

Research Article

Women and Child Trafficking in Africa: The Consequences of Globalization

Cecilia U. Okafor (Ph.D)

Department of Political Science, Enugu State University of Science and Technology Enugu, Nigeria

ABSTRACT: *In developing states where agrarian lifestyle predominates, citizens are left without education or appropriate skills to compete in an evolving workforce. As socio-economically disadvantaged people, opportunistic predators seize upon their vulnerability. Women and children are the most vulnerable and are the principal victims of traffickers who coerce their services, predominantly in the sex industries. Crime syndicates are notorious for identifying vulnerable females who entertain visions of better life and more susceptible to deceptive offer of job opportunities in foreign countries. Globalization is the development of an increasingly integrated economy marked especially by free trade, free flow of capital, and the tapping of cheaper foreign labour markets that transcend nation-states' boundaries (Webster.com). The mobility of capital, organizations, ideas, discourses, and peoples has taken on an increasingly global form. Consequently, other forms of slavery and human trafficking are not just outcomes of globalization, but are part of the globalization process itself that involves a functional integration of dispersed economic activities. This paper discusses why women and children are more vulnerable to trafficking in Africa. It provides explanations to the cultural and social factors that drive and sustain this illegal practice and evaluates the efforts of various groups and institutions in stemming the tide.*

Keywords: *Child trafficking, Consequence, Crime syndicates, Globalization, sexual exploitation,*

I. INTRODUCTION

As a complex economic, political, cultural and geographic process in which the mobility of capital, organizations, ideas, and peoples has taken in an increasingly global or transnational form for commerce and transfer of commodities, globalization has resulted in complex connectivity that simply intensifies global interconnectedness and thus, facilitates the trafficking of individuals [1]. The central argument is that the traffickers had lured the most vulnerable in the society, i.e. women and children, into trafficking under the guise of available job opportunities in foreign lands. The article begins by looking at human trafficking and highlighting the implications of the 'shrinking' of the world into a global community on the trade. Looking at the trade from the perspective of internationalization [2], globalization enhances cross-border relations between countries, and results in the growth of international exchange and interdependence. Consequently, as [3] have said, globalization has to do with large and growing flows of trade which human trafficking has turned into in recent times, especially in Africa. This article projects the nexus between human trafficking and globalization. The ultimate goal is to illuminate the effects of globalization on the nefarious trade in human beings. The scope of the article is continental with the following sub-regional countries randomly selected for consideration – Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Gambia and Togo. Secondary data that are primarily used are sourced from United Nations (UN) publications, country-based data and newsletters from NGOs and

women's organizations' texts. After conceptualizing the term human trafficking, factors precipitating women and child trafficking were highlighted and critically assessed. Finally, government and group efforts to stem the challenges were considered and recommendations made

1.1 Human Trafficking and Globalization

Human trafficking is a social problem that is currently generating concern globally. And so many victims of human trafficking cut across pre-teens, teenagers and adults who are trafficked distance away from their homes to other cities within their country or to other countries. Consequently, as the world "shrinks" and tends to evolve toward a sort of global community, such transfer of people, both voluntarily and coerced, is becoming more prevalent. This condensing of the world can be attributed to the process of globalization. Globalization of the world economy has resulted in the globalization of the sex industry with interconnected aspects such as prostitution, sex tourism, mail order brides, online sex clubs and pornography [4]. The globalization of sex industry and the associated trade in women operates now largely outside the boundaries of sovereign states, making extra-territorial regulation and law enforcement very difficult [5].

It is partly due to globalization that human trafficking has become such a lucrative and fast growing, but, criminal practice. Thus, globalization disseminates practices, values, technologies and other human products throughout the globe [6]. Consequently, globalization is a set of social practices that undergoes constant renovation and reinvention. It fosters interdependence between states for commerce and facilitates the transfer of commodities. Mostly the less developed countries provide cheap labour for the multinational corporations in developed countries and this fact results in the trafficking and exploitation of desperate workers who in turn are subjected to a life-time of slave-like conditions. Women and children are the most vulnerable and traffickers coerce their services predominantly in the sex industries. The internet is an important icon of globalization as it has helped in facilitating the trafficking of individuals. Traffickers, through the internet, lure women into trafficking under the guise of mundane job advertisements in foreign countries which the intermediaries are armed with to easily convince the victims.

Various researches have reported that majority of women and children are trafficked in Africa and that they are moved internally or within a region. There are, however, flows linking Africa to other regions with their main destinations being Europe e.g. Nigerians trafficked for sexual exploitation to Western Europe. From the Middle East, there are also Moroccan women and girls trafficked for sexual purposes to Saudi Arabia, Qatar, Syria and United Arab Emirate [7] and South East Asia [8]. Again, some parts of Africa have also been reported to be a destination for women and children from other continents (e.g. Thai girls trafficked to South Africa for sexual exploitation). In North Africa, information on trafficking routes is scarce but, possibly women and children from sub-Saharan Africa are trafficked there in transit to Europe and the Middle-East. Cases of sexually- exploited Moroccan children identified in the Netherlands and France suggest that this country is also a source for trafficked children [9]. Trafficking within Africa affects more than 90% of countries of the same sub-region e.g. within West African countries, within Central African countries e.t.c. while flows between sub-regions e.g. from Eastern to Southern African countries are less common. According to UNICEF Research, many countries are both sending and receiving and such flows are complex [8]. In a number of instances, neighbouring countries are engaged in child trafficking in both directions across a common border. For instance, children are trafficked from Ghana to Togo and the Ivory Coast or from Benin to Nigeria and vice versa [10]. There is equally an internal trafficking that occurs within a country's own borders. This usually involves movement from rural to urban areas or from one city to another. Finding oneself in an unfamiliar environment increases the vulnerability to trafficking, especially for children. So, the victims of internal trafficking may include nationals, migrants with or without legal status who reside in the country, refugees, asylum-seekers and stateless persons.

However, the majority of trafficking of girls and women takes place for purposes other than for sexual exploitation. Therefore, they get involved in work places including factories, private homes, fisheries and agricultural plantations across the region and this makes it possible for these industries to remain profitable.

II. CONCEPTUALIZING TRAFFICKING

A considerable amount of definitions abound on trafficking as a phenomenon. For instance, the South Asia Association of Regional Countries (SAARC) Convention on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Women and Children sees ‘trafficking’ as a means for moving, selling or buying women and children for prostitution within and outside a country for monetary or other considerations with or without the consent of the person subjected to trafficking. The International Organization of Migration (IOM) views human trafficking as the recruitment and transportation of persons by use of deceit or force for the purpose of exploitation. Again, according to the court, in Nigeria (Trafficking in Person (TIP) Act, 2003 Section 50) the word “Trafficking” was defined to include all acts relating to the transportation, receipt, harbouring of a person for purpose, whether, voluntarily or involuntarily of servitude of a sexual, domestic labour in slave-like conditions [11]. Over decades the concept itself has evolved to include many more attributes and features, so much so that it has been recognized that the historical characterization of trafficking are outdated, ill-defined and non-responsive to the current realities of the movement and trade in people and to the nature and extent of the abuses inherent in and incidental to trafficking [12].

Thus, various definitions reflect different interpretations of the attributes of trafficking. However, all debates and arguments are centered on issues of consent, of movement, of purpose and the unequal treatment of women and children. *The United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children* (also referred to as the Palermo Protocol on Trafficking), which entered into force in 2002, is a part of the United Nations Convention Against Organized Crime [13] and provides the first internationally recognized definition of trafficking.

Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of the abuse of power or of the vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payment or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purposes of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

In addition to giving ‘a framework’, this definition has proved to be a ‘guiding principle’ for a macro-conceptual understanding of trafficking [13]. The concept of human trafficking refers to the criminal practice of exploiting human beings by treating them like commodities for profit and deals with the exploitative conditions that may result from trafficking, including the ideas that were earlier confined only to understanding prostitution. Positively, this definition includes the explanation of the means used for trafficking, its clarity on the issue of consent and the different acts in the trafficking process that it elucidates. Hence, rightly described as nothing less than a form of modern day slavery, the problem of human trafficking cannot be relegated to one country, one nation or even one continent. It is a universal problem that destroys the lives of millions of people each year. Much research has been compiled world-wide by a variety of organizations. Some examples of the statistics provided include the following:-

- The UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) – Human trafficking is the second largest crime in the world. Only drug trafficking is larger and makes more money

- The Office to monitor and Combat Trafficking Persons, US State Department – 2 to 4 million men, women and children are trafficked across borders and within their own country every year. More than one person is trafficked across borders every minute
- “Global Report on Trafficking in Persons”, (UNODC) – 1.2 million children are trafficked every year).
- Estimate by UNICEF – Boys under the age of 18 are increasingly lured into sexual exploitation, more frequently for use in pornography.
- A global alliance against forced labour, International Labor Organization, 2005 – The most common form of human trafficking (80 percent) is sexual exploitation. The victims of sexual exploitation are predominantly women and girls.
- “Global Report on Trafficking in Persons” United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) – in respect of commercial sexual exploitation, women are just as likely as men to be recruiters.
- “No Experience Necessary: – The Internal Trafficking of Persons in South Africa” IOM, 2008 – The majority of trafficking victims arguably come from the poorest countries and poorest strata of the national population.

Thus, the definition of trafficking is elaborated in the context of crime control, which is undermined by the inability to prove it, rather than with a focus on human rights. As one of the fastest growing criminal activities in the world, trafficking in persons results in serious breaches of human rights and dignity of trafficked persons. And, the violations of the rights of the trafficked persons are so enormous that traffickers could easily be convicted if provisions for easy access are made for the victims. Human Rights violations on a trafficked person include:-

- Deprivation of the right to life (slave-like conditions)
- Deprivation of the right to equality
- Deprivation of the right to education/employment
- Deprivation of the right to liberty
- Deprivation of the right to security
- Denial of the right to just and favourable conditions of work
- Deprivation of dignity
- Denial of the right not to be subjected to torture, or other cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment
- Deprivation of the right to access to justice and redressal of grievances
- Denial of access to health services, denial of the right to the highest standard attainable of physical and mental health
- Denial of right to self-determination (e.g. when the victim is pushed back)
- Denial of right to return to own community
- Denial of the right to equal protection under the law
- Deprivation of the right to be free from all kinds of discrimination
- Double jeopardy (e.g. when a person trafficked across the border is convicted for non-possession of passport/visa, e.t.c and is simultaneously punished on charge of ‘soliciting’ or ‘prostituting’)
- Denial of right to representation
- Denial of right to be heard before decision making
- Denial of access to justice and delivery of justice [14].

The multidimensional forms of exploitation and the attendant violation of rights of trafficked persons results in different implications for each trafficked individual. However, there seems to be a broad agreement on the factors that lead to trafficking.

III. FACTORS PRECIPITATING WOMEN AND CHILD TRAFFICKING

The vulnerability of persons that are marginalized or disadvantaged has been identified as the root cause of trafficking, but there are those who argue that the circumstance of the marginalized or disadvantaged merely exacerbate the vulnerability of such persons and that is exactly the case in Africa. Such circumstance, in developing states of Africa, where agrarian lifestyle predominates, leaves citizens without education or appropriate skills to assist them in competing in a changing workforce and this heightens their vulnerability. Again, the general economic hardship in existence in the society compounds the already precarious situation. Women and children, who are the most marginalized and disadvantaged are, thus, seriously affected by these vulnerability factors.

These causes of vulnerability relate to the socio-economic and political context of the people and are interlinked. And these can be divided into two categories – personal circumstance and socio-cultural forces [13].

3.1 Personal Circumstance

It has been reported that people with low-self esteem and who lack self control are especially vulnerable to trafficking [15]. Such low-self esteem and lack of self control is attributed to lack of (insufficiency or inappropriateness) education and training and this results in a situation in which knowledge and skill are not at a level that can enhance creativity and productivity. Such lack of education serves to perpetuate their low status. It becomes easy to see why poor and illiterate women of such status in developing countries, especially Africa, fall prey to trafficking or even why parents of such caliber easily give out their children to supposedly caregivers or for child labour. Thus, low levels of literacy and awareness are risk factors and these usually precipitate low income, low status and impoverishment. Consequently, economic deprivation and the associated conditions are factors that lead to vulnerability. Researchers have proved that a high percentage of trafficked people belong to the low income group and that the greater the degree of impoverishment, the higher the risk of falling preys to trafficking [16]. Again, people with disabilities or women who may suffer from disfigurements are also considered vulnerable [17]. Another important factor that makes people vulnerable is a dysfunctional home environment. Example, breaking-up of the family, marital discord, physical abuse, sexual abuse, drug abuse, family pressures, large family members, families facing uncertain times, children in substitute care, gender discrimination within the family, and desertion by husbands who acquire a second or third wife. It has been found out that most trafficked women are unmarried, divorced, separated or widowed [18] and that most trafficked children are from families that are impoverished and find it difficult to provide the basic necessities of life.

3.2 Social/Political Factors

In addition to the personal condition, the environment also has its impact. For instance, [19] rightly states, that the environment which lacks livelihood options or economic opportunities along with the accompanying pressure to earn, makes life for the poor an ongoing ‘battle for survival’, and this situation of battling to survive is especially noticed in Africa. In addition, there is the social/cultural dimension which denies women a number of basic rights such as the right to property

and/or access to credits. Furthermore, the social/political factors that influence and determine the circumstance that exacerbate vulnerability has been enumerated to include industrialization and globalization, economic crises, economic decline, disruption or underdevelopment, economic policies such as privatization, liberalization, the withdrawal of subsidies and the commercialization of agriculture. Other factors that influence vulnerability include the erosion of subsistence agricultural practices, the loss of traditional livelihoods and inflation, and labour market demands and policies. Thus, in a global market, women and girls are increasingly being hired as service providers [19]. Though African women do engage in diverse agricultural activities like planting, weeding, harvesting and processing, yet their income is usually very low and incapable of fully providing the basic necessities of life and thus, they become easily prone to trafficking.

Some of the political factors that influence vulnerability are conflicts that cause disruption and instability, immigration policies and human rights violations by the states. Others are poor governance, limited law enforcement or implementation of labour standards [20]. Such political disruption with its attendant instability is visible in several African countries. Environmental calamities and disruptions also put people at risk. In addition, other contributing factors are the quickening pace of urbanization and the heightened mobility resulting from the development of road links, and thus, easy passage into nooks and crannies of the environment. And again, the resultant culture of consumerism and materialism which distorts family needs and individual desires [21] enhances their vulnerability. There are also discriminatory practices and social exclusion that exacerbate the vulnerabilities of groups like scheduled tribes, scheduled castes, other backward caste, ethnic minorities, tribal communities, undocumented tribal workers and stateless people or people in refugee camps. Early marriage, which results in the lack of choice regarding a marriage partner and the socialization of women into persons who must remain servile and bear injustice silently are other factors that render women more vulnerable.

IV. GOVERNMENT AND GROUP EFFORTS TO STEM THE CHALLENGES

Looking at the [22] *Report* on the global initiative to fight human trafficking, and [7], some of the provisions and actions of Government of the following countries can critically be looked at: Benin, Burkina Faso, Chad, Cote d'Ivoire, Gabon, Ghana, Guinea, Liberia, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, The Gambia and Togo. The provisions of the government and other interested bodies to fight trafficking and the standard of their compliance are considered.

4.1 Benin

In Benin, specific law enforcement unit for the protection of minors, and which deals with trafficking in persons, exists. This unit known as The *Brigade de Protection des Mineurs* has been active since 1991. In 2004, the Brigade had about 10 officers devoted full time to protection of minors. Services provided to victims by State authorities include: legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support, and repatriation of victims to their origin countries. Local NGOs provide legal protection, medical and psychosocial support, housing and shelter, and victim repatriation. In addition, Benin has an official referral system or mechanism for victims of trafficking in persons and a central database where information concerning identified victims is registered. These services are operated by the Observatory for Family, Women and Child Protection.

Benin is a country of origin and transit for children, and possibly men and women, subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. Reports indicate that children are transported to Nigeria and Gabon, and to lesser extent Cote d'Ivoire, Ghana, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Togo, Cameroon and Niger, where they are forced to labour in mines, quarries, restaurants, street vending and on cocoa farms. The Government acknowledges that child trafficking is a problem in Benin but does not recognize the trafficking of adults. Hence, the trafficking of adults for forced labour and forced prostitution is not adequately prohibited by Beninese law.

4.2. Burkina Faso

The specific offence of child trafficking in Burkina Faso was established in 2003, a law covering adult trafficking drafted in 2007 and a national action plan on child protection adopted in 2005. In 2008, this unit that deals with trafficking in persons known as the *Brigade de Mineurs* had about 180 officers dedicated full time to the protection of minors. The state authorities, local NGOs and international organizations provided the following services: legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support, and housing and shelter for victims and also repatriation services.

Burkina Faso is a country of origin, transit and destination for women and children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. Burkinabe children are forced into labour as farm hands, gold panners and washers, street vendors, domestic servants, beggars recruited as pupils by unscrupulous religious teachers and exploited in sex trade. To a lesser extent, traffickers recruit Burkinabe women for forced prostitution in Europe. Through the country's national committee for the coordination of anti-trafficking services led by the Ministry of Social Actions Directorate for Child Protection and Combating Violence against Children, the Government has made modest efforts to prevent trafficking in persons.

4.3 Chad

The specific offence of trafficking in persons does not exist in the legislation of Chad and because of this absence, no persecutions or conviction were recorded for trafficking in persons during the reporting period. However, laws criminalizing related forms of trafficking are used to prosecute some types of cases, including illegal adoption, economic exploitation, forced services and abduction (kidnapping and rape). State authorities, local NGOs and international organizations provide legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support, and housing and shelter for victims.

Chad is a source and destination country for children subjected to conditions of forced labour and sex trafficking. The country's trafficking problem is primarily internal and frequently involves family members entrusting children to relatives or intermediaries in return for promises of education, apprenticeship, goods or money. Some children in religious schools (*madrasahs*) are forced to beg for long hours for the benefit of their teachers and may be denied food or physically punished if they do not collect enough money. Though the Government of Chad did not enact legislation prohibiting trafficking in persons, but it undertook limited anti-trafficking law enforcement and victim protection activities.

4.4 Cote d'Ivoire

The specific offence of trafficking in persons does not exist in the legislation of Cote d'Ivoire, but laws criminalizing related forms are used to prosecute some types of trafficking. For instance a national action plan on child trafficking and child labour was adopted in 2007. Hence, about 29 men were investigated for forced labor between 2005 and 2007 with two prosecutions recorded in 2005 and 15 in 2006, resulting in two convictions in 2006. State authorities, local NGOs and international organization provide legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support, and housing and shelter for victims.

4.5. Gabon

The specific offence of child trafficking was established in Gabon in 2004. Though the law does not cover trafficking in persons above the age of 18, other provisions of the penal code criminalize sexual exploitation and forced labor. For instance, during 2004-2005, the *Centre Arcade* in Gabon sheltered victims of trafficking and related crimes. State authorities provide

legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support, and housing and shelter for victims. The local NGOs provide housing and shelter, and in addition, repatriation services.

Gabon is primarily a destination and transit country for children and women from Benin, Nigeria, Togo, Mali, Guinea and other West African countries who are subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. The majority of victims are boys forced to work as street hawkers or mechanics. Girls are subjected to conditions of domestic servitude and forced labor in markets or roadside restaurants.

4.5. The Gambia

The specific offence of trafficking in persons was established in Gambia in 2007 as well as a national action plan on trafficking adopted. The 2007 *Trafficking in Persons Act* included the establishment of a national agency against trafficking in persons. There was also a special enforcement section under the Department of Immigration and Child Protection Unit that deals with some forms of trafficking in persons. State authorities, local NGOs and international organizations provide legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support and housing and shelter for victims.

The Gambia is a source, transit and destination country for children and women subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Within The Gambia, women and girls, and to lesser extent boys, are subjected to sex trafficking and domestic servitude. Women, girls and boys from West African countries – mainly Senegal, Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria, Guinea, Guinea Bissau and Benin are recruited for exploitation in the sex trade in The Gambia in particular to meet the demands of European tourists seeking sex children.

4.6. Ghana

The specific offence of trafficking in persons was established in Ghana in 2005. The *Domestic Violence and Sexual Offences Unit* of the *Ghana Police Service* is mandated to investigate trafficking in persons in addition to domestic violence offences. State authorities, local NGOs and international organizations provide legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support, housing and shelter, vocational training and microfinance opportunities for victims.

Ghana is a country of origin, transit and destination for women and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. The trafficking of Ghanaian citizens, particularly children, within the country is more common than the transnational trafficking of foreign migrants. This internal trafficking is characterized largely by movement of children from rural to urban areas or from one rural area to another, such as from farming to fishing communities. Ghanaian boys and girls are subjected to conditions of forced labor within the country in fishing, domestic service, street hawking, begging, pottering and agriculture. Ghanaian girls, and to a lesser extent boys, are subjected to prostitution within Ghana. Ghanaian women and children are recruited and transported to Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, The Gambia, Russia, Syria, Lebanon, South Africa, United States and countries in Western Europe for forced labor and sex trafficking. Women and girls voluntarily migrating from China, Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, Benin and possibly Romania are subjected to commercial sexual exploitation after arriving in Ghana.

4.7 Liberia

The specific offence of trafficking in persons was established in Liberia in 2005 while a national action plan was adopted in 2006. The *Women and Children Protection Section* was established in 2005 as part of the *Liberian National Police*. The section is responsible for the protection of women and children and has responsibility for investigating cases of trafficking in persons as well as sexual assault, sexual exploitation, domestic violence, child abuse and other related offences. State authorities, Local NGOs and international organizations provide legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and

psychosocial support and housing and shelter for victims. In addition, *The Faith Consortium of Liberia* receives trafficked children, collects related data and transfers the children to a shelter run by the *Women and Children Protection Unit*. Liberia is a source, transit and destination country principally for young women and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking.

4.8 Guinea

The specific offence of trafficking in persons does not exist in the legislation of Guinea. However, some forms of trafficking in persons may be prosecuted through the offences of “pawn of human beings” and “servitude”, and this had existed in the criminal code since 1998. And a national action plan on trafficking in persons was adopted in 2005.

However Guinea’s law enforcement has a specialized *Child Prosecution Unit* that addresses child trafficking. State authorities, Local NGOs and international organizations provide legal prosecution, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support and housing and shelter for victims.

Guinea is a source, transit and to a lesser extent, a destination country for men, women and children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. The majority of Guinea’s trafficking victims are children and incidents of trafficking are more prevalent among Guinea citizens than foreign immigrants residing in Guinea. Girls are often subjected to domestic servitude and commercial sexual exploitation while boys are forced to beg on the streets or work as street vendors, shoe shiners and laborers in gold and diamond mines. Some Guinean men are subjected to forced agricultural labor. Smaller numbers of girls from Mali, Sierra Leone, Nigeria, Ghana, Liberia, Senegal, Burkina Faso and Guinea- Bissau, migrate to Guinea, where they are subjected to domestic servitude and likely also commercial sexual exploitation. Guinean women and girls are subjected to domestic servitude, forced labor and child prostitution in Nigeria, Cote d’Ivoire, Benin, Senegal, Greece and Spain. Chinese women are brought to Guinea for commercial sexual exploitation by Chinese traffickers, and women from Vietnam are reportedly forced into prostitution in hotels and restaurants in Guinea. Networks also traffic women from Nigeria, India, Greece through Guinea to the Maghreb and onward to Europe – notably Italy, Ukraine, Switzerland and France – for forced prostitution and domestic servitude.

4.9. Mali

The specific offence of child trafficking was established in Mali in 2001. The law does not cover trafficking in persons above the age of 18. There are however, other provisions that criminalize the sexual exploitation and the forced labour of adults. A national action plan on child trafficking was adopted in 2002. State authorities, local NGOs and international organizations provide legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support and housing and shelter for victims.

Mali is a source, transit and destination country for men, women and children subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. Within Mali, women and girls are forced into domestic servitude, agricultural labour and support roles in gold mines, as well as subjected to sex trafficking. Boys from Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Niger and other countries are forced into begging and exploited for labour by religious instructors within Mali and across borders. Though Government of Mali acknowledged that human trafficking is a problem in Mali, but it did not demonstrate significant efforts to prosecute and convict trafficking offenders. In February 2011, the Prime Minister of Mali signed a decree creating the National Coordinating Committee for the Fight against Trafficking and Related Activities and assigned specific anti-trafficking prevention responsibilities to it.

4.10 Mauritania

The specific offence of trafficking in persons was established in Mauritania in 2003 and new provisions were adopted in the penal code in 2007 criminalizing slavery. A national action plan on child trafficking was adopted in 2005. Again, a special *Child Police Brigade* targeting child forced labor and child prostitution was established in 2006. State authorities, local NGOs and international organizations provide legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support and housing and shelter for victims.

Mauritania is a source and destination country for men, women and children subjected to conditions of forced labour and sex trafficking. Women, men and children from traditional slave castes are subjected to slavery-related practices rooted in ancestral master-slave relationships. Boys from within Mauritania and other West African countries – referred to as *talibes* – who are recruited to study at Koranic schools, are subjected to force begging by some religious teachers known as *marabouts*. Mauritanian girls, as well as girls from Mali, Senegal, The Gambia and other West African countries are forced into servitude. Mauritanian women and girls are forced into prostitution in the country or are transported to countries in the Middle East for the same purpose. The Mauritania Government demonstrated negligible efforts to protect victims of human trafficking, including traditional slavery. If there were any Victim services, they are provided by NGOs.

4.11. Niger

The specific offence of trafficking in persons does not exist in the legislation of Niger, although some forms of trafficking may be prosecuted through other offences, such as “forced begging” and “pandering”. In 2007, draft legislation was considered by the competent authorities. State authorities, local NGOs and international organizations provide legal protection, temporary stay permits, and medical and psychosocial support for victims of trafficking.

Niger is a source, transit and destination country for children and women subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking, caste-based slavery continued primarily in the northern part of the country. Nigerian children are subjected to force begging within the country, as well as in Mali and Nigeria by religious instructors known as *marabouts*. They are also subjected to domestic servitude, prostitution, and forced labor in gold mines, agriculture and stone quarries within the country. The Nigerian girls are subjected to prostitution along the border with Nigeria and are reportedly entered into “marriages” with citizens in Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates. It is also a transit country for women and children from Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Gabon, Guinea Mali, Nigeria and Togo migrating *en route* to Algeria, Libya and Western Europe; some may be subjected to forced labor in Niger as domestic servants, mechanics and welders, or laborers in mines and on farms.

4.12 Nigeria

The specific offence of trafficking in persons was established in Nigeria in 2003 and a national action plan on trafficking in persons was adopted in 2006. Nigeria has three different specialized police units dealing with trafficking in persons. The first is the *National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons* (NAPTIP). NAPTIP is responsible for investigation, enforcement cooperation and coordination, and the legal department of the agency has skills in the prosecution of human trafficking cases. The *Police Force* also has a specialized unit to combat trafficking in persons that coordinates its efforts with NAPTIP. The special *Immigration Unit* to combat trafficking in persons concentrates most of its work on interception of victims and traffickers at border and exit points. About 100 officers were dedicated full time to combating trafficking in persons in 2007. State authorities, local NGOs and international organizations provide legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support, housing and shelter, vocational skill training, schooling, job placement and small business start-up and support for victims. NAPTIP has a *Rehabilitation and Reintegration Department* that coordinates all

organizations and agencies with respect to support and services for victims. It does this through its headquarters and six zonal offices, each of which has a shelter available to care for victims. It supervises other institutions and organizations providing services to victims within its area of jurisdiction. A central database is situated in the NAPTIP *Monitoring Centre* that stores information on victims and traffickers.

Nigeria is a source, transit and destination country for women and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Trafficked Nigerian women and children are recruited from rural, and to a lesser extent urban areas within the country's borders – women and girls for domestic servitude and sex trafficking, and boys for forced labor in street vending, domestic

servitude, mining, stone quarries, agriculture and begging. Nigerian women and children are taken from Nigeria to other West and Central African countries, including Gabon, Cameroon, Ghana, Chad, Benin, Togo, Niger, Burkina Faso, the Central African Republic and The Gambia, as well as South Africa for the same purposes. They are also taken to Italy, Spain, the Netherlands, Germany, Turkey, Belgium, Denmark, France, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Ireland, Greece and Russia for the same purposes. Nigerian women and children are also recruited and transported to destinations in North Africa and the Middle East, including Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, Lebanon, Egypt, Libya, and Morocco, where they are held captive in the sex trade or situations of forced labor.

Though, the Nigerian Government has sustained a modest number of trafficking prosecutions as well as provided assistance to several hundred trafficking victims but, it has not demonstrated an increase in its anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts. The NAPTIP has also tried cases involving non-trafficking crime against children – such as pedophilia and baby selling – appears to have burdened the organization and this has resulted in the organization not performing at full capacity.

4.13. Senegal

The specific offence of trafficking in persons was established in Senegal in 2005. Senegalese law enforcement includes two police units that address trafficking in persons. The first unit targets sexual exploitation and the second focuses on illegal migration. State authorities, local NGOs and international organizations provide legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support for victims. Also two residential facilities are available for victims.

Senegal is a source, transit and destination country for children and women subjected to forced labour, forced begging and sex trafficking. NGOs estimate that many children (*talibes* - students attending Koranic schools run by teachers known as *marabouts*) are forced to beg in the streets. Women and girls from other West African countries particularly Liberia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone and Nigeria may be subjected to domestic servitude and commercial sexual exploitation in Senegal, including for international sex tourism. The Senegalese Government made progress in its anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts.

4.14 Sierra Leone

The specific offence of trafficking in persons was established in Sierra Leone in 2005. A national action plan on trafficking in persons was adopted in 2006. The Family Support Unit of the Sierra Leone Police along with the Criminal Investigation Division was established in 2005 and has jurisdictional responsibility for trafficking in persons cases. State authorities in cooperation with International Organization of Migration (IOM), provide housing and shelter for victims. International organizations offer legal protection, medical and psychosocial support, housing and shelter, and vocational training for victims. A residential facility for victims is administered by IOM.

Sierra Leone is a source, transit and destination country for children and women subjected to force labour or sex trafficking. Victims originate largely from rural provinces and refugee communities within the country, and are recruited to urban and mining centres for the purposes of exploitation in prostitution, domestic servitude and forced labour in petty trading, potting, rock breaking, street crime and begging. Sierra Leone may be a destination country for children trafficked from

Nigeria and possibly from Liberia and Guinea for forced begging, forced labour and prostitution. Through the Ministry of Social Welfare Gender and Children's Affairs (MSWGCA), Government has partnered with NGOs and international organizations to provide services for trafficking victims. This they did by creating an anti-trafficking law enforcement database within the MSWGCA and updating the National Action Plan for 2011.

4.14 Togo

The specific offence of child trafficking was established in Togo in 2005, but the law does not cover trafficking in persons above the age of 18. Other provisions of the penal code criminalize sexual exploitation, forced labor, child begging and the use of children as soldier. A national action plan on child trafficking was adopted in 2007. *The Brigade de Protection des Mineurs* is responsible for cases of child trafficking. State authorities, local NGOs and international organizations provide legal protection, temporary stay permits, medical and psychosocial support, and housing and shelter for victims. Two residential facilities administered by NGOs are available for victims.

Togo is a source and transit country for men, women and children, subjected to forced labour and sex trafficking. The majority of Togolese victims exploited within the country are children from rural areas, brought to the capital Lome, and forced to work as domestic servants, roadside vendors and porters or are exploited in prostitution. Togolese girls and, to a lesser extent, boys are transported to Benin, Gabon, Nigeria, Ghana, Cote d' Ivoire and the Democratic Republic of Congo and subsequently forced to work in agricultural labour. Through the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Government partnered with local NGO to conduct awareness campaign about the dangers of child trafficking. In addition, there is a national committee that focuses on the reintegration off child victims

V. SUMMARY

The victims of trafficking are mostly unaware of the implications of their adventure since they may or may not be given proper travel documents. Again, they are trafficked to unknown destinations and so they psychologically face the uncertainties of an unknown environment. They also face other consequences such as effects of poverty, unemployment, poor education, exacerbated by corruption and mismanagement of the economy. Other factors that force women and girls to fall easy prey to the traffickers include spiraling record of poverty, high level of ignorance and large family size. Moreover, the financial distress of most poor guardians makes them vulnerable to the whims and caprices of traffickers who lure them with supposedly rewarding jobs; only to cajole them into prostitution and forced labour in America, Europe and Asia as well as other neighboring countries and major cities of their own country. The divergent negative impacts of trafficking on its victims range from minor to serious health implications, as well as minor and serious traumatic and post-traumatic disorders that often leave victims devastated enough to live a normal life. Effects of trafficking also have a number of far-reaching psychological, socio-economic, health and political consequences. Besides, when the psychological implications are not tackled, other health complications may result, and might lead to an outright death. Thus, the need to mount extensive enlightenment campaigns as well as to beef up immigration, security, creating legal frameworks and organizations meant to tackle trafficking cannot be overemphasized. Neither should the role of rehabilitation process, which is of paramount importance for the reintegration of victims of trafficking into their different societies, be ignored.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

There is need for combined institutional efforts like that of the UN Interpol, Local police, Immigration units and NGOs to combat human trafficking. The adoption of the *Palermo Protocol* initiated by the UN's Convention Against Crime and also the need to initiate the national action plan of the various countries are recommended. These will help in enacting anti-trafficking laws and consequently emphasize the propagation of the following:

-Creation of awareness through awareness campaigns to enlighten the vulnerable on the existence of traffickers in the society and the consequences of falling prey.

-Prevention of trafficking through a multi-tiered approach such as providing methods that dissuade the trafficking of human beings in the first place. As has been suggested by some people, the approaching of the problem from the "demand" side by pursuing and prosecuting the traffickers and those seeking these illicit services as opposed to the sex-workers themselves. [6] also appropriately suggested efforts on researches to follow the flow of the trafficked from the market place to identify corporations linked to the slavery and instances of forced labor facilitated by trafficking.

-Protection of Victims – by establishing authorized agencies charged with the specific responsibility of protection for victims of trafficking.

-Prosecution of offenders – there is the need to provide means for eliminating obstacles that militate against the prosecution of traffickers, example the challenge faced by the victims for easy access to litigation.

There is, in addition, the need for the improvement of governance so as to eradicate poverty, provide employment for the teeming population and also to mitigate gender inequality.

Finally, there is also need for more focus on the human rights violation of trafficked persons.

In concluding, as [11], a UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, stated

The time has come for government, civil society, researchers, and private sector and indeed all relevant and interested entities to join hands in the fight against human trafficking. Some of the influencing factors, such as growing poverty and low standard of living, gender inequality and low status of women, demand for commercial sex (sex tourism) and cheap labour; the inadequacy of laws and laws enforcement should be looked into in the fight against human trafficking.

In other words, there is a grave need for a multidimensional cooperation among the above various bodies in the fight against human trafficking, as that will bring a beacon of hope to shine on the victims since it is only through such concerted efforts that this enslavement of human beings by their fellow human beings would end.

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