



THE INTERSECTIONS OF Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking



A Publication of UNANIMA International 2021



Foreword

Jean Quinn, DW
Executive Director
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UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL IS A NON-governmental organization (NGO) advocating on behalf of women, children, and girls (particularly those living in poverty), the homeless, migrants and refugees, and the environment. Our work takes place primarily at the United Nations headquarters in New York, where we and other members of civil society aim to educate and influence policy makers at the global level. In solidarity, we work for systemic change to achieve a more just world. On the ground our unique membership consists of 23 communities of religious women whose 23,000 members work in 85 countries.

Founded in 2002 by Sr. Catherine Ferguson, the mission was giving a voice to women, children and girls that were the victims of human trafficking. Human Trafficking, as we know, is the action or practice of illegally transporting people from one country to another, typically for the purposes of forced labor or sexual

exploitation. It is a global issue, and given the hidden nature of human trafficking, it is impossible to understand the full scope of the issue. The International Labor Organisation is a good source for statistics. According to the 2017 report on forced labor and forced marriage, 40.3 million people are trapped in modern slavery; of these, 24.9 million were exploited for labor, while 15.4 million were in forced marriages.¹ 37% of victims of forced marriage were children, the majority of whom were girls.² It is widely cited that over 90% of trafficked persons are sexually exploited. With these statistics, the relevance of the issue to gender equality and child protection is undoubtable.

UNANIMA International has contributed significantly to advocacy efforts to eradicate Trafficking. As part of our past work with the NGO Working Group on Girls and the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Person (CSTIP), we have pursued the recognition and

protection of the rights of victims. We also have an ongoing international campaign to STOP THE DEMAND for Trafficking in women, children and girls. This campaign has revealed conditions (most prominently income and wealth inequality) underlying vulnerability to trafficking and the prosperity of the industry. UNANIMA International's prioritization of women, children, and girls has specifically necessitated focus on the issue of Human Trafficking, but moreover, to its drivers and consequences in the lives of these groups. We continue to advocate for the eradication of Trafficking through the lens of Homelessness and Displacement.

Our current work researching Family Homelessness, and subsequently sharing and acting upon findings through advocacy, intersects greatly with the topic and framework of Human Trafficking. In the past we have seen group activists and legislators fighting human trafficking, while others of us are working tirelessly to end homelessness. But the two are interlinked. What is important is identifying the problem, and in this case the problem is trafficked persons experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, and those experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity being at risk for trafficking. Two intersecting issues, and the issues should not be examined separately. Rather the problem of human trafficking and its relationship to homelessness should be looked at as one. In putting this publication together UNANIMA International wants to increase the awareness of the relationship between Human Trafficking and Family Homelessness.

Safe, adequate housing is a human right and a critical resource for survivors of human trafficking because it is fundamental to human well-being, and aids their journey towards healing. Providers of housing in the homeless sector

are supporting survivors of trafficking without necessarily knowing it, in part because not all survivors are aware that their exploitation is considered trafficking, and others are not willing or able to share this information. Housing organizations must ensure that their services are trauma-informed to provide the wrap around services that the person and family need.

At UNANIMA International we need to learn not just about each other's work but also from each other, interacting in a spirit of 'receptive generosity.' We want to explore where the partnership opportunities are that will support our work in family homelessness and trafficking. We are focusing on the intersections of human trafficking and homelessness — two very traumatizing situations that are often addressed individually, rather than together. In order to address the intersections, all of us in society must link the two issues to each other. When our services, research and advocacy are continually interacting, then we can make a difference to the suffering and exploitation caused by homelessness and human trafficking.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'what are you doing for others?'"

Let's look for the signs of risks for trafficking and homelessness in our communities, and treat them as one and the same; let's work to address and prevent these drivers and protect all people among us, making vulnerabilities reduced, or when related to identity, things that we celebrate culturally.

Sincerely,

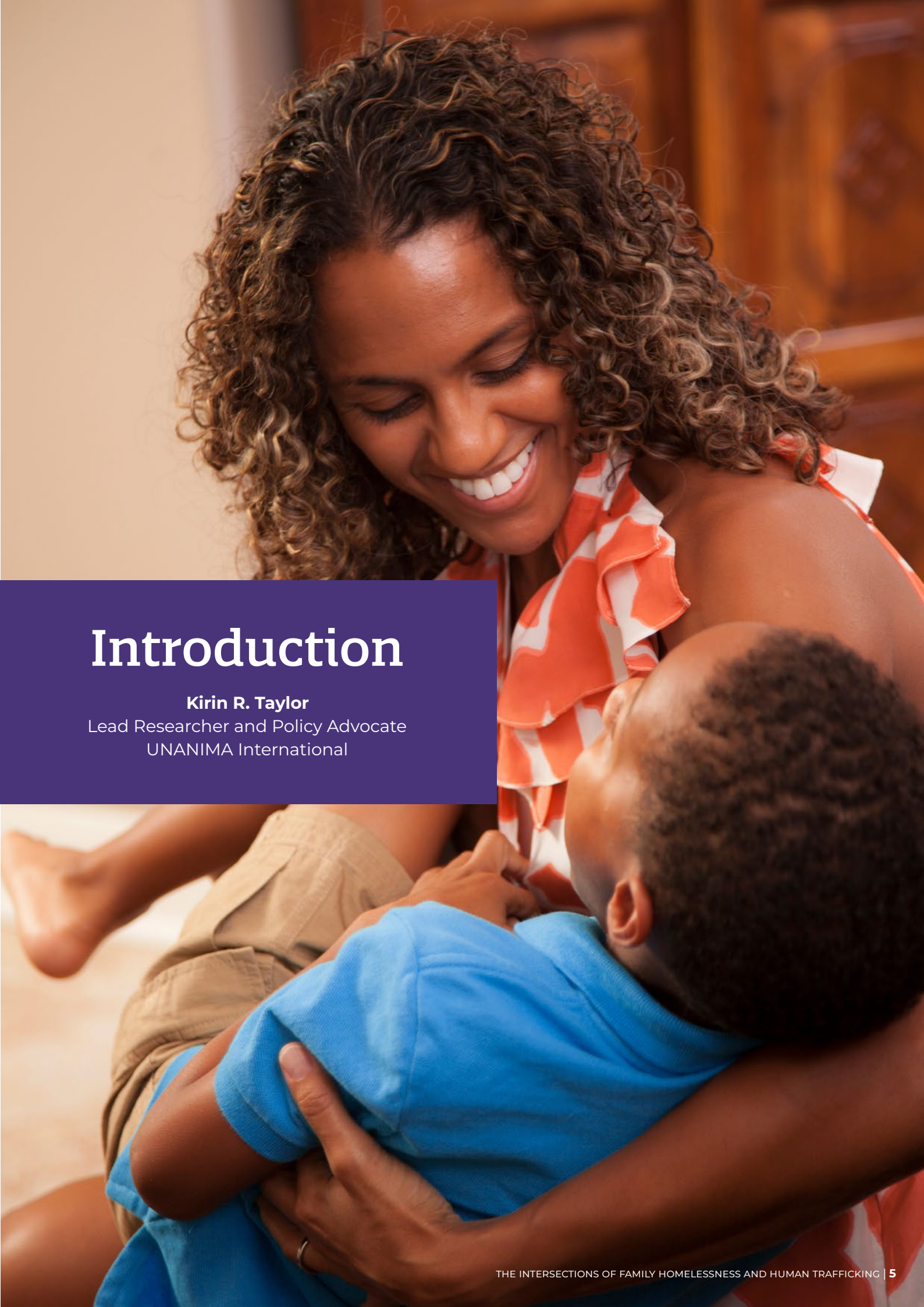
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jean".

Acronyms

ACE	Adverse Childhood Experiences
ACRATH	Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans
CEDAW	The Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CHD	Community House Damaris
COVID-19	Global Coronavirus Pandemic
CST	Catholic Social Teaching
CSTIP	NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons
GAATW	Global Alliance on Traffic in Women
GCM	The Global Compact for Migration
HRBA	Human Rights-Based Approach
ICT	Information and Communications Technologies
IGH	Institute of Global Homelessness at DePaul University
IJM	International Justice Mission
ILO	International Labor Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NAPTIP	National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and Other Related Matters
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NUA	New Urban Agenda
OCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
PIE	Psychologically Informed Environments
RENATE	Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UI	UNANIMA International
UN	United Nations
UNCRC	United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
UNDRIP	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNODC	The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
UNPFII	United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues
WGEH	NGO Working Group to End Homelessness

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A close-up photograph of a woman with voluminous, curly brown hair, smiling warmly as she holds a young child. The woman is wearing a red and white patterned top. The child, with short dark hair, is wearing a bright blue t-shirt and is looking up towards the woman. The background is softly blurred, showing what appears to be a wooden chair and a warm, indoor setting.

Introduction

Kirin R. Taylor

Lead Researcher and Policy Advocate
UNANIMA International

IN UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL'S PUBLICATION

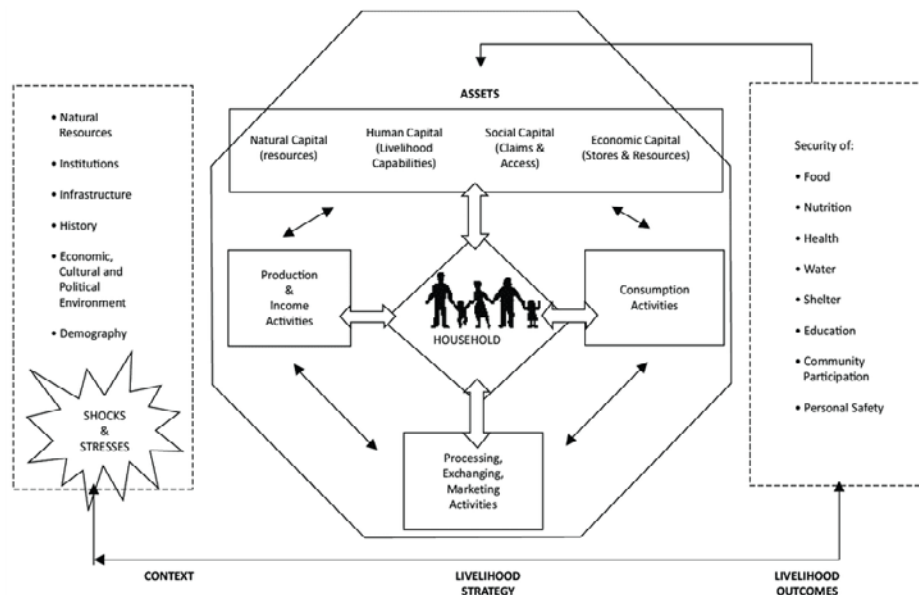
Family Homelessness Through the Lens of the United Nations 2030 Agenda Volume One it is stated, “experiences of homelessness and housing insecurity/inadequacy are not the whole of an individual’s or family’s reality. Moreover, within international political issues, we must view Family Homelessness as one human rights issue among many, and seek to understand the histories and contexts from which Family Homelessness has stemmed.”³ This is one reason why it is necessary to explore the intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking. The publication *I Have a Voice: Trafficked Women in Their Own Words* by Dr. Angela Reed, RSM and Marietta Latonio, clarifies the advantages of viewing Human Trafficking “within the context of a life course perspective.” “First, it applies a multi-dimensional framework for exploring the complexity of human development. Second, it provides insight into unique issues that individuals experience within particular communities and historical periods, hence providing a context for how and why one may be vulnerable to human trafficking. Third, it recognises life stages, not pertaining to age but to the significance of events from birth to full maturation which may not fit neatly into age-graded theories of development.”⁴

Vulnerability to adverse life experiences, including some of the most traumatic ones imaginable—such as homelessness, trafficking, and various forms of abuse—is reflective of an overarching livelihood of the individual and that of their household or family. Their community and culture, and often even international society, also affect their livelihood. The CARE Livelihood Security Model (see graphic) which is used often for livelihood assessments is relevant here, as we contextualize both Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking within

one’s life, community, and global culture. Referencing the research of Chambers and Conway (1991),⁵ “CARE identifies three fundamental attributes of livelihoods,” including, “the possession of human capitals (education, skills, health and psychological orientation); access to tangible and intangible assets; the existence of economic activities.”⁶ As the Anti-Slavery NGO Arise states, “Modern slavery can affect someone of any gender, race or age. However, it most commonly affects those made more vulnerable by insufficient access to opportunities, education, healthcare or sanitation.”⁷ Exploring the intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking, as this publication does, necessarily relies upon discussion of vulnerability, context, and opportunities, as well as strategies for holistic support, and social justice in response and prevention.

The long-term, and continued focus of UNANIMA International on Human Trafficking is necessary for two primary reasons: firstly, this issue is global. It affects international relations both formally and informally, necessitating its place in the United Nations’ and civil society’s agendas. It also affects the internal conditions of all nation states within which UNANIMA International’s members are based. Secondly, this issue, like many pervasive social injustices, has an economic basis, and functions in effect as an industry, therefore necessitating responsiveness from those impacted in order to initiate systemic change and to stop the demand. Our grassroots members themselves, their communities, and their nations have been impacted by Human Trafficking. Likewise, the people whom we advocate with at the United Nations (Women, Children and Girls, Migrants and Refugees) are deeply affected.

Evaluating the intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking in the



Source: <http://www.fao.org/3/x9371e/x9371e12.htm>

context of the COVID-19 pandemic is essential as the pandemic has exacerbated vulnerabilities of people facing housing and financial insecurity, marginalization and/or exploitation in areas not limited to health and wellness. With only ten years remaining to achieve the United Nations 2030 Agenda, acknowledgement of each of these issues' intersections with the Sustainable Development Goals will be vital to accelerating action. International laws and protocols will be vital to achieving the goals and ending Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking, but are not enough without multi-stakeholder engagement and work towards solving the issues, initiating local assessments, creating political will, and fostering the implementation of preventative measure and responsive services. The nexus of the different pillars of sustainable development (social, economic and environmental) with these issues also cannot be overlooked.

A Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) must be applied to preventing and addressing both Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking through policy and plans of action, as well as in analyses of the issues at hand.

Former Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights, Philip Alston, stated in his report on the Digital Welfare State that, “the reality is that Governments have certainly not regulated the technology industry as if human rights were at stake, and the technology sector remains a virtually human rights-free zone.”⁸ In light of the most recent (59th) session of the United Nations Commission for Social Development (CSocD59) which had the priority theme: “socially just transition towards sustainable development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all,”⁹ technology must be considered in relation to the topics of Family Homelessness, Human Trafficking, COVID-19, and Human Rights. Technology simultaneously has the propensity to be a risk factor for vulnerable populations, and also to be used through good practices to serve, and resolve systemic issues.



Kirin R. Taylor



01 Definitions & Language

Home·less·ness

Personas sin techo 无家可归 **Sans abri** ى وأم الب
नरिश्रय **Sem casa** Hamaji Senzatetto

Hu·man Traf·fick·ing

Trata de personas 人身売買 Biashara ya binadamu 人口販運 торгoвля людьми
ਮਨੁੱਖੀ ਤਸਕਰੀ **Tratta di persone** الاتجار بالبشر Traite des êtres humains

Definitions

Internationally, interpretations of the issues and concepts of both homelessness and human trafficking differ, and consequently prevention and address of the issues also differ. National, regional, and international coordination and cooperation to reduce and ultimately stop these issues can be improved when an international definition is adopted. The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Protocol). Establishing an international definition of homelessness, or multiple definitions, is a goal of advocates for ending homelessness, who have largely supported the proposed definition from the United Nations Expert Group on “Affordable Housing and Social Protection Systems for All to Address Homelessness.” Below, UNANIMA International introduces a working definition of “hidden homelessness,” with the hope that those reading will expand their understanding of who is in need of support services and policy actions related to the right to safe, adequate housing.

Human Trafficking

“The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall

include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”¹⁰ (Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, Article 3.A.)

Homelessness

“Homelessness is a condition where a person or household lacks habitable space with security of tenure, rights and ability to enjoy social relations, including safety. Homelessness is a manifestation of extreme poverty and a failure of multiple systems and human rights.”¹¹ (United Nations Expert Group on “Affordable Housing and Social Protection Systems for All to Address Homelessness”)

Hidden Homelessness (Working Definition)

“The hidden homeless do not have a secure place to call home. They are people who remain in unsafe housing, relationships, or living situations. They are people who become homeless but find temporary solutions by staying with family, friends, or living in insecure accommodation. The situation for them is often short-term and unsustainable, meaning they end up in various kinds of shelters and emergency accommodation. This can be due to abuse and domestic violence. The hidden homeless often don’t seek support as they don’t want abusers to know where they are.” (UNANIMA International, 2021)

Testimony

Liz Madden
International Advocate
with Lived Experience
of Homelessness



“When I think of homelessness, at least in the Irish context, I think of people living in B&Bs, people waiting to be housed, people in overcrowded homes, or staying with friends. I think of people who are living in rehab centers, psychiatric homes; I think of asylum seekers living in direct provision. Homelessness is not having a key to a home. Homelessness is being buzzed in by services. In your own home you are the decision maker.”

Note: Liz shared this testimony on a panel at the United Nations 58th Commission for Social Development in February, 2020

Language

It is important that the language we use to describe and define people involved in trafficking is accurate. One action to help stop the demand for trafficking in women and children is using accurate language, as it helps to shape

peoples’ understanding and perception of the issue, and therefore how it is responded to. We also can help reframe homelessness as a human and civil rights issue by shifting our language to acknowledge the people experiencing it.

NOT THIS...	THIS!
“Clients” or “Buyers”	“Perpetrators” or “Exploiters”
“Sex workers”	“Women exploited in prostitution”
“Homeless person”	“Person experiencing homelessness”



02 Human Rights, International Affairs & International Laws

RECENTLY APPOINTED

UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Professor Siobhán Mullally,



Siobhán Mullally

Image credit: OHCHR
<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/Issues/Trafficking/Pages/SiobhanMullally.aspx>

stated: “It is critical now that effective protection measures are taken to vindicate the human rights of victims of trafficking, and that Governments and the international community take seriously their obligations to prevent human trafficking.”¹² Safe, adequate housing is a human right which has been emphasized in the international community more significantly since Leilani Farha’s two terms as United Nations Special Rapporteur on The Right to Adequate Housing, the conception and founding of the NGO Working Group to End Homelessness (WGEH) in 2017, and the inclusion of homelessness in the 58th Session of the UN Commission for Social Development’s priority theme.

Fundamental human rights overlap significantly as denial or inaccessibility of one right may facilitate denial or inaccessibility of another. For example, not being able to access legal proceedings may keep someone from claiming their right to adequate housing, or seeking justice after surviving an experience of trafficking (let alone while in the midst of the experience). A violation of Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) Article 4. “No one shall be held in slavery or servitude; slavery and the slave trade shall be prohibited in all their forms,”¹³ implies an additional violation to the right to adequate housing, as people’s security

of tenure and safety are each not possible when they are in a forced or coerced living situations. Human Rights are bolstered by international affairs and laws, though local, national, and regional action is necessary to fulfill and actualize the guidance provided by the international community. Partnerships are required for human rights to truly be met at the family, community, regional, national and international levels. It is also necessary for diplomatic processes and their outcomes to be inclusive and responsive to the experiences and needs reported from the grassroots, in this context specifically meaning people who have experienced human trafficking and/or homelessness, and those who have worked in response to and prevention of these issues.

Human Rights

Both Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking are human rights violations in themselves, and reflect many violations of human rights which lead to and feed into the experiences, as well as international laws which are not actualized. Each happens to people of all ages, but it is well understood that Women and Girls are particularly at risk for trafficking in persons. UNANIMA International Grassroots member, Sister Kathleen Bryant, RSC, commented that human trafficking “has so many forms...it’s systemic.”¹⁴ The Palermo Protocol defines trafficking and is the first international document to talk about how essential it is to address demand when discussing the trafficking of women and children from a human rights perspective.¹⁵ Many other definitions of Human Trafficking highlight the economic aspects prevalent to the phenomenon, in part because of this aspect’s contribution to its systemic pervasiveness. Some forms of trafficking, including child marriages,

have prominent cultural or legal acceptability that facilitate denial of human rights. Inputs from service providers in several countries have indicated that a lack of understanding of one's human rights, as well as the protections they have within their respective national and local laws, can result in forced marriage and conditions of homelessness.

International Laws and Affairs

International laws and frameworks not limited to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Beijing Declaration, the New Urban Agenda (NUA) and even the Copenhagen Accord, are relevant to addressing and preventing both Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking. Given the urgency that the United Nations 2030 Agenda has brought forth, with the next ten

years referred to as the “decade of action,” and the extreme vulnerability of youth and migrants, focus on the relevance of the Sustainable Development Goals, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the Global Compact for Migration at the intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking will provide insight into how these issues remain prevalent to multilateral diplomacy and global politics.

The United Nations 2030 Agenda (Sustainable Development Goals)

To be clear, there is not just an intersection between Homelessness and Human Trafficking, but also other socio-political issues which are drivers and effects of each, including all seventeen of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in the United Nations 2030 Agenda (and most notably SDGs 1 (No Poverty), 5 (Gender Equality), 8 (Decent Work), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), 11 (Sustainable Cities



and Communities), and 16 (Peace, Justice, and Strong Institutions). A special focus on SDG 8 is necessary, including Target 8.7: “Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labor, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labor, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labor in all its forms,” and Indicator 8.7.1 “proportion and number of children aged 5–17 years engaged in child labour, by sex and age.”¹⁶

Noting the many intersecting issues may make prospects for preventing human trafficking seem overwhelming. However, it is essential that decision-makers and policy implementers recognize that existing frameworks, when fulfilled, would reduce these issues by consequence. Likewise, it is imperative that Human Trafficking and Family Homelessness are recognized as barriers to the successful achievement of the UN 2030 Agenda if not addressed directly. The intersections between Family Homelessness and the seventeen UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are analysed in UNANIMA International’s publications *Family Homelessness Through the Lens of the United Nations 2030 Agenda Volumes One and Two*.¹⁷

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC)

Additional reference to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) is necessary, particularly to the following articles, which together show the necessity for international action: Article 11 “1. States Parties shall take measures to combat the illicit transfer and non-return of children abroad. 2. To this end, States Parties shall promote the conclusion of bilateral or multilateral agreements or

accession to existing agreements,” Article 34 “States Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes, States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent: (a) The inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity; (b) The exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices; (c) The exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials,” and Article 35 “States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.”¹⁸

The Global Compact for Migration (GCM)

The Global Compact for Migration (GCM) has UN Member States commit to 23 “Objectives for Safe, Orderly and Regular Migration.”¹⁹ The NGO Committee on Migration has divided these commitments into the following categories: Protect the Human Rights of All Migrants; Reduced Forced Migration; Improve Migration Management; Enhance the Safety of Migration.²⁰ The following objectives are particularly relevant to addressing and preventing Family Homelessness/Displacement and Human Trafficking: 2, 4, 9, 10, 11, 18, 23.

Further relevant objectives of the GCM, among others, are related to the collection and utilization of data (Objective 1), and provision and access to information during migration (Objective 3). In stakeholders’ work to prevent and address Human Trafficking among the Migrant and Refugee populations, education and awareness of the nature and extent of the

issue is essential—and people with lived experience and vulnerability must undoubtedly be brought into this work and considered as “stakeholders.” It is notable that though a majority of Member States have formally ratified the GCM, several have not, including the United States of America and some EU Member States, including Hungary.

QUESTION

Would Legalizing Prostitution Help Reduce Trafficking In Persons and Homelessness?

In looking at legal employment in prostitution it has been shown that “most prostituted women find it the only viable solution they perceive among very limited options for survival.”²¹ In reference to the Livelihood Security Model, engagement in prostitution often is used to achieve livelihood outcomes, such as security of food, water, education, or other needs. In an interview with UNANIMA International, Rania Ioakeimidou from Community House Demaris shared, “here in Greece prostitution is legal. Not all the girls working in those places do this willingly; there are girls who have been trafficked and they are forced to work there. So also not only [inside], but also in the streets...Mostly the girls come from foreign countries. We see, of course there are some Greek girls also, but most of them, they come from other countries.”

Objectives relevant to Addressing & Preventing Family Homelessness/Displacement and Human Trafficking

18

Investing in the identification and development of migrants' skills and qualifications”

2

Minimizing factors that compel people to leave their country of origin

23

Strengthening international cooperation and global partnerships for safe, orderly and regular migration

4

Ensuring that all migrants, including stateless people, have proof of legal identity and adequate documentation

9

Intensifying joint efforts to prevent and counter smuggling of migrants

10

Acting to prevent, combat and eradicate trafficking in persons

11

Promoting bilateral and regional cooperation to manage national borders in a coordinated manner

UNANIMA International previously published that countries where prostitution has become legalized, “have also seen an expansion of the sex industry to tabletop dancing, bondage, sadomasochist centres, peep shows, phone sex and pornography.” Contrastingly, in Sweden, engagement in prostitution is not criminalized, yet it is illegal to buy sex. As such “because it has become more dangerous and less profitable, the trafficking of women and children for sexual purposes is on the decline there.”²² International law does not have a requirement for countries’ laws on prostitution, as United Nations “Member States decided to keep the issue of prostitution within the domain of national competence.” According to the

UNODC, “the strict policy line of UNODC is to remain neutral on the issue of prostitution,” which reflects the position of the institutional United Nations, as well.²³ UNANIMA International believes, based on inputs shared with us from the grassroots and existing bodies of research, that the legalization of prostitution can actually increase human trafficking. The Nigerian Federal Government Agency, National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP), recommends promoting “the passage of anti-trafficking laws that follow the Swedish model of punishing those who buy sex,” as a way to use legal avenues to decrease trafficking in persons.²⁴



Trafficking and Family Homelessness at Their Intersections”

Danielle Curtis BL

Legal Professional in Ireland

Human Trafficking is a global threat necessitating a global response. It is worth noting that homelessness is a prevailing issue in Ireland. In November 2020, there was 8,484 persons who were homeless.²⁵ Children accounted for 2,452 of this figure and youth aged 18-24, whom are most susceptible for human trafficking accounted for 745 of the total.²⁶ These figures do not account for the overwhelming number of youths experiencing “hidden homelessness.” Young persons are more likely to experience “hidden homelessness,” meaning they may be sofa-surfing with friends and family, squatting, sleeping on the streets, or living in insecure accommodation.

A tiered approach is required to adequately address human trafficking

1. **Identification:** Development of an International standard of assessing suspected victims of human trafficking. This standard should focus on the adoption of a cross sector approach allowing law enforcement and State services to refer suspected victims, but also key frontline services such as social workers and healthcare professionals;
2. **Prosecution:** The Trafficking in Persons Report 2020 noted that although many countries had criminalized sex and labour trafficking (some prescribing penalties up to life imprisonment), many failed to prosecute for the offences. From an Irish

perspective, although the laws are adequately stringent, having been amended in 2013 and then again in 2017, the State has not obtained a trafficking conviction since 2013, and;

3. **Protection:** trafficking victims are generally financially unstable, in turn making them susceptible to re-exploitation. To combat this, Member States should provide sufficient protection to victims—a key component of this protection is the provision of stable and secure housing.

I make the following recommendations on the basis of my extensive engagement with homeless families and see these as pivotal for effectively combatting the global threat of human trafficking:

- Legal protection of the right to housing to create a firm foundation for an enduring protection of the human right to adequate housing;²⁷
- The adoption of a legal-rights based approach to housing provision, including homeless provision, such that housing authorities have a duty to provide interim accommodation for homeless persons. From an Irish perspective, this would include a tightening of the statutory protections contained in the Housing Act



1988 to eliminate the statutory discretion afforded to housing authorities with respect of the housing assessment and impose a duty on the housing authority to provide homeless accommodation. This would circumvent frontline organisations utilizing short-term and chronically unstable provisions of accommodation to rehabilitate victims of human trafficking;²⁸

- Expedite the screening tools for trafficking, many Member States note that screening for human trafficking is often a lengthy and onerous process;²⁹
- Train law enforcement and State services to identify victims of sex and labour trafficking;³⁰
- Implementation of adequate legal protections for both sex and labour trafficking offences. Once adopted, Member States should provide resources to vigorously

investigate, prosecute, and convict suspected offenders;³¹

- Adapt a cross sector multi-agency approach which would allow formal victim identification by and referral from entities other than State bodies, including civil society; social workers; healthcare professionals and housing agencies. Working in partnership is key to combat the crime of trafficking;³²
- Adapt provisions of long-term supported accommodation for trafficking victims;³³
- Adoption of an international standard to assess suspected victims of trafficking. This guidance could come in the form of a handbook similar to that of the *Handbook on Procedures and Criteria for Determining Refugee Status under the 1951 Convention and the 1967 Protocol relating to the Status of Refugees*.

Testimony

Soroptimist International

Circumstances, including homelessness, put women, girls and families at risk of trafficking. The intersecting inequities of poverty, leaving state care, lack of education, disasters and conflict all contribute to risks of homelessness and women's and girls' vulnerabilities. The COVID-19 pandemic only exacerbated these risk factors, with many countries now facing a homelessness crisis. We cannot combat trafficking without preventing homelessness.



Through this relationship, international law recognises the right to adequate housing prevents trafficking and protects victims, providing for their physical and psychosocial recovery. The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (Palermo Protocol) mandates securing housing and addressing homelessness as a means to protect victims and prevent trafficking. Article 6.3(a) regards housing as a protection mechanism, and through Article 9 safe and adequate housing can be interpreted as a measure to prevent the trafficking of persons.³⁴

This international law requires contextualized implementation that uses victim-centered and gender-sensitive approaches. To improve policies and implementation, services should work with NGOs and trafficking survivors as they know local needs best.

Making international law local, Soroptimist International members across California

— including in Sonoma and Marin County — formed coalitions of non-governmental actors and campaigned for Community Resolutions. These can adapt to local circumstances, focus actions upon need, initiate awareness-raising programmes and vital training in order to identify victims and those at risk. Following natural disasters, Soroptimists have identified traffickers as among the first on the scene — ahead of aid workers — exploiting those who've lost their homes and livelihoods. In Nepal, by identifying the relationship between income, education, housing and trafficking, Soroptimist projects provided safe accommodation after an earthquake, ensuring girls could complete their education safely and develop income sources. In Japan, local Soroptimists responded immediately, securing the housing and educational needs of secondary school-aged students who lost parents and were targets for traffickers. These essential preventative actions must be incorporated into disaster risk reduction programmes, understanding local NGOs can mobilize immediately, ensuring trafficking is not the only option for survival.

“Trafficking takes place because of a victim's vulnerabilities. Homelessness is one of the most profound of these...displacement can be both (1) the reason a person is trafficked, with offers of a place to live in return for required sex acts, or (2) the fear of losing shelter provided by an exploiter can also be a reason not to flee.”

- Rev. Dr. Marian Hatcher, Ambassador-at-Large, UN;
U.S. Representative, SPACE International;
Soroptimist International Member

GOOD PRACTICE

Laws with Enforcement Components

Frustration with the lack of accountability for the fulfillment of international laws is common in discussions surrounding them. The United Nations Protocol against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air is unique, because it includes a variety of enforcement mechanisms. As stated within “International Law and Human Trafficking” by Lindsey King, “provisions within the Trafficking Protocol state that parties must: take action to penalize trafficking, protect victims of trafficking, and grant victims temporary or permanent residence in the countries of destination. Therefore, if a state is a party to the Convention and its Protocols, it has an obligation to create legislation that supports these provisions at the domestic level.”³⁵ Because there are discussions



over the definition of migrants, however, and all people who are trafficked are not migrants, it is important that more laws concerning trafficking have enforcement components included.

RESOURCES

- *Human Trafficking in Supply Chains and the Way Forward* by Danielle Lloyd
https://link.springer.com/referenceworkentry/10.1007%2F978-3-319-63058-8_50
- Global Database on National Legal Frameworks Protecting Children From Sexual Exploitation Online by ECPAT International
<https://globaldatabase.ecpat.org/>
- *Human Trafficking Still Exists: What Can Lawyers Do?* by Lawyer Monthly
<https://www.lawyer-monthly.com/2020/01/lawyers-taking-a-stand-against-human-trafficking/>



03 Intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking

HUMAN TRAFFICKING TAKES MANY

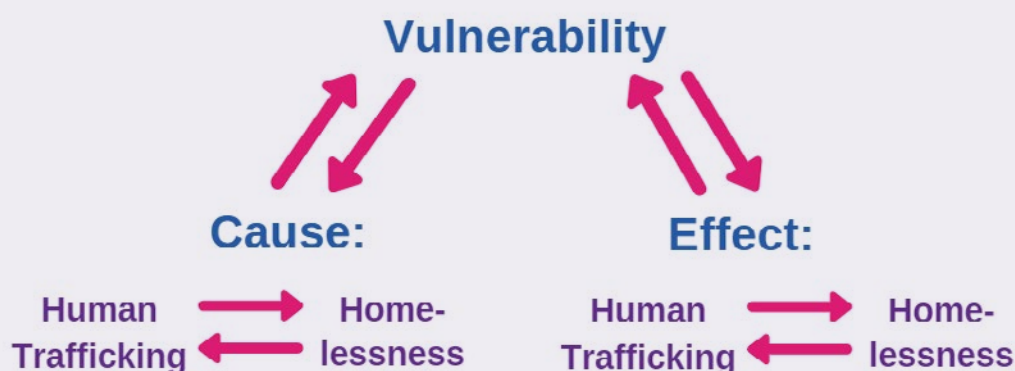
diverse forms, and people who are trafficked have their livelihoods drastically diminished (through immediate and long-lasting shocks and stresses), even if they are able to escape trafficking. Families that experience one or more of their members being trafficked are also greatly affected and traumatized, and if a parent is the victim, Children/Girls become further at risk of being trafficked themselves. Testimonies shared with UNANIMA International through our research mandate for Family Homelessness/Displacement and Trauma demonstrate why it is necessary to focus on the family unit in evaluating homelessness, its drivers and effects, and why homelessness cannot be simplified to just being without a house. Family situations, including relationships (safety, psychological and emotional support), income (access to resources and fulfillment of needs), housing (space, adequacy, location) and more factors (see Livelihood Security Model on page 7) influence people's vulnerability to Human Trafficking and Family Homelessness. Beyond the measure of the family unit, the context of the Global Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19) sheds new light on the culture, drivers, and

opportunities present that allow the pervasiveness of human trafficking in the Global North and South alike.

PERSPECTIVE

Commodification of People and Property

Clearly, there is not a “demand” for homelessness, as there is for people — who are trafficked most often for the purpose of exploitation. But a prominent similarity between Human Trafficking and Family Homelessness is the commodification which facilitates each social injustice. For Family Homelessness, commodification of land and housing is a huge driver of evictions, land grabbing, families being forced to rent rather than own, and housing not being honored as the human right that it is.³⁶ For human trafficking, the human body is commodified, whether for sex or for other labor forms. However, it is important to understand that the commodification of the female body also causes conditions that drive women into homelessness.³⁷ Escape from trafficking situations can result in experiences of poverty, doubling-up, or living in insecure housing, and because of this many survivors may end up trafficked once again.



Human Trafficking and Homelessness are negative effects of vulnerability, and each causes vulnerability to the other.

“Intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking”

Winifred Doherty, RGS NGO, Representative of the Congregation of Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd to the United Nations

Relevant recently published reports include: *Labor and Sex Trafficking Among Homeless Youth*³⁸ which gives a detailed account of labor and sexual exploitation experienced by homeless youth in Covenant House’s care in ten cities, and *Human Trafficking Prevalence and Child Welfare Risk Factors Among Homeless Youth, a Multi-City Study*³⁹ which provides the reader with deep insights and understanding of the intricate dynamics and intersections of the experience of Homelessness and Human Trafficking. According to Covenant House, “68% of the youth who had either been trafficked or engaged in survival sex or commercial sex had done so while homeless.”⁴⁰ The aforementioned report by the Field Center for Children’s Policy, Practice & Research stated, “two out of three homeless females reported being solicited for paid sex. For all genders, 22% of those homeless youth who were approached for paid sex had this happen on their very first night of being homeless. Transgender youth were particularly vulnerable, with 90% of transgender youth reporting being offered money for sex.”⁴¹ These two blatant human rights violations, in this case Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking, are extrinsically linked but should not be addressed in isolation from multiple other human rights violations.

The root cause of Family Homelessness is systemic and due in large part to the lack of States’ responsibility as a duty bearer to ensure the provision of adequate shelter and social protection in fulfillment of its obligation in international law, intertwined with profiteers who through the housing market exploit families through evictions. Thus sexual predators and criminals

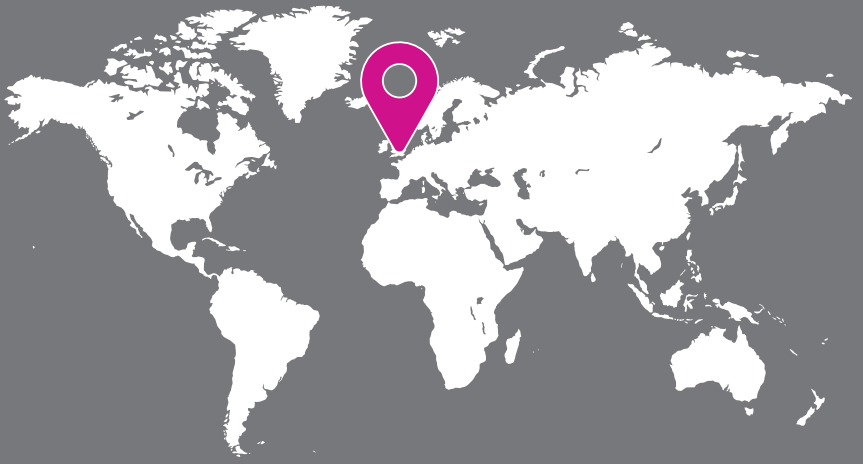


who are ‘trafficking in persons’ continue to capitalize on vulnerability by offering people ‘shelter’ and the opportunity to make a dollar or two by trafficking them into prostitution. “One young person reported trading sex to help her take care of her daughter as a single mother, stating, ‘It was quick and easy and I needed to get my daughter some milk.’”⁴²

*In the January 2020 edition of the Bellevue Reporter, a human trafficking survivor shared how homelessness leads to sexual exploitation: “traffickers often lure victim[s] by promises of the basic necessities of survival - home, food, clothes, money, love and safety.”*⁴³ *Another panelist Carl Covington, “now 45, grew up in Hawaii and experienced homelessness when he and his older sister lived on the streets of California, witnessing his mother become a victim of sex trafficking.”*⁴⁴ *In order to target the intersection, he said, society must place the problem of the two topics, intrinsically tied together, in front of themselves: “predators and exploiters may take advantage of very young children who not only cannot legally consent to a sexual act, but also are lacking the developmental maturity to understand the implications of their actions.”*⁴⁵ *“Another young woman reported that when she was 9 years old, her mother “sold her to a pimp” for some drugs.”*⁴⁶ *These testimonies show that there is a dark intricate web of abuse of human rights and exploitation of persons when homelessness and human trafficking intersect. A step towards a solution is zero homelessness.*

Testimony

**Sister Imelda
Poole, IBVM**
President of RENATE



I sat down on a street in London outside a station with homeless girls, and I'll never forget it. I was on my way back from work, and I saw these youngsters - kids really. And I discovered they were from Romania and they had been trafficked, then escaped, but they hadn't had protection. So here they were. And they were apparently with nine others. I didn't meet the other nine, but they were all sitting on the streets in different patches of London to survive. While I was sitting on the street with these two young Romanians, I found out that they didn't have proper documents. They showed me what they had, but it was a flimsy tatty piece of paper, not what I'd call an official ID. What had happened? God knows. While I was sitting there a young man that approached us, a well-dressed young London jet who turned out to be a lawyer asked me, could he help me? Which was amazing. Wow. I said yes because I had no mobile phone on me to help these youngsters to get protection, which they wanted. And so this young man stayed with me for about an hour to track down an agency that would protect these girls - an amazing experience of Goodwill. And we did get protection for these two and presumably for the nine, but I left the organization to it because they came and it was my time to get the train to Albania to carry on my work here.

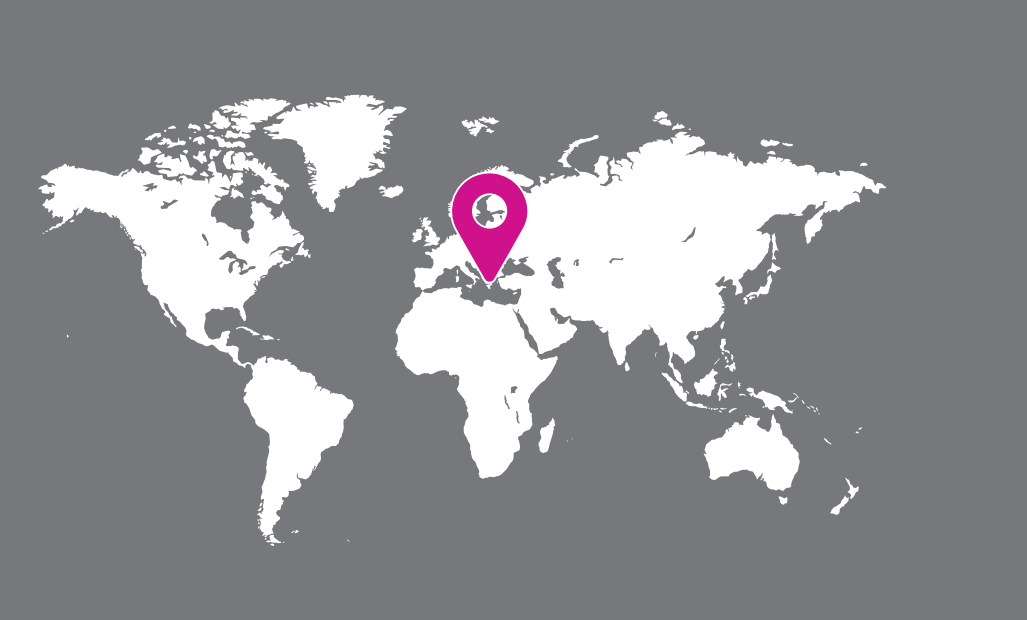


For more information about RENATE please visit:
<http://www.renate-europe.net/>

Testimony

Rania Ioakeimidou

Service Provider in
Greece at Community
House Demaris



From our experience and the stories of the girls that we have so far, I believe that homelessness is an important factor that leads to trafficking because some of our girls, when they got interviewed by us, told us for example, they ended up sleeping in the street and then someone came close to them, talked to them, and then abused and trafficked them...With the hidden homelessness, for example, recently we had a refugee girl who told us that she was travelling from her country to Turkey, and then she ended up here in Greece. She tried to find places to sleep, she was by herself and she didn't know anyone. So the thing is that people would invite her, "oh, come on and sleep with me." They would tell her they have a house where they can let her stay - but the price was the sexual abuse. Homelessness is a very sensitive factor. So this poor woman, told us that in order for her to not stay in the street, to have somewhere to sleep overnight, she was forced to sleep with certain men. She would then try to leave, but on her journey find the same situation again.

Note: Rania participated in a formal interview with UNANIMA International in November, 2020.

GOOD PRACTICE

Leading Organization: Arise Inputs from Tove van Lennep, Manager of Frontline Advocacy

“Arise is working to end slavery and human trafficking in some of the worst affected areas in the world. We do this through a network of frontline groups, working hard to protect their communities. Many people are surprised to learn that these communities are wise to the ways of traffickers. But from the context of unemployment, hunger and homelessness, the promise of “a job in the city,” however empty, can become a person’s only hope for survival.

To prevent human trafficking, we must provide a viable alternative. Sometimes that is an education, other times it is a job, and often, it is a safe home. As traffickers prey on vulnerability, homelessness and human trafficking are inextricably linked.

Arise provides a platform for those who have passed through the pain of exploitation to tell their stories; this can help people to empathize with the severity of the situation for so many, and the urgency of abolition.”



© Arise Foundation

For more information about Arise or to read more of the testimonies they share, visit: <https://www.arisefdn.org/>

RESOURCES

- The Global Movement to Secure the Right to Housing by The Shift
<https://www.make-the-shift.org/>
- *Intersections on Homelessness and Human Trafficking: A Case Study on End Slavery Tennessee* by National Health Care for the Homeless Council
<https://nhchc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/EndSlavery-TN-Profile-Final-Update.pdf>
- Human Trafficking Capacity Building Center by the U.S. Department of Justice
<https://htcbc.ovc.ojp.gov/>



04

Drivers of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking

VULNERABILITY TO HUMAN TRAFFICKING

trafficking is extreme for women, children, LGBTQ+ people, migrants and the displaced. Many vulnerabilities end up becoming risk factors for Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking. Historically marginalized groups, and groups that face continuing discrimination within societies undoubtedly face multiple drivers simultaneously. A Polaris report on Sex Trafficking and LGBTQ youth shared that this group is, “3-7 times more likely to engage in survival sex to meet basic needs such as shelter, food, drugs, and toiletries.”⁴⁷ An escape from an abusive or inadequate housing situation (hidden homelessness) may drive situations that lead to trafficking, such as spending time in dangerous areas or moving to the street. The Connecticut Coalition to End Homelessness state, “one of the most effective ways to reduce a young person’s risk of falling into human trafficking is to end their homelessness by providing a safe and stable place to stay and supports to help a youth thrive.”⁴⁸ This is true globally.

Poverty, Labor and Resources

Sister Kathleen Bryant, RSC commented, “poverty drives human trafficking. People are driven out there: to pay their rents, sometimes they’ll sell their child.”⁴⁹ These situations vary, and the reasons vary, across family units and cultures, as well as historical contexts. Food insecurity is a huge reason why children are in situations of abuse - whether as a “choice” from their parents or “negligence,” each of which may also come from the parents’ situations of necessity.⁵⁰ In an interview with UNANIMA International, Sister Imelda Poole, IBVM who is the president of Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and

Exploitation (RENATE) explained, “if you take countries of origin and destination in Europe, patterns are repeated with labor trafficking. There’s abuse of the workers by the traffickers in slave labour within factories. Often, as I have seen in Albania, the workers are not protected with safety gear or from long hours of grueling work. They are not given a living wage yet the workers stay in this work because of debt bondage. Employers take their papers. All of these issues are across Europe in the factories or the fields. Homeless who are taken off the streets are given dreams of possibilities, but which aren’t realized.” Such patterns are not solely in Europe either.

Under and unemployment are often systemic issues rather than personal faults, caused by large-scale economic crises and market conditions. Within many societies women and minority groups face barriers in accessing education, the job market, and equal pay.⁵¹ Panagiota Fitsiou, Psychologist MSc and Head of EU Projects from The Society of Social Psychiatry P. Sakellaropoulos shared in an interview with UNANIMA International in July 2020, that women exploited in prostitution were “most endangered when homeless,” and “struggling to survive”; she also pointed out that they do not receive benefits and security in their work, or receive government support when “unemployed.” In light of these realities, we recommend gender sensitive policies on domestic and unpaid work in accordance with International Labor Organization (ILO) Recommendation 201 (2011),⁵² and implementation of universal social protection systems in accordance with ILO recommendations, in particular ILO Social Protection Floors Recommendation 202 (2012) which specifies the responsibility of states in relation to social

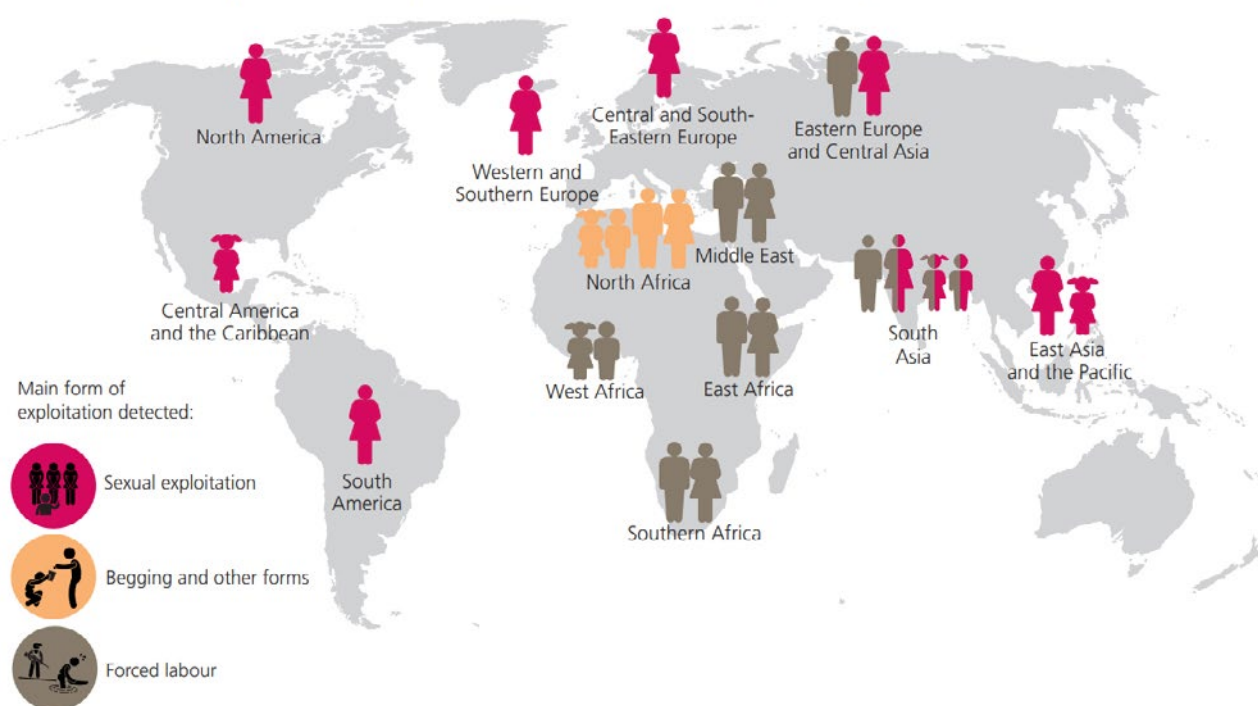
protection floors and national strategies for the extension of social security and monitoring.⁵³

Recent multilateral focus (such as at the United Nations 57th Session of the Commission for Social Development⁵⁴) and international guidance on social protection floors (such as ILO Recommendation No. 202⁵⁵) have sought to encourage national commitment to and implementation of social protection floors which would assist in the challenges and poverty perpetuated by under and unemployment. The WGEH has campaigned for these in response to homelessness, using the slogan “Social Protection Requires a Roof, Not Just a Floor.”⁵⁶ Likewise, other groups such as the Global

Alliance Against Traffic in Women (GAATW) have identified the link between human trafficking and social protection floors: “austerity measures, including the privatisation and underfunding of public services, have a detrimental impact on preventing, detecting and responding to trafficking. It is critical that public service providers have the financial and human resources to identify and respond to human trafficking.”⁵⁷ This particular alliance has also emphasized the relevancy of migrants’ rights within this topic of discussion.

Across the world the lack of secure work options paired with flawed or underdeveloped social protection systems causes families and

Main forms of exploitation and profiles of detected victims, by subregions, 2016 (or most recent)

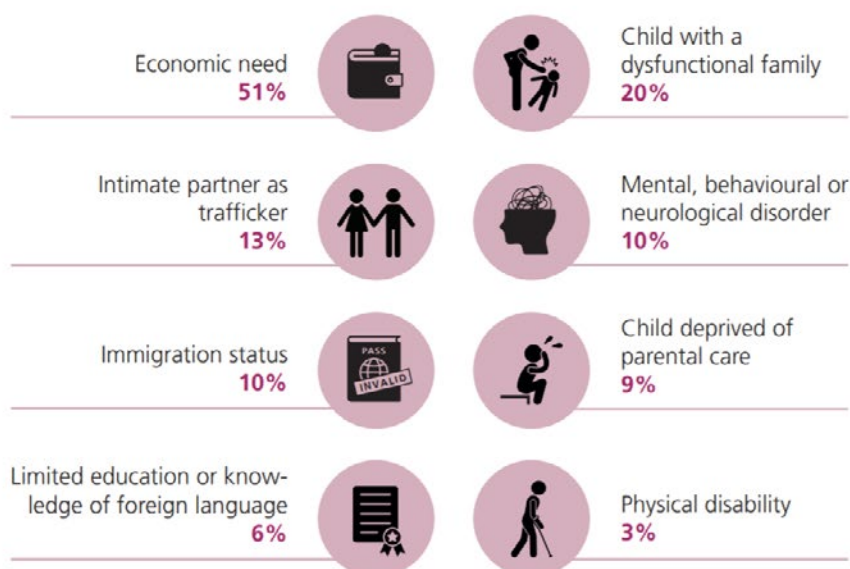


Source: UNODC elaboration of national data.

Note: The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on the map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Image source: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) 2020

FIG. 1 Percentage of cases by pre-existing factors that traffickers have taken advantage of



Source: GLOTIP collection of court case summaries, based on 233 court cases out of a total of 489 collected by UNODC for the purpose of this Report.

*Note: The same case may report multiple factors, therefore percentages may add up to more than 100.

individuals to be unable to afford adequate housing and avoid situations of trafficking. Children/Girls and youth whose families are experiencing poverty may be forced into labor at early ages, sold, promised as child brides or grooms, or run away to avoid any one of these fates, still remaining vulnerable in their new situations. Part of *Amelia, a 22 year old experiencing homelessness' testimony from an interview with UNANIMA International has been shared in *Family Homelessness Through the Lens of The United Nations 2030 Agenda Volume Two* within the "Family Homelessness and

SDG 8" section.⁵⁸ But additional insights from her story on page 96 demonstrate how money, as a means for security and housing, necessitated her sex work (even as a minor) both in in-person encounters and through technology as well as her participation in other work that traumatized her. Amelia explained that many of her experiences led her to depression and a period of drug abuse. As far as we are aware, she is still homeless and living in a tent in a forest in the USA, because now that she no longer does sex work, she is unable to afford housing from a minimum wage job.

CASE HIGHLIGHT: AUSTRALIA

**Louise Cleary, CSB, ACRATH
President and Christine Carolan,
ACRATH Executive Officer**

“There are Australian Aid labour schemes which attract workers from the Pacific region and Timor Leste into unskilled jobs primarily in the horticulture and slaughterhouse industries. Oftentimes, Australian workers are unwilling to undertake these tasks and thus, overseas workers have an increased vulnerability to exploitation. Examples of exploitation include poor wages (although a recent law passed in early December 2020 will ensure that ALL



unskilled workers must be paid a minimum wage), instances of grossly inadequate housing (too many workers in a room/house/caravan and limited access to cooking and sanitation. It is commonplace that overseas workers are charged rental costs which greatly exceed the normal rental cost of a dwelling in regional Australia.

Students who come to Australia for an education are also vulnerable to being trafficked into the sex industry. A student might arrive expecting to enroll in a particular academic or skill-based course, only to find that the course is non-existent or not what was promised. In debt for the travel, housing, living and course costs, a young female overseas-born student is highly vulnerable. Male and female students may be offered false promises of courses which are not recognised with appropriate qualifications by



Australian education standards. This leaves students prime candidates for labour and sexual exploitation and with decreased opportunities to access a whole raft of social services which would normally enable a citizen or VISA holder to economic, social and health services.

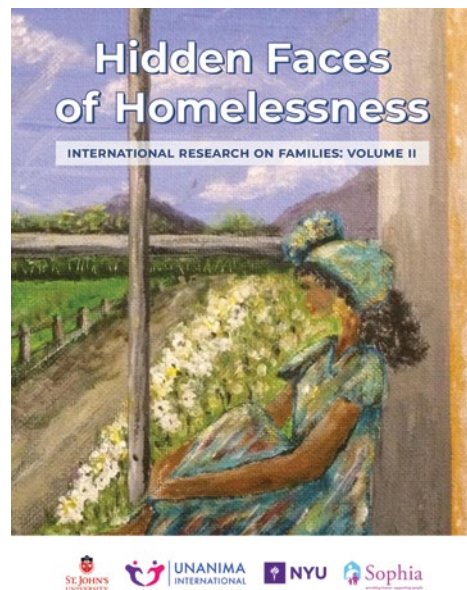
Australia has a skilled migrant program which is attractive to, for example, Korean tilers wishing to work (on a VISA) in the Australian construction industry. Greed by the brokers in a worker's country of origin and Australia can result in migrant workers being paid and then taken to a flexi teller at a bank so they can withdraw and repay their wages. Over the past three years Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans (ACRATH) has advocated to the Australian government to encourage legislation for a national scheme for the licensing of labour hire companies; the first part of this legislation has just passed in the Australian Parliament.

When working conditions and wages are unfair, workers are more vulnerable to exploitation, deceit, and can end up in debt. Often homelessness is the result, further impacting an individual's well-being and economic, social, physical, and emotional safety.

[One of ACRATH's biggest concerns in light of the COVID-19 pandemic has been] increasing incidence of homelessness and poverty amongst those who cannot access the Australian Government's safety nets. ACRATH remains critically concerned about workers in supply chains of goods that come to Australia; we've been linked with exploited migrant workers in rubber glove manufacturing in Malaysia. We are very concerned that thousands of those

workers are now testing positive to COVID-19⁵⁹ because of bad practices in the factories, and accommodation housing those workers from Myanmar, Bangladesh and Nepal."

You can read UNANIMA International's Case Profile of Family Homelessness in Australia on page in Hidden Faces of Homelessness: International Research on Families (Volume Two).

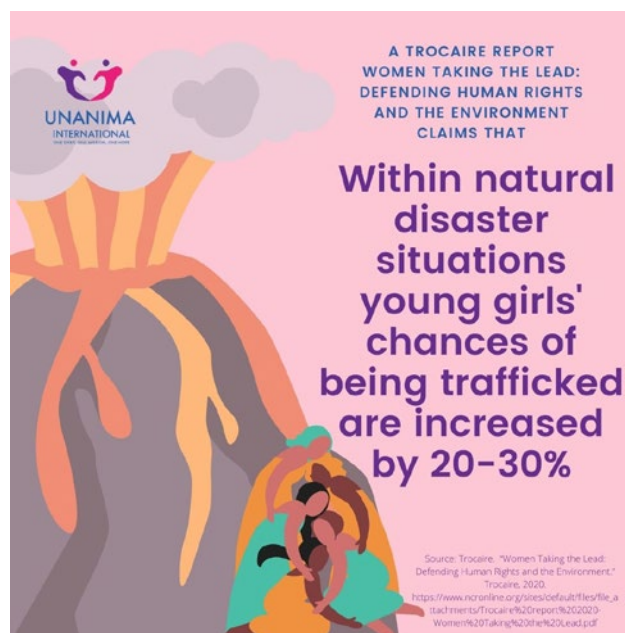


Vulnerability Underlying Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking

There are a variety of vulnerabilities which can drive Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking, which, as already established, then drive each other. Various identities and experiences can further exacerbate vulnerability. For example, the IOM stated, “migrants are most vulnerable to abuse and exploitation in situations and places where the authority of the State and society is unable to protect them, either through lack of capacity, applicable laws or simple neglect.”⁶⁰ The Arise Foundation shares that, “modern slavery can affect someone of any gender, race or age. However, it most commonly affects those made more vulnerable by insufficient access to opportunities, education, healthcare or sanitation.”⁶¹ Other vulnerabilities not listed below have been discussed elsewhere in this publication and are not limited to: being a student, working in a foreign country, housing inadequacy, and more; the vulnerabilities expanded upon below were voiced as concerns by multiple participants in interviews with UNANIMA International.

Living in Informal Settlements

Among people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, including slum dwellers, youth are particularly at risk to human trafficking. When children are living in informal settlements and general poverty, risks increase. UNANIMA International’s research trip to Mukuru Slum in Nairobi, Kenya led to insights on this topic from our research partners at Mukuru Promotion Center. Head of Education, Risper Ogutu, commented in an interview, that for students who are known to be orphaned and housed by friends or



relatives, “you may find the child pushed to prostitution.” Additionally, though primary school enrollment in Mukuru had dramatically increased in the last years, secondary school enrollment has not seen the same improvements. Common explanations for this included the tendency for older children to engage in child labor to help their families, the limited money families had would go towards younger children’s primary school fees, or by the age typical for secondary school boy children become “street boys,” while girls become employed in domestic work such as housekeeping.

Gender Inequality

A Trocaire report *Women Taking the Lead: Defending Human Rights and the Environment* claims that within natural disaster situations young girls’ chances of being trafficked are increased by 20–30%.⁶² Anne Muthoni, Projects Coordinator at Mukuru Slum Development Project reflected that, “for girls in the street sleeping it is different—there is more of a risk



of abduction and trafficking.” In an interview with UNANIMA International in November 2020, Angela Reed, RSM, identified gender as one of five paradigms that impact human trafficking. Reed’s research has largely focused on gendered violence, of which human trafficking proves a prominent facet. Inputs from ACRATH also identified being female as a risk factor for being trafficked, which is increased with age, and linked to the ‘gig’ economy present in Global North and Global South countries alike. The Nigerian National Agency for the Prohibition of Traffic in Persons details a “pull factor” for trafficking: “women’s perceived suitability for work in labour-intensive production and the growing informal sector which is characterized by low wages, casual employment, hazardous work conditions and the absence of collective bargaining mechanisms.”⁶³

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE)

Facing many adverse experiences in adolescence can also increase risks for Homelessness and Human Trafficking, and this includes being in foster care. Within the USA there is much research on these topics and shocking statistics. The National Foster Youth Initiative, “estimates that 60% of child sex trafficking victims have a history in the child welfare system.”⁶⁴ Many stories and research show that traffickers offer housing coercively, to get youth to do what they want and they prey upon people who are not from stable family or home situations.⁶⁵ There is a correlation between abuse in young years (including incest) and entry into trafficking, which is told qualitatively in the publication “I have a voice”! This was reiterated by Angela Reed, RSM in her interview with UNANIMA

International, as well as affirmed through our interviews with people with lived experience. This is one reason why early interventions and services are vital.

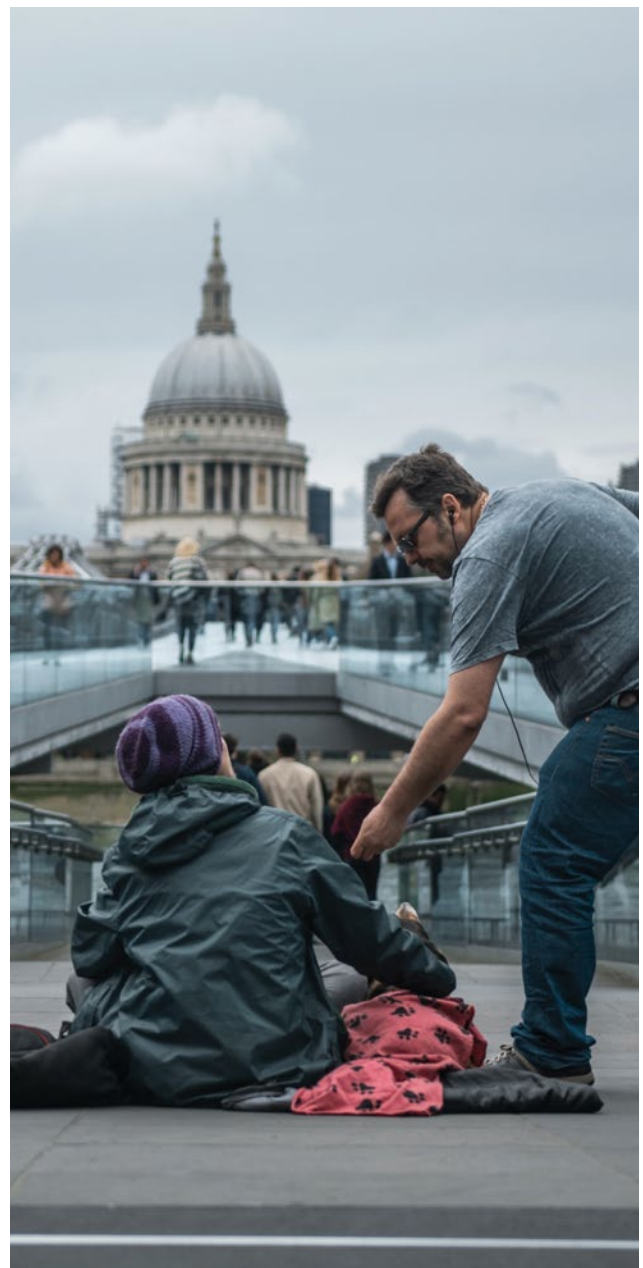
Housing Insecurity

According to The National Network for Youth—a New York City provider of services to homeless youth, “approximately one in four youth had been a victim of sex trafficking or had engaged in survival sex, and that 48% of those who engaged in a commercial sex activity did so because they didn’t have a safe place to stay.”⁶⁶ A Polaris survivor survey showed, “64% of [human trafficking] survivor respondents reported being homeless or experiencing unstable housing when they were recruited into their situation”⁶⁷

Historical Marginalization

Many situations of vulnerability are the result of historical problems facing communities, groups or even nations as a whole. *Colonization, Homelessness, and the Prostitution and Sex Trafficking of Native Women* identifies the roots of native women’s exploitation, including sexual exploitation, within colonialism, leading to the discussion of current familial instability that is a clear result of systemic abuses in areas ranging from education to security of tenure.⁶⁸ They state, “Native women might become involved in prostitution and sex trafficking due to being homeless, or due to domestic violence that puts them on the street or couch hopping, thus making them vulnerable to prostitution and trafficking.”⁶⁹ They also point towards a study, *Garden of Truth: The Prostitution and Trafficking of Native Women in Minnesota* which revealed, of 105 Native women who were prostituted and

sex trafficked, “98% were currently or previously homeless,” and “79% of the women we interviewed had been sexually abused as children by an average of 4 perpetrators.”⁷⁰ Such findings reinforce UNANIMA International’s use of a constructivist lens to analyse Family Homelessness in case studies, as social injustices perpetuated through systems are reflected in historical events underlying current realities.



“An Intersectional Approach to Ending Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking”

Jo Padgett Herz

Project Coordinator, Institute of Global Homelessness
at DePaul University (IGH)

Those who experience homelessness are susceptible to victimization by human traffickers. Youth who experience homelessness (often LGBTQ+, people of color, and those experiencing mental health problems) are especially vulnerable, due to a common reliance on survival sex. Traffickers take advantage of those who have been failed by the social systems designed to protect us. Research has shown this, but the data is not accurate or clear.⁷¹ Like homelessness, collecting data on trafficking is



difficult: survivors may feel shameful or threatened when speaking to researchers. Preventing people from experiencing homelessness is an important step in ending human trafficking. Ensuring access to safe, quality, affordable housing and the social services required to maintain stable housing offers the foundation necessary to escape trafficking. The oppressive systems of poverty are connected; it is vital that we understand how they interact. We cannot end these systems by isolating them, we must instead end them all together.



Testimony

*Kat

Single Mother
from Hungary
Exploited for Labor
in London, England



“Kat was a qualified general nurse in Hungary. She is a single mother, and when made redundant she came to London on the promise of good wages working as a cleaner. When she arrived she discovered that her Hungarian employment agency was a sham. They offered her shared rented accommodation which she would pay for through her work. The pay was too low to afford this. Quite early on the agency offered “work” in brothels as a way to make ends meet. Most of her contemporaries were single mothers with their children being looked after by grandparents in Hungary. They tended to say yes. They were desperate...

Kat eventually managed to escape through an unlocked window one night, after two years of prostitution. The window had been left ajar after a client had complained about the lack of air in the room. She registered as a self-employed cleaner with a real agency, and began working 40 hours a week to support her family.

However, she fell on hard times again after her mother fell ill, and again found herself offered work in a brothel to survive. The circumstances were so inhuman that when she again managed to escape she found herself sleeping on the streets.

This is where she was found by a support worker for Women at the Well, a charity in Kings Cross headed by one of Arise’s Trustees. She was given food, and a safe place to sleep over the weekend. The charity supported her living costs for four months, during which time she came to their drop-in centre every day to seek help. Kat said herself that if they had not paid her hostel, she would have found herself back in brothels as they were the only other places open to her. Kat has no mental health issues, and has no history [of] substance or alcohol misuse.”

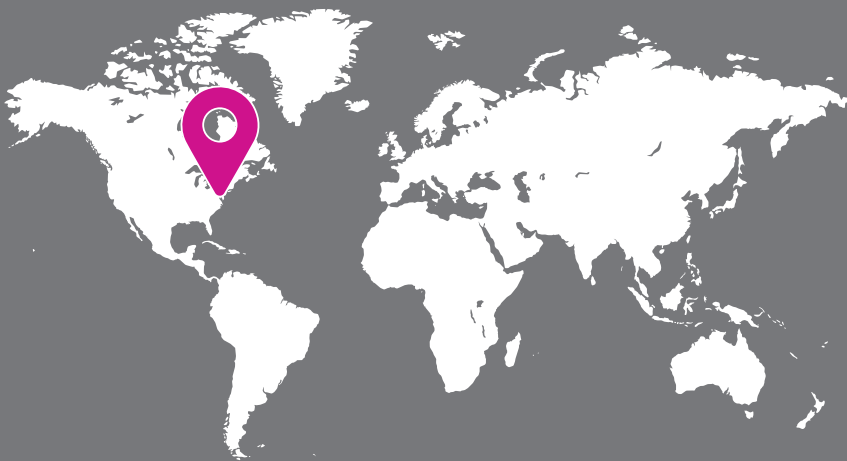
Note: This testimony was shortened and reprinted from the Arise website⁷²

*Name change

Testimony

Rebecca Lorick

Former Director of
My Sister's Place



That's one of my passions: protecting women. We [My Sister's Place] have a partnership with the University of Baltimore Human Trafficking prevention project. I love it. We have attorneys come in and talk to ladies who are at risk of being trafficked, which all homeless women, and children are at risk of being trafficked. A lot of people don't understand what human trafficking really is. They have kind of this Hollywood vision of it. And a lot of our ladies do experience that...we have women who exchange sex for housing...



We can put money towards eviction prevention, but in order for people really to sustain and make long term change, it's gonna take the supportive services. When kids grow up in a situation where they're moving from place to place or they're couch surfing, it becomes ingrained that "oh this is just the way life is supposed to be." So it takes a lot of support and guidance when they get a little bit older to say hey, you can have a single house, and this

is possible and here's the tools that you need to do so. Our approach is pretty unique in that way that we provide those supportive services. And not just supportive services around finance, or budgeting, or mental health, or substance use, but we really take a holistic approach and look at the whole person - not just poverty, not just homelessness. It's important to see the big picture...

The most prominent reason why clients in the day shelter have become homeless is lack of affordable housing... there's just not any affordable housing here [in Baltimore], SAFE, affordable housing. And there are a lot of people who go through landlords who do rooms for rent, but they're not really the safest environments. There's a lot of trafficking that goes on in those situations. So it's just really difficult for our ladies, especially those who are on social security disability and have limited incomes. It's really hard for them to get to a safe, affordable place.

Note: Rebecca participated in a formal interview with UNANIMA International in August, 2019



Image credit: Housing Authority of Baltimore City website, <https://www.habc.org>.

RESOURCES

- *On-Ramps, Intersections, and Exit Routes: A Roadmap for Systems and Industries to Prevent and Disrupt Human Trafficking* by Polaris
<https://polarisproject.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/A-Roadmap-for-Systems-and-Industries-to-Prevent-and-Disrupt-Human-Trafficking-Housing-and-Homelessness-Systems.pdf>
- *Forced migration, human trafficking, and human security* by Farhan Navid Yousaf
<https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0011392117736309>
- *Ending Child Labour, Forced Labour and Human Trafficking in Global Supply Chains* by International Labour Organization (ILO)
https://www.ilo.org/ipec/Informationresources/WCMS_716930/lang--en/index.htm

The background of the page is a photograph showing the lower legs and feet of several people walking on a brick-paved surface. Long, dark shadows are cast across the bricks, indicating low sunlight. A solid purple rectangle is positioned on the left side of the image, containing the page number and title.

05

Child Trafficking

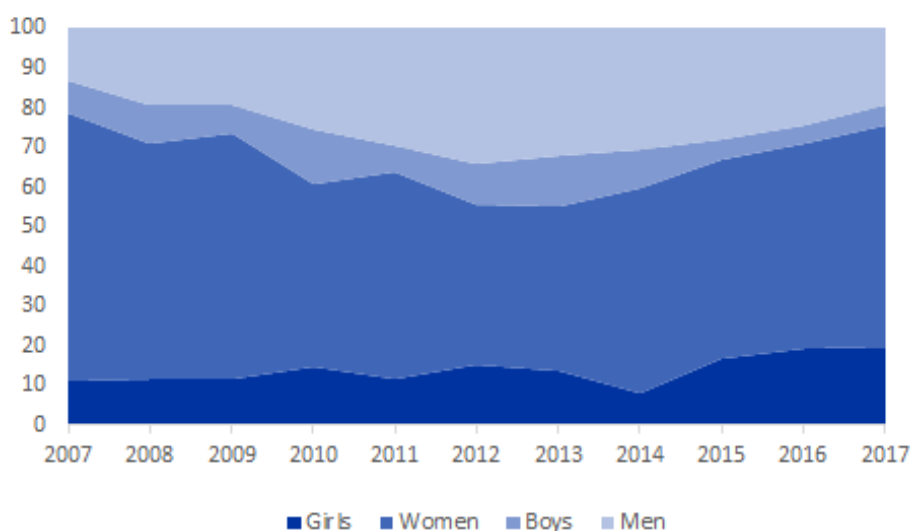
THE IOM'S GLOBAL MIGRATION PORTAL'S

data, “indicates a recent increase in child trafficking, for both girl and boy demographics,” and that the largest age group is 15 to 17 years old.⁷³ Though sex trafficking of minors is a huge issue, additional manifestations of child trafficking include child marriages (of both girls and boys) and child labor trafficking. In May of 2020, the nonprofit organization Polaris asserted that isolating children may lead to more trafficking; they make this argument in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic and increasing internet access and activity for children.⁷⁴ Isolation of minors does increase vulnerability to trafficking and other risks even when the internet is not a factor. In an interview with UNANIMA International in August of 2020, Sister Maree Marsh, CSB (a Brigidine Sister and member of ACRATH) specified that one of the situations where children are most susceptible to being trafficked is when either one of both of their parents have died, when there is an “unstable environment,” and they “want to escape that.”



Another common situation is when “there has been a lot of violence in the home and they want to escape them.” While parts of escaping situations may be running away into homelessness or situations of human trafficking, inappropriate and dangerous engagement and exposure through technology and internet content is another aspect of this issue.

Gender and age profile of detected victims, 2007-2017 (%)



Source: The Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC) (2019).

Note: The data in this chart are from the Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC); the global data hub on human trafficking featuring the largest case level datasets on human trafficking from different organizations around the world. For more information, go to www.ctdatacollaborative.org.

Childrens' vulnerability to trafficking and experiences of child trafficking can also vary between genders. The book *Human Trafficking, The Ultimate Slavery: Sexual, Labour and Debt Bondage* details the everyday life of a trafficked girl, listing, "violence and rape or threats thereof; threats against her family; debts - fabricated or real; diseases especially STI's and HIV/Aids; forced abortions; beatings and violence by clients; servicing 18 hours per day."⁷⁵ There is also a difference in the experiences and risks for children based on where they are growing up. In some developing countries, children are taken from rural areas to do domestic work within cities.⁷⁶ Informal settlements, where more residents are likely to lack identification documents, put children further at risk.

Child Labor

The demand for Children/Girls is often different from that which exists for women or adults, due to the specialized labor tasks they may be used for, or the sexual preferences of the exploiters. Journalist Nicholas Kristof once reported, "fear of AIDS has nurtured markets



for younger children who customers think are less likely to have HIV."⁷⁷ In places where informal economies are prevalent, children often try to earn money, even during school hours, through labor. Anecdotes and observations of this situation within Malawi were shared with UNANIMA International in an interview with board member Sister Pereka Nyirenda, RSC, who saw child labor increase specifically following an environmental disaster which affected the local economy.

Despite international laws which forbid child labor, the many national laws aligned with this, and even promises from industries to put an end to child labor in their supply chains, child labor has increased in many countries around the world. In October, 2020 the Washington Post article, *U.S. report: Much of the world's chocolate supply relies on more than 1 million child workers*, shared, "child labor among agricultural households in cocoa-growing areas of Ivory Coast and Ghana, the two primary suppliers, increased from 31% to 45% between 2008 and 2019, according to the Department of Labor survey."⁷⁸ The COVID-19 context heightens

concerns that were previously fading because of advancements in employment rates, poverty reduction, school enrollment, and the like (in various jurisdictions). The *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020*, published in January 2021, includes in its preface: “with many millions more women, men and children in every part of the world out of school, out of work, without social support and facing diminished prospects, targeted action is urgently needed to stop crimes like trafficking in persons from adding to the pandemic’s toll.”⁷⁹



PERSPECTIVE

Public Health Influences Trafficking

Societal factors such as public health may play a role in the prevalence or persistence of child trafficking. Currently with the COVID-19 pandemic, we must have priority concern for children, and especially the most vulnerable children. Rafferty (2020), *Promoting the welfare, protection, and care of victims of child trafficking during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic*, provides important contextualization of how past pandemics have impacted children, not only in the areas of health and well-being, but also in social, economic and political areas, and focuses on the impacts specifically on victims of child trafficking.⁸⁰ This source identifies the correlated increased rates of trafficking beginning during public health crises, extending into the years after, and suggests there are factors from those crises which directly contribute to these increases. United Nations advocacy and resource development since the COVID-19 pandemic have been significant and diverse, yet we are seeing family, communal, and even country-level susceptibility to trafficking, homelessness, and poverty which suggest the public health influence on trafficking is significant.



Testimony

Elizabeth Mwangi

Programs Manager
at Reuben Center



“Even in research you don’t find much about Mukuru, not so much as other slums in Nairobi. Last year the social workers [at our organization] reported about 300 cases of abuse – not necessarily sexual, but it could be physical, mental and even sexual – we’ve had these cases...Mostly this happens within the community not within the facility. We find most of these cases are people close to the kids, they’re not strangers...We need more resources. For instance, we have to make what we have or redefine it in a way that a child understands it, [which] requires funding. We need it to be translated to Kiswahili and also to add pictures to help the kids get it. Also in terms of training, people must understand this is necessary for staff, community, and even kids. Also find we are often not able to go so far with the case. Once they report it to the police that is it. [We] need to involve those in administrative positions, like the chief of police, to train them and sensitize them about child protection, because at the end of the day, the cases are reported to men...”



Photos from UNANIMA International fieldwork in Mukuru Informal Settlement, Nairobi, Kenya in January of 2020.

Note: Elizabeth participated in a formal interview with UNANIMA International in January 2020.

“Protecting Young People”

Sister Nancy Downing, CND, Esq.

Executive Director of Covenant House New York

For decades, youth experiencing homelessness in the United States and Canada



remained largely unseen and not talked about. Even when a spotlight was being shown on human trafficking in North America, homeless youth were largely left out of any trafficking conversation. At Covenant House, the largest privately funded agency serving homeless youth in the Americas, it was commonly believed that youth who experienced homelessness were likely to be more vulnerable to human trafficking, yet there was little or no research or data to support this assumption informed only by experience. Additionally, it was a long held belief at Covenant House, as reflected in its mission statement, that supporting youth with unconditional love and absolute respect and providing a refuge from the streets would safeguard youth from exploitation and give them the opportunity to flourish.

In 2013, Covenant House New York, with the help of Fordham University, completed a study of the prevalence of human trafficking among youth experiencing homelessness. Using the U.S. Victims of Trafficking and Violence Protection Act's definition of human trafficking,⁸¹ it was determined that 12% of the youth interviewed experienced being sex trafficked and 2.9% experienced labor trafficking.⁸² The results, while startling to most, were not surprising to those who worked with homeless youth at Covenant House.

Subsequently, in 2014, Covenant House International began exploring opportunities to replicate this study on a broader scale. It engaged The Field Center for Children's Policy, Practice & Research at the University of Pennsylvania and the Loyola University Modern Slavery Research Project to interview nearly 1000 homeless youth, ages 17-25, across 13 cities in the U.S. and Canada.⁸³ The 13 cities study revealed that nearly one in five (19.4%), homeless youth interviewed were victims of human trafficking.

Beyond identifying the connectivity between homelessness and trafficking, the studies identified the vulnerabilities that made youth more susceptible to being trafficked. These included: the need for money to pay for basic need; lack of job opportunities; gender (female), gender identity and sexual orientation (LGBTQ youth were disproportionately vulnerable).⁸⁴ And perhaps the two most important factors in protecting youth from exploitation are also the most basic: having a safe place to live and having supportive, caring parents, family or adults in their lives.

Consequently, to protect young people from becoming victims of human trafficking we must at very least, as Covenant House has long known and practiced, ensure that our children have supportive, loving, caring adults in their lives and a safe place to sleep at night.

Testimony

Cathy

Philippines



"Although I was loved by my grandmother, it's not the same as the love of a mother that I really wanted. If I could turn back time, I would love to have my mother, even for one month, so that I could feel her love. I attended school up until my second year of high school. My grandmother was the one who bore the cost of my schooling, though sometimes my father would give her money. My aunties really resented me because of the care my grandmother gave me. They were cruel to me and teased me and told me I was going to end up a prostitute like my mother...When I was a teenager, I left school because I had told my grandma that I would help earn money. I started work as a waitress. It was during this time that I had an affair with a married man. His wife was out to get me so I needed to leave that place. An acquaintance of mine asked me if I wanted to work in Cebu. I told him that it was so far away and that I was only 16, but he arranged for two other friends of mine who were also minors to come to Cebu with me. He told us we would earn good money as waitresses but when we arrived in Cebu we were transported in a van to a club...For three weeks I was just dancing on the stage and then one night I was told that somebody had 'bar fined' me. I did not know what this meant. A more experienced woman explained that a man had

bought me...I gave all my earnings to the two women who were my managers; this included any tips that were given to me. They said that I had plenty of debts. My debts included payment for living in the apartment, my food, clothing and make up. I could not escape because there were people who watched what we were doing – we called them 'watchers'..."

Note: This testimony was shortened and reprinted from the publication "I Have a Voice: Trafficked Women in Their Own Words"



Artwork by Sister Venus Marie Pegar SFX, reprinted from "I Have a Voice: Trafficked Women in Their Own Words"

Testimony

***Salaam**



Salaam had looked forward to her January holiday. She had left her family's home country at age 5, on a refugee journey to Australia, and had very few memories of her homeland or of her extended family. Her parents suggested the holiday as an opportunity before commencing her final school year, and S eagerly jumped at their suggestion and the gift of a return airline ticket. What began as an adventure for S, and a chance to get to know her family, ended in a life-changing experience that became fraught with danger. Upon arrival at her destination airport, Salaam was met by one of her uncles who embraced her warmly. She was expecting a welcoming family home environment; instead, she was entering a compound surrounded by chain-mesh fences that were 2 meters high. Locking the gate behind them, her uncle demanded Salaam hand over her passport, return airline ticket, mobile phone and other documents that she had with her. Salaam paused and looked questioning at her uncle, only to be told that safety and security were an issue, and these important items would be locked in the family's safe until they were next needed. Salaam was very quickly set to work by the women of the household, given cleaning and childcare duties which occupied her whole day, and soon nearly two weeks had passed without her having a chance to leave the compound except to visit the local church to attend choir practice.

She asked her uncle about her return home. She was told that she was home, and that this was to be her home until her marriage; she was to marry - a 60-year old widower - and it was expected that she would provide him with children. Salaam was utterly terrified, and without thinking began to argue with her uncle, stating that her parents would never allow this. That was the first of a number of beatings for Salaam, and she was told that her parents were part of this plan. She felt totally devastated that she had been betrayed in this way. Whilst captive in the family compound for 5 months, Salaam devised a way to contact her school; the local church had a computer and wifi access. Successfully emailing the school, wheels were set in motion for her to return. A contact, who was sympathetic to Salaam's situation, helped her to escape late one night, and she was safely escorted to the airport to fly back to Australia. Her life in Australia, however, was now changed forever. Salaam returned to navigate a new world...a world without her parents or a home, dealing with mental illness, and feeling totally disconnected from all she knew. Salaam's repeated homelessness and severe mental state led to severely precarious accommodation choices – at least twice she saw the need to access very temporary housing via access to dating apps.

Note: This testimony was submitted by ACRATH and shortened

*Name change

GOOD PRACTICE

Leading Organization: ECPAT



ECPAT International is an international network of organizations that are working to end the sexual exploitation of children, which has members in 104 countries. Their website states, “we work at all levels, supporting shelters for survivors, training and supporting law enforcement, influencing governments and conducting a wide range of research. At the heart of all our work is every child’s right to live free from sexual exploitation and abuse.”⁸⁵ Notably, members of ECPAT may be coalitions, or individual organizations, making the membership diverse and able to report on and impact local, national, regional, and international efforts to end trafficking.

For more information about ECPAT International: <https://www.ecpat.org/>



RESOURCES

- *Online Sexual Exploitation of Children: Hidden in Plain Sight* by John Tanagho, Director of International Justice Mission (IJM)'s Center to End Online Sexual Exploitation of Children
- Primary Prevention Program by A21
<https://www.a21.org/offer.php?intid=5141>
- Child Bill of Rights by ECPAT International
<https://www.ecpat.org/what-we-do/bill-of-rights/#/en>



06 Migration

MIGRATION CAN OCCUR THROUGH

trafficking, sometimes with victims unaware of where they are being taken, and in some cases unable to speak the language of the country they are in. These factors can present barriers to seeking assistance, or accessing justice. Other groups, including migrants and individuals or families seeking asylum, are vulnerable to trafficking. When one lacks access to housing, social protection, or identification, these risks increase. Pope Francis has stated specifically that financial corruption is one reason why Refugees and Migrants become victims of trafficking.⁸⁶ Archbishop Paul Gallagher has asserted that, “human trafficking is inextricably linked to statelessness, conflict, misery, corruption, a lack of education as well as migration and smuggling.”⁸⁷ A Catholic News Source, Crux, reported in 2019 that, “Many women and minors who left African and eastern European countries to escape poverty have been forced to work as prostitutes in western Europe.”⁸⁸ A Ghanaian woman who shared her testimony commented that, “the ‘road’ had become our home where we could be selected

or rejected, admired or despised, sold or used like second hand clothes.”⁸⁹

Within the United Nations coordinated appeal, *Global Humanitarian Response Plan: COVID-19*, it is expressed with concern that refugees and migrants in irregular situations are particularly at risk of trafficking among other risks, and “many families and people with specific needs among the refugee and migrant populations have been exposed to discrimination, violence, exploitation and abuse throughout their displacement.”⁹⁰ In the context of the COVID-19 pandemic America Magazine reported that many pre-teen and teenagers are being abandoned when their families cannot care for them, with notable evidence of this in Latin America.⁹¹ Homelessness and displacement can also cause family separation. Border Security Report comments on the safety risks for people displaced by conflict and violent situations, which pose their own risks for trafficking: “even once migrants have fled the immediate fighting, when people are on the move, this vulnerability persists while migrants





Source: CTDC Global Dataset: Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative, 2020.

Note: The data in this chart are from the Counter Trafficking Data Collaborative (CTDC); the global data hub on human trafficking featuring the largest case level datasets on human trafficking from different organizations around the world. For more information, go to www.ctdatacollaborative.org.

Source: <https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/human-trafficking>

are dislocated from community and family support structures, and are thereby typically without access to legitimate forms of employment, legal status and social protection.”⁹²

The UNHCR connect the vulnerability of some migrants and other relevant groups to the achievement of the United Nations 2030 Agenda. “In a world increasingly shaped by climate change, poverty and conflict, the SDGs cannot be achieved without taking into account the rights and needs of refugees, internally displaced and stateless people.”⁹³ It is necessary to explore migration in the context of development and UN proceedings. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) released a

report titled *Migration in the 2030 Agenda* in 2017 which is a helpful resource.⁹⁴ The existing literature on migrants and trafficking displays the many layers of vulnerability, including migration status being leveraged against victims afraid of persecution, unable to return to countries of origin, or unaware of their labor rights.⁹⁵ Recently released statistics from the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2020* convey the prevalence of migrants in detected victims of trafficking globally: 65% in Western and Southern Europe, 60% in the Middle East, 55% in East Asia and the Pacific, 50% in Central and South-Eastern Europe, and 25% in North America.⁹⁶

“The Exposure and Vulnerability of Migrants to Homelessness and Trafficking”



Cecilie Kern, MIA Global Policy and Research
Advocate at Mercy International Association;
Vice-Chair NGO Committee on Migration

There are a lot of similarities in the struggles of migrants and people experiencing homelessness; there's a lack of social integration and social inclusion and a loss of social networks, a loss in a sense of belonging, or home. Similar to homelessness, there's no single internationally agreed definition of who is a migrant and so there are always questions such as “how do you measure this?” and “what data are you using?”. Invisibility, especially for irregular migrants who are already laying low, means getting data and creating policies to reach this population are even more difficult. Not having a definition of migration, like a single definition, has had benefits and some drawbacks; depending on the context, that definition can be more or less inclusive of people. And Mercy International Association have been able to work around it and just try to keep as broad and inclusive a definition for ourselves. Having a specific definition can be useful in some respects, in terms of measuring, data collection, and disaggregation of data, but when discussing provision of services to different people, it can get more complicated; under international law, refugees have entitlements that other people on the move don't, so governments are cautious not to conflate “forced migrant” or “migrant in a



vulnerable situation” with a refugee, who have an international convention dedicated to them.⁹⁷

In natural disasters, women and girls tend to get trapped in situations where, especially those living in poverty, are not able to easily leave those areas. In their need to migrate to a safer place and provide basic needs to their families, they can be vulnerable to human trafficking. Additionally, being in precarious situations where they have lost their home or their land increases their vulnerability to being trafficked. As more natural disasters, and more “human made disasters” occur, I am sure that that vulnerability will increase. In extractive development projects, when big corporations come in to collect resources or build a dam, for example, it displaces people, it disrupts their traditional livelihoods, and that increases vulnerability to trafficking. The NGO Committee on Migration⁹⁸ has subcommittees with topics relevant to the intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking: 1. Xenophobia and Social Inclusion, 2. Climate-Induced Displacement, 3. Migrant and Refugee Children, 4. Mixed Migration and Migrants in Vulnerable Situations

There are specific attributes of migrants, as a group, that can cause increased exposure and vulnerability to homelessness and social



exclusion, in that migrants often aren't entitled to the same kind of benefits and assistance as citizens and often face barriers to accessing public housing. That is for a variety of reasons. There are policies that exclude non-citizens, and a lack of social networks. A huge issue is fear of accessing public services, especially for undocumented migrants. Additionally, there is lack of information in languages that migrants can understand, and then the issue of stigma. Migrants who already experience xenophobia and social exclusion for being foreign are also further stigmatized and marginalized when they become homeless, or when they seek access to services related to housing.

Inadequate recognition of skills and qualifications that migrants have, lead to them working in low wage jobs, which creates income insecurity, which can lead to homelessness. And that kind of same income insecurity also ties into human trafficking in countries of origin, transit, and destination. It is something that happens everywhere.

A lack of access to social protections that enable a person's ability to access comprehensive healthcare, mental healthcare, education, housing services, or labor protections, can trap migrant domestic workers in exploitative situations, especially women migrant workers in

the informal economy. Domestic and care workers already experience decreased opportunity and exclusion from labor protections, and because of their informality, they have insecure contracts, low wages, and insecure working environments. Without those protections, they're more vulnerable to discrimination and gender-based violence, and rather than experiencing safe and adequate conditions, women migrant workers may find themselves in conditions that can be classified as situations of trafficking. An example of this could be live-in domestic workers who experience violence in their workplaces but may not have alternative housing options, and nowhere to escape to. In some countries, if they do leave their employer, they violate the terms of their visa which means that they become irregular, or they become undocumented, which then again increases risks of other forms of trafficking including sexual exploitation.

Clearly there's a criminalization of migration occurring, where people are detained or deported without due process just for crossing an international border. There's also a phenomenon where governments are criminalizing people who provide assistance to irregular migrants and asylum seekers. So civil society organizations and other entities, people, individuals, communities that provide safe shelter for migrants in transit and destination countries, can be charged with migrant smuggling. That happens quite a lot in the Mediterranean and other parts of Europe.⁹⁹ There was a case in the United States that didn't have to do with

shelter, but rather with the provision of water in the desert. We received grassroots testimonies of migrants who live in insecure housing and overcrowded conditions, and that their inadequate housing situation increased exposure to COVID-19. There were sometimes inadequate water and sanitation facilities, and no ability to social distance. These kinds of conditions in inadequate housing are particularly an issue for irregular migrants who may fear immigration enforcement if they speak up for their rights, migrants living in highly-populated migrant labor housing, those in administrative detention, or refugees in camps.

There is truly a need—and this needs to happen regardless of COVID-19—for improved reception and information centers for migrants and asylum seekers, to make sure that they are aware of their rights and have information about housing and their rights as tenants. And then of course, firewalls between public services and immigration enforcement are needed to make sure that if there is a violation of rights, or if someone needs to access education, healthcare, housing, or adequate housing, there are no immigration enforcement consequences for people asking for help and claiming their rights.

Note: this analysis was given through a virtual dialogue with UNANIMA International

“The COVID-19 Impact on Migration, Homelessness, and Human Trafficking”

Alejandra Camacho Vega

UNANIMA International Volunteer based in Mexico

Owing to the COVID-19 outbreak, in April 2020



after Mexico's government declared a public health emergency the United States government has deported almost 65,000 people to Mexican territory under the U.S. Code Title 42 that deals with public health.¹⁰⁰ It is important to specify that not all the deported individuals to the Mexican territory are Mexicans. For this matter, those that are arriving in the country without any knowledge about Mexico, are encountering vulnerable situations of homelessness, which can lead to human trafficking.



The growing number of deported people has had a harsh impact on the capacity of shelters during the pandemic. Because of this, some migrants have decided to move between several Northern Mexican cities, while many others have ended up not finding anywhere to stay for several days when they have recently been deported. As this migration crisis continues, it is crucial to offer migrants economic recovery assets even if they decide to pursue their migration process in the United States, or alternatively if they decide to settle in Mexico, or any other country.



**We support
Migrants' Rights
and the
Global Compact
for Migration (GCM)**

**#hiddenfacesofhomelessness
#makingahome4everyone**

Testimony

*Omorose



"My name is Omorose. I was born in Benin, Nigeria in 1989. Both my parents died when I was very young and so I was raised by my grandmother. She could not afford to send me to school so I stayed with her each day selling oranges by the roadside. As a teenager I got a job in a salon. One of my customers was a glamorous business woman I called 'Auntie'. She offered to take me to Europe where I could work for a rich family and go to school. My grandmother did not want me to leave, but we were struggling to make ends meet and I was so excited by this vision of a 'new life' that I agreed.

In the airport Auntie gave me a document that had my picture on it, but a different name. It was crowded and confusing at the airport. Auntie said to just trust her and follow. After three days we got through the last airport – Dublin airport. We went to a house where I was taken to a room and told to get some sleep. The next day Auntie told me that there was a problem with the family I was supposed to work for – they did not need me anymore. She explained that I owed her a lot of money for the travel to Europe and that to pay her back I would have to work in her business: prostitution."

Note: This testimony was shortened and reprinted from the Ruhama website¹⁰¹

*Name change

Testimony

*Marie

Trafficked
Through Coercion



"I want to tell this story about what happened in Syria." Marie was recruited in Manila by an agency that promised her domestic work in Romania. As she had never been on a plane before, it was only after passing through airport security that she realised her flight was not bound for Romania, but Aleppo, Syria. 'But if we go back to our family how can we pay back the money that we borrowed? I can't quit, you know. I decide to go to Syria.' On arriving in Syria, the receiving agency confiscated Marie's mobile and assigned her to a family of 13. 'They said "You cannot use a mobile here in Syria. Read your contract. Your contract here in Syria is 3 years. You don't have days off. You cannot call your husband, your family!"'

For 8 months, Marie lived in domestic servitude. She was verbally and physically abused. 'I work for 8 months and we don't have a salary. We are like slaves, you know?'

After suffering burns to her face inflicted by her employer, Marie was admitted to hospital. Despite death threats from her agency, Marie decided to run away. She managed to get through the Lebanese border and find protection at the Philippines embassy in Beirut, before being returned to her family in the Philippines."

Note: This testimony was shortened and reprinted from the Arise website¹⁰²

*Name change

Figure 1: Conflict as a root cause of trafficking



Source: *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons (2018)*, UNODC, p.12 and Booklet 2, p. 5.

RESOURCES

- *Migrants and Their Vulnerability to Human Trafficking, Modern Slavery and Forced Labour* by International Organization for Migration (IOM)
https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/migrants_and_their_vulnerability.pdf
- Migration Data Portal:
Human Trafficking by Global Migration Data Portal
<https://migrationdataportal.org/themes/human-trafficking>
- *Covid-19 Fuels Vulnerabilities to Human Trafficking and Smuggling for Refugees and Migrants from Venezuela: Key messages to community, refugees and migrants* by Response for Venezuelans
<https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/76845.pdf>



07 The COVID-19 Pandemic Context

A HRBA, AND SOCIAL JUSTICE RESPONSE to Human Trafficking and Family Homelessness is necessary, and the context of the COVID-19 has increased many political actors' feelings of urgency around these issues. Many experts and anti-trafficking advocates have expressed their concerns that Human Trafficking will increase during COVID-19.¹⁰³ With economic disruption to formal and informal economies, risk to trafficking has increased, and in varying forms—including through online means. The rise of human trafficking within the COVID-19 pandemic has been predicted globally and evidenced in several countries where civil society and other organizations and researchers' attentions and resources have remained dedicated to the topic, despite concerns elsewhere that victims will be less easily identified and these realities further ignored. The increasing of situations and vulnerabilities that may result in human trafficking, including both visible and invisible forms of homelessness as drivers, as well as formally reported cases, are causes for great concern.



Emerging Data and Research Internationally

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report: *Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Trafficking in Persons: Preliminary Findings and Messaging Based on Rapid Stocktaking* states, “essential and practical operations to support [victims of human trafficking] have become a challenge, due to countries adjusting their priorities during the pandemic...significant numbers of people who were already vulnerable find themselves in even more precarious circumstances.”¹⁰⁴ The UNODC explicitly mention unemployment and finances within this discussion of concerns, and go on to specify, “children are at heightened risk of exploitation, especially since school closures have not only precluded many from access to education but also from a main source of shelter and nourishment,” which presents both in-person and online threats.¹⁰⁵ Journalist Elizabeth Thompson of CBS News reported in July of 2020, *Child sex exploitation is on the rise in Canada during the pandemic*, stating “police and experts say abusers have been taking advantage of children spending more time online.”¹⁰⁶ Thompson went on to describe findings from a service operated under the Canadian Centre for Child Protection. “Stephen Sauer, director of Cybertip.ca, said his organization saw an 81% spike over April, May and June in reports from youth who had been sexually exploited, and reports of people trying to sexually abuse children...’ It seems to be an epidemic right now online,’ he said.”¹⁰⁷ These increases do not appear to be isolated, but rather pervasive in Canada as well as other countries.

In the United States useful analyses have shown other increases. According to Polaris, which has been tracking data reported to the



U.S. National Human Trafficking Hotline, “Trafficking cases handled by the Trafficking Hotline increased by more than 40% in the month following the shelter-in-place orders compared to the same period in 2019, and the number of situations in which people needed immediate emergency shelter nearly doubled.” There are necessary service, policy, and crisis responses for these findings.¹⁰⁸ One recommendation of UNODC is, “despite the anticipated slowing down of economies because of COVID-19 and the resulting pressures on national budgets, countries must continue supporting anti-trafficking work and adapt their assistance programmes to the new and extraordinary circumstances created by the pandemic and its aftermath.”¹⁰⁹ Anti-trafficking work includes the engagement of law enforcement in its prevention and imputation; some of this must be achieved through the online realm.

In Latin America during COVID-19 reportedly, “perpetrators have also changed how they lure and abuse young women, mainly by using digital devices.”¹¹⁰ In the article *How Covid-19 Made Sex Trafficking in Latin America Much Worse*, grassroots voices from Latin America are shared, including women religious working within networks against trafficking. Sister Carmen Ugarte Garcia is one such woman, who shared that Human Trafficking, “has always been something hard and scary for those women. Now it’s even more difficult, given that throughout the continent the police and the courts are much more inaccessible, with the imposition of social distancing measures...Many women are homeless, so they have to prostitute themselves to pay the rent. Others are forced by their own husbands to do so—something that has increased during the Covid-19 crisis.”¹¹¹

“Preventing Scenarios for Exploitation”

Jacqueline Shapiro, CSTIP Steering Committee Member
and UN Representative for ECPAT-USA



Human trafficking is one of the most profitable illicit businesses in the world. The ILO acknowledges that its estimate of \$150 billion dollars profit annually is probably low because much of trafficking is a hidden crime. It is estimated that 20–40 million individuals are victims of human trafficking. Similar to the annual profits, the total amount of trafficked people is likely much greater than identified. Traffickers prey on the most vulnerable populations in every society. One group very much at risk is the 100 million street children worldwide. Many live on the streets either alone or with family; some visit family but spend many days and nights on the street because of poverty or abuse at home. Additionally, children in institutionalized care are at risk of returning to the streets. Though such homelessness has historically been largely an urban phenomenon, increased conflict and COVID-19 have increasingly left children destitute and orphaned everywhere. Children of the streets have little protection and lack both resources or any one to turn to. This isolation provides the perfect scenario for exploitation.

Providing housing, food and health care are, of course, the first line of defense for protecting homeless children, but a more systemic solution to assisting this neglected resource of the world's future lies in providing educational and vocational opportunities for them to thrive.

The Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons¹¹² is a coalition of non-governmental organizations working at the United Nations that advocates with Member States and its partners to commit at both the international and national levels to actions that will end human trafficking. Our activities highlight the complex intersection of the political will of Member States and UN agencies, the allocation of resources, the development and execution of legal and judicial mandates, the critical role of the private sector and the importance of civil society support in efforts to end human trafficking.



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CASE HIGHLIGHT: LATIN AMERICA

This is a translation and summary of the Efeminista article “La pandemia agudizó la trata local de mujeres y niñas en América Latina”¹¹³ (“The pandemic exacerbated local trafficking in women and girls in Latin America”) provided by Andrea Grynberg

The pandemic has made Human Trafficking worse, but there is now a prevalence of moving women between provinces within the country of origin. The article says that this is a consequence of more restrictions on mobility and the economic crisis; additionally, they are seeing more women and girls as victims of this crime. They say that in some countries in Latin America and the Caribbean, more than 50% of the victims are girls.

According to the UN 93% of the victims of human trafficking in Latin America were found within their own country, and this has increased with the pandemic—mostly in Ecuador, Peru and Bolivia. They are intercepted and captured in the cities where they live, meaning they don’t have to cross big distances. However, because of the economic crisis there are more women who are crossing the border illegally, and in exchange for that they have to give sex or work for the person who helps them cross the border. This “transactional sex” is increasing as a result of the pandemic. This is now prevalent among women from Venezuela and Columbia in situations of great poverty, which makes it easier for them to be exploited.

The article suggests that what is more worrisome, especially for the victims who are

immigrants, is that they are exposed to contracting the virus and other serious health issues, because they have been prostituted without any protection, and the services for justice and health have been reduced during the pandemic, making them even more vulnerable.

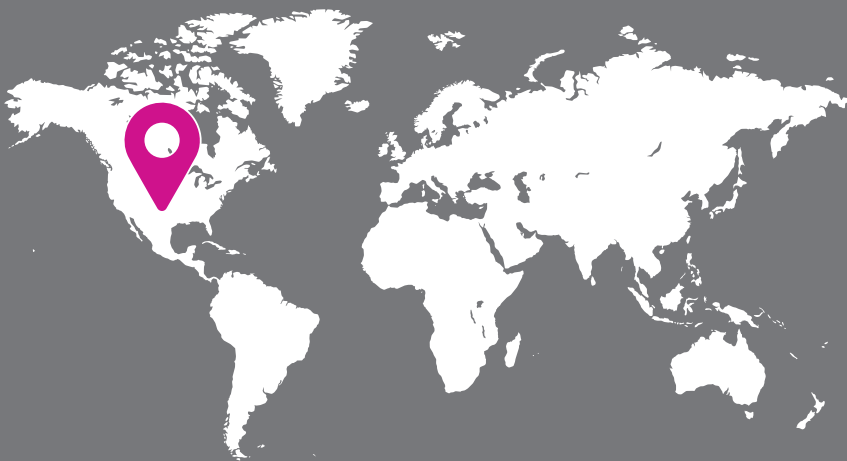
In countries like Ecuador, families sometimes contribute to the situation of trafficking. They force their daughters to work for pimps because they need the money or they need less people in the household. The article asserts that because resources are limited in Latin America and the governments are working to manage the pandemic, they are not paying a lot of attention to what is going on with human trafficking, and so the victims are more vulnerable and have less help. And the same is true for international organizations: as they are taking care of the pandemic and paying attention to that, they’re not taking care of the victims of human trafficking. They are also saying because people are staying more at home, social media is becoming another good way for pimps to capture more people to exploit.



Testimony

Bridget Banning

Trauma Therapist,
USA



We have a department specifically for our sex trafficking survivors...so now our priority is making sure that they have shelter, are fed, and receiving education about safe sex practices. I know unfortunately, out of necessity there has been a return to sex work...and that is just a reality we have to face...the priority is making sure they have the resources to engage in sex work as safely as possible... Folks aren't really able to engage as much in therapy right now... It has been a shift in how we normally engage in case management with that population. A lot of the women who returned to sex work were "non-essential employees." They didn't have that income and they turned to the only other way that they knew to quickly make income. But a lot of folks who would normally be customers are no longer engaging because of some of the fears around COVID-19, absolutely.

Note: Bridget participated in a formal interview with members of the NGO Working Group to End Homelessness in March, 2020

RESOURCES

- Talitha Kum Study, Prayer and Action Packet: Neoliberalism and Human Trafficking in a Time of COVID by Talitha Kum
https://www.talithakum.info/files/documentdownload/2020/ENG_Neoliberalism_Priority2FINAL.pdf
- Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Trafficking in Persons: Preliminary findings and messaging based on rapid stocktaking by UNODC
<https://www.un.org/ruleoflaw/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/Thematic-Brief-on-COVID-19-EN-ver.21.pdf>
- Global Humanitarian Response Plan COVID-19 by the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA)
<https://www.unocha.org/sites/unocha/files/Global-Humanitarian-Response-Plan-COVID-19.pdf>

A photograph of a cluttered desk. In the center is a laptop with a screen showing a blurry image. The desk is covered with various items, including papers, a mouse, and other small objects. A purple rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing the text '08 Technology'.

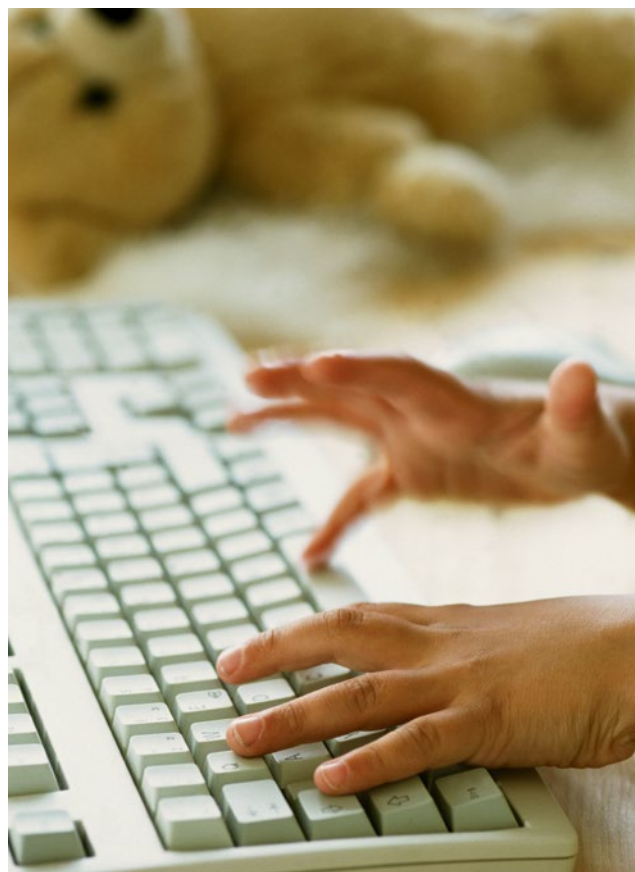
08 Technology

THE INTERNET HAS BEEN CONSIDERED

a factor in trafficking long before the COVID-19 pandemic. UNANIMA International state, “the demand seems to be increasing as travel across borders becomes cheaper and easier, and as the internet normalizes deviant sexual practices and allows traffickers, pimps and purchasers to locate each other.”¹¹⁴ It is apparent that there are positive and negative aspects of technology in relationship to the address and prevention of both Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking, as well as at its intersection with education, facilitation of access to services and supports, utilization for healing, and capacity building for related organizations and even governmental offices. In the *Road map for digital cooperation: implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation: Report of the Secretary-General* it is stated, “of particular concern are the areas...in which technologies can be, and increasingly are, used to violate and erode human rights, deepen inequalities and exacerbate existing discrimination, especially of people who are already vulnerable or left behind.”¹¹⁵ Therefore, preventing vulnerabilities is one way in which the threats of technology can be mitigated. As discussed in this publication, this necessitates the provision of safe, adequate housing and ensuring other human rights are achieved.

The “Triple A Engine” of Technology

The technological aspect of sex trafficking and sexual exploitation is increasingly relevant as the world globalizes, and is seemingly connecting to trafficking increasing and spreading. Technology is a means of engagement in the buying and selling of sex; technology is also an



essential element in discussions of combating trafficking, spreading awareness about the issue, and even addressing trauma (as will be discussed in the next section). The book *Exploring the Nexus Between Technologies and Human Rights Opportunities and Challenges in Southeast Asia* has a chapter dedicated to “Sex, Crime and Deceit: Women and Child Trafficking and Sexual Abuse in the Internet Age in Cambodia and Thailand” by Theresa W. Devasahayam, which argues:

“Non-traditional channels or Internet processes of recruitment of victims for sexual exploitation have accelerated sex trafficking since these new technologies have had the effect of ensuring that which Cooper (1998, p. 187) calls the “Triple A Engine”...I propose the model of “Triple A Engine: access, affordability, and anonymity” to understand the choices made for the use of the Internet on both the

part of traffickers and clients, as well as victims alike. In this case, pimps and traffickers exploit this platform to achieve their ends because of the minimal risk of prosecution resulting from the unregulated nature of the Internet (Kunze 2010). Women victims themselves might use the Internet although for the purposes of locating employment, especially since the Internet provides for access to information fairly easily and swiftly.”¹¹⁶

The “Triple A Engine” does present concern for the increase and pervasiveness of human trafficking, should we not pair attempts to prevent this with the other necessary actions in international law, recognizing its intersections to family homelessness, among other issues, as well as efforts towards a global cultural shift towards equality and recognizing the dignity in every person.

Social Media

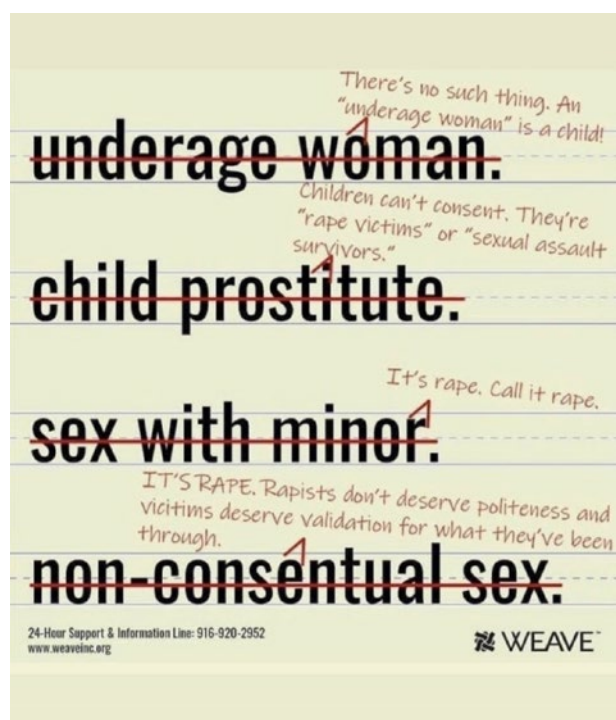
Social media has both positive and negative linkages to human trafficking. Noelene Simmons, SM, a member of ACRATH, shared with UNANIMA International her concerns that through social media perpetrators “lure women and girls in and exploit them.” She shared specifically about instances of people lured to Australia from Malaysia. This method of reaching victims is increasingly successful as global access to social media platforms increase. UN News reported in 2020, “social media-based trafficking on the rise during coronavirus pandemic.”¹¹⁷ This news further demonstrates how vulnerability and demand are prevalent factors in trafficking. “A panel of UN-appointed independent rights experts also warned against the increased recruitment of vulnerable people by traffickers for online sexual exploitation, along with “an increased demand for child sexual abuse material and technology-facilitated child sex trafficking”.”¹¹⁸



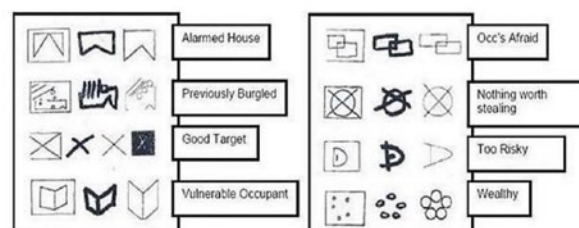
Social media, like technology, can be considered a tool—not only for traffickers seeking to trick and exploit people—but also for organizations and governments seeking to provide services, raise awareness of trafficking and prevention methods, or fund raise to support such efforts. Social media is a means through which victims can seek help, contact friends, or in some cases NGOs. When trafficked, inability to access technology, and consequently social media platforms, can prolong the experience. For people experiencing homelessness and housing insecurity, lack of access to social media increases vulnerability. Organizations such as ACRATH use social media to make resources available to their network; ACRATH noted to UNANIMA International that they consider their organization to have a very active social media presence that they value in the fight to end trafficking, which they also acknowledge as related to the fight to end homelessness. Social media platforms are a

political actor in relation to the topic of trafficking. The aforementioned UN News article included the call to action put forth from a UN rights committee directed to social media platforms, “to use big data and artificial intelligence to help eliminate trafficking in women and girls, amid an increase in online traps designed to recruit potential victims during the COVID-19 pandemic.”¹¹⁹

Simply by engaging on social media platforms, one may encounter information on how to avoid being trafficked, how to fight human trafficking, or the progress and challenges in the global fight to end trafficking; even people who do not directly seek out this information may see it through reposts. The pictures here are examples of information posts related to trafficking which were found by surveying social media.



More signs house robbers/human traffickers use to target homes, beware people ❤️



“Families and Technology Applied to Homelessness and Human Trafficking”

Susan Walker, Professor at University of Minnesota

Use of information and communications technologies (ICT) by families worldwide has revolutionized family life, providing efficient connections to people, work, resources and information that sustain daily life. Unique to the family, ICT offers ways to sustain relationships through interactions among family members, parents and children, and extended family; and secure resources for family members to fulfill basic functions, including access to health, housing, finance, employment, and schooling. It also enables wider community connections that offer practical, emotional and informational support. Yet the availability, exposure and use of ICT also mean challenges and conflicts for families, particularly in the intrafamily negotiation of when and how children use devices and access social media, and how to protect children from threats to their privacy and security. It also affects how an individual fulfills work and family responsibilities when the internet erodes traditional boundaries such as space and time

Worldwide, household access to the Internet and ownership of mobile phones is nearly ubiquitous. Close to 87% of individuals use the internet in developed countries. Those in countries with emerging economies report lesser use (47%, on average¹²⁰). And the vast majority of those in Europe and the United States own a cell phone (93%). Yet within and across families, technology use varies greatly. Individual differences occur by function (e.g., desired use for entertainment, social media, shopping, etc), comfort and skill with specific applications and devices, need for accommodations for language and ability, and frequency of use. Access also varies for those with more or less income, education, location (e.g., rural areas with less access to high speed wireless), creating the so called “knowledge gap”

or “access gap” for those who cannot benefit from information, efficiencies and having a voice online. Never before has this been as prevalent as during the COVID-19 pandemic, closing schools and leaving children dependent on available technology in the household, access to the internet, and in family human resources for those savvy enough to assist with homework.

For families who are homeless, technology access can be a complicated issue. The internet is considered a basic human right; one that includes the technology to access it.¹²¹ A recent study on shelters in New York City indicated that residents used the internet to seek permanent housing, medical care, jobs, for transportation, and public assistance.¹²² They also used it for email and social networking that help retain social connections, social capital and personal relationships.¹²³ On one hand access to technology seems similar to families who are in homes. In 2017 Rhoades et al reported that 94% of homeless adults owned a cell phone, though about half reported frequent phone number or phone changes; over half reported owning a smartphone and of these, 86% used Android systems.¹²⁴ Cell phone use for most was daily (by 85%), 76% reported using text messaging and just over half (51%) accessed the Internet on their phones.¹²⁵ Yet for those without phones or phones with data plans, accessing the internet based on shelter provision of wireless is spotty. Families report variable availability of personal computers and work stations at shelters, relying on free wireless from businesses, or needing to go to public facilities such as libraries to use the internet. Reports on homeless children’s school performance during COVID reveal particular challenges with having sufficient access to devices and internet access to fully participate.¹²⁶

Technology can be valuable to agency coordination and support the needs of homeless families as well. Resources for homeless families can be targeted more effectively, and predictive analytics can assist those at risk of becoming homeless.¹²⁷ Applications using new technologies can aid homelessness care and case management, create aggregations and visualize data capabilities, deploy GIS analytics, optimize supply and demand, offer digital tools for caseworkers, behavioral ‘nudges’ and assist in coordinating systems of resources for homelessness.¹²⁸

Much research has focused on the technology use of homeless youth, often pointing to benefits technology confers through social networking, collection of social capital, access to resources for schooling, jobs and permanent housing and medical care. And while many youth are runaways or separate from families, use of digital communications can mean for many a connection to stable family relationships.¹²⁹ Yet social technologies can also expose youth to dangers which when unmonitored, can threaten children’s safety.¹³⁰ Youth who are homeless and in homeless shelters as runaways may receive less monitoring than youth who are members of intact families or parts of families. Youth are easy prey for human traffickers who appeal to practical, social and emotional needs of the young. Algorithms through social media accounts that track user profiles, and GIS that track phone locations target likely homeless youth to identify profiles of those most vulnerable. According to the Homeland Safety Today of the United States’ Government Technology and Services Collation:

“Online platforms make it easier for traffickers to find potential victims, especially those who post personal information, such as their financial hardships, their struggles with low self-esteem, or their family problems. Human traffickers target and recruit their victims by appearing to offer help, or pretending to be a friend or potential romantic partner. They leverage their

victims’ vulnerabilities and coerce them to meet in person. After establishing a false sense of trust, traffickers may force victims into sex work or forced labor.”¹³¹

Homeless children may be vulnerable when those who are underage access messaging sites. The UK Children’s Commissioner reports that 60% of 8 year olds and 90% of 12 year olds reported using a messaging app with an age restriction of 13 and older.¹³² And more than one third of 8-10 year olds and over half of 11-13 year olds admit that they have lied about their age to sign up for an online messaging service. This offers potential exposure to predators seeking out vulnerable children.¹³³ And even for those youth who are in shelters or otherwise homeless yet living with a parent, online activity may not be closely monitored. Many parents lack basic digital literacy or security skills to track children’s online behavior or exposure to strangers. This is particularly the case for those who are less sophisticated or cautious in their own digital security, online searches or who assert critical thought about messages through social media.¹³⁴ Making monitoring even harder, platforms like Facebook have promised end to end encryption which will mask the content of messages targeting children.¹³⁵

Solutions lie in policies and internet access for homeless families that provide access, yet safety and protections for vulnerable youth. Agencies can identify the resources and supports, including subsidies, that families need to thrive while homeless which can ensure that families have mobile devices, text and data plans, and internet access to connect to necessary resources. Solutions for the safety of children and vulnerable youth lie in policies that strengthen protections for children’s exposure online and resources that enable parents and other caregivers to be knowledgeable custodians of children’s digital presence.

Testimony

*Loraine

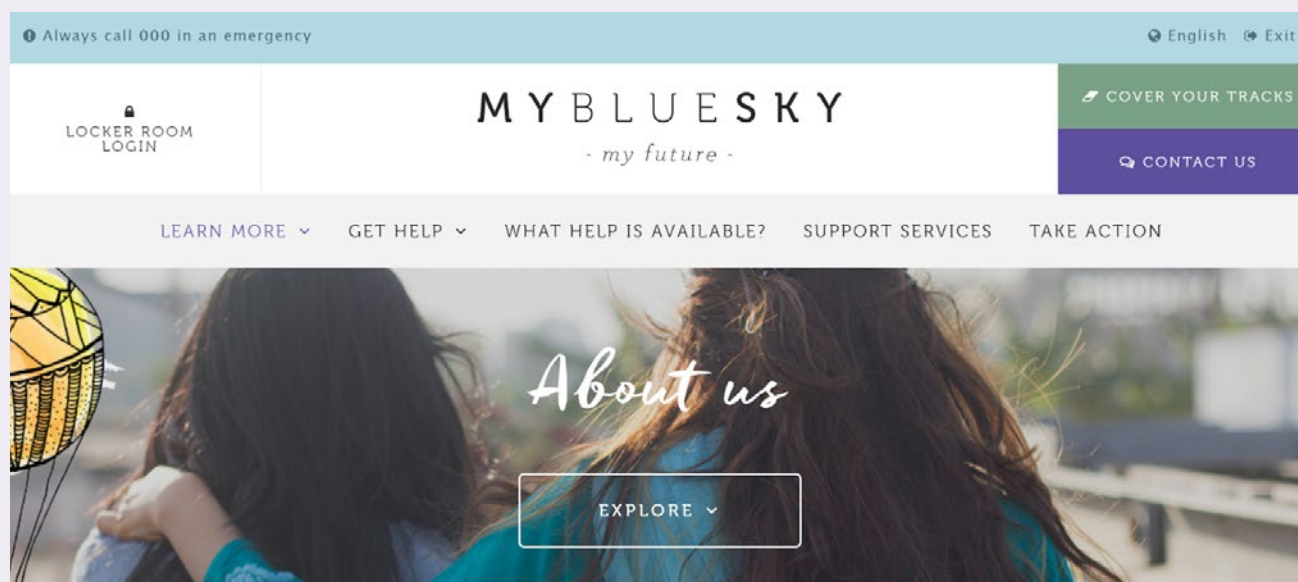
Teenager forced into marriage who accessed help online



Loraine is a 16 year old girl who was attending high school in Melbourne. Her parents took her overseas for a holiday to their country of origin. When they arrived Loraine discovered preparations for her marriage were well under way. She didn't want the wedding to take place but felt she had no choice but to comply. Loraine's parents returned to Australia with her passport. Through Facebook, Loraine's school friends in Australia alerted her to the My Blue Sky website¹³⁶ and the fact that forced marriage is a slavery-like practice and is illegal in Australia. Loraine was able to receive support through the My Blue Sky website. She was assisted to obtain new Australian travel documents and an airline ticket back to Australia. Loraine did not return to live with her family. She expressed to her NGO caseworker that she wanted to reconnect with some family members and was given mediation assistance to do so. Loraine was able to continue working towards her dream of graduating from university...

Note: This testimony was submitted by ACRATH and shortened

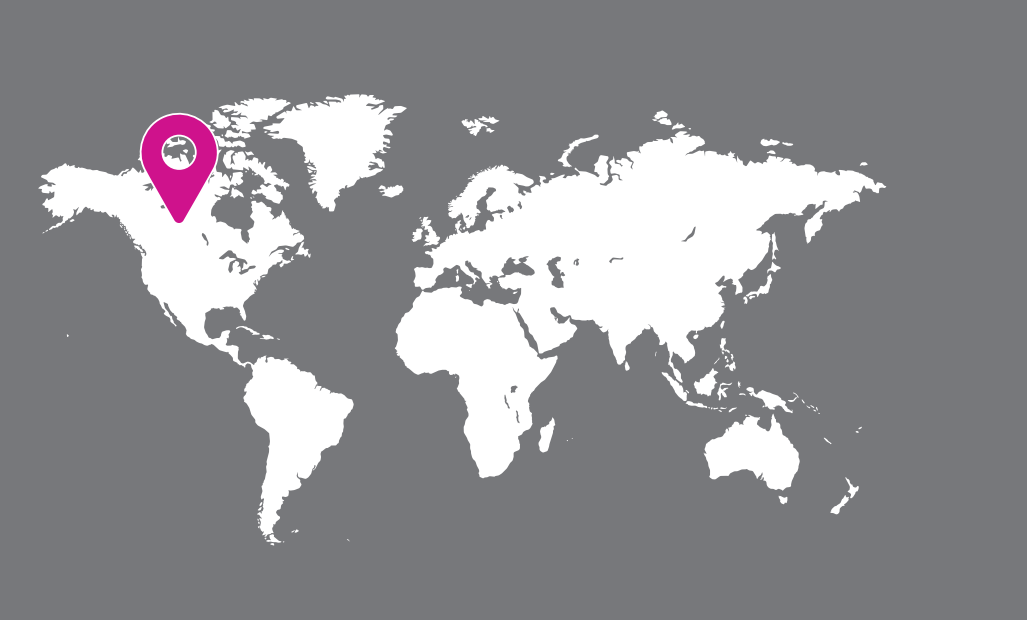
*Name change



Testimony

*Ally

Teenager exploited
online and later
in person



“Ally, now a 27-year-old public speaker, activist and mother, at age 16 suffered sexual exploitation at the hands of a notorious Internet sexual predator in her homeland of Canada. At the time, as with most teenagers, Ally was struggling with issues of identity and with family, so the Internet became a place of solace – where she could connect anonymously with strangers and receive the kind of attention she felt was lacking in her day-to-day life...It would turn out that he lived close to her Grandmother’s house and one evening, against her better judgment, Ally decided to honour an invitation. She went to Mark’s place, but the fateful visit ended with Ally getting sexually assaulted. A couple days after the assault, Mark resurfaced, telling Ally that if she went to the police he would “share pictures of her with the world” – and so she remained silent. For many months after, Ally was terrorised by her abuser – he blackmailed her, stalked her online, harassed her and hacked into her computer. She went an entire year living in shame, alone with her stifling secret. Depression set in and Ally became suicidal, which led to her abusing drugs and engaging in other self-destructive behaviour...”

Note: Excerpt from Ally’s story on ECPAT website¹³⁷

*Name change

GOOD PRACTICE

Leading Organization: A21

The A21 Campaign is a global NGO that has many online resources and educational campaigns, many of which emphasize the international nature of this injustice. A21 strategically uses their online platform to fund raise. The organization has done work to address the technology gap. In April of 2020 they shared with supporters that during the pandemic they are, “supplying survivors with phones and tablets, allowing them to connect with caseworkers and do online therapy and learning courses.”¹³⁸ In January, 2021, they shared to their email list:



KNOW THE SIGNS* of Human Trafficking

.....

Controlled by another person
Lack of earnings
Overly fearful, depressed, and submissive behavior
Lack of official identification
Substance abuse
Lack of personal belongings
Deceived by a false job offer
Controlled movement
Foreign, unfamiliar with the language
Bad health and malnutrition
Signs of physical abuse
Lack of trust
Signs of dependence
Feelings of being trapped
.....

Information from A21 and Graphic from UNANIMA International

For more information about A21:
<https://www.a21.org/>

RESOURCES:

- Girls and the Internet Fact Sheet by The Working Group on Girls
<http://girlsrights.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Girls-and-the-Internet-fact-sheet.pdf>
- *Leveraging innovation to fight trafficking in human beings: A comprehensive analysis of technology tools* by the OSCE Office of the Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings and Tech Against Trafficking
<https://globalinitiative.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/Leveraging-innovation-to-fight-trafficking-in-human-beings.pdf>
- *Road map for digital cooperation: implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Panel on Digital Cooperation: Report of the Secretary-General* by the United Nations
<https://www.un.org/en/content/digital-cooperation-roadmap/>



09

Trauma & Trauma Healing for Sex Trafficking Survivors

UNANIMA INTERNATIONAL PROMOTES

trauma-informed care as a good practice, specifically for services provided to populations who have experienced homelessness. A further aspect of trauma-informed care is ensuring that trauma-informed services and spaces are not limited to just health care or shelters, but rather present within public spaces in society, such as educational institutions and libraries. A past UNANIMA International resource posed the question “Why should UNANIMA International focus on the *Demand* side of trafficking?” One reason was, “persons working with victims of trafficking point out that once a woman has been trafficked, the trauma she experiences makes it almost impossible for her to be reintegrated into a normal social life. Stopping trafficking protects victims better than trying to treat them afterward. Since trafficking is very profitable, we believe that eliminating the profit will decrease this form of exploitation.”¹³⁹ However, it is the case that people are currently being trafficked and survivors in need of services exist. The National Alliance to End Homelessness, an organization based in the USA states,

“housing programs have the opportunity to ensure that their services are trauma-informed and person-centered. By creating systems that focus on providing the individual choice and voice in their housing, we can ensure that all clients, including those who have experienced violence and exploitation, can access housing options that feel safe for them.”¹⁴⁰

With this in mind, it is important to explore the intricacies of trauma and opportunities in healing related to housing and the other human rights and opportunities housing tends to facilitate or offer.

Barriers and Difficulties in Healing Trauma

Human Trafficking: The Ultimate Slavery by Mary O'Malley, MMM, details some of the barriers facing victims and survivors of human trafficking, a few of which are physical and mental problems; different cultural setting; facing deportation as they are without passports; and these are just a few from a list of twenty.¹⁴¹ For survivors, it is noted, “intensive psychotherapy is always required...self harm and suicide common.”¹⁴² For Sex Trafficking survivors, who have no doubt experienced traumas repeatedly, this same response of trauma-informed care is necessary. In light of the COVID-19 pandemic it is necessary to discuss trauma healing within the digital age; can trauma healing occur from therapy settings online? Though more research on this topic is needed, we highlight here some challenges and opportunities for trauma healing. Naturally, these challenges vary based on economic status, familial and communal involvement and support, geographic location, and other factors. Notably, in many nations or jurisdictions, therapy and mental health services are commodified and offered under a business model, and separately may be stigmatized.

Difficulties in healing trauma include: limited availability and access to appropriate mental health services; difficulty establishing a trusting relationship between survivors and care providers; and re-traumatization may occur through treatment measures when not trauma-informed or paired with relationship and trust building.¹⁴³ Due to normalization of trafficking experiences within a victims' life, survivors may not personally define their experiences as abusive or traumatic. Foreign-born trafficking victims also face barriers related to

language, culture, and integration within their new communities and surroundings. An interview with Noelene Simmons, SM and Maree Marsh, CSB gave insight into the challenges of language barriers between staff and survivors—including the existence of many dialects and non-mainstream language speakers in need of services, and limited access to trained personnel who speak these languages.

The Still Developing Role of Technology

In discussions about technology's potential to aid in addressing and preventing trauma, the negative aspects must also be explored. Sister Noelene Simmons' comments on technology included both highlights of good practices, and the acknowledgement that "technology can put barriers up too." A barrier for online trauma-healing efforts include technology access, comfort, and competency of survivors in using technology. Notably, these concerns are more related to the educational and

financial aspects of technology use, rather than more technical problems—which still do exist.

Currently, telemedicine is becoming more popular, and in some cases (such as during the COVID-19 Pandemic), a necessary option for many people. However, this may not be the best option for someone who has or is still experiencing trauma. The main reason behind this is that staying home could be isolating them from society, and their home space could become a dysfunctional refuge. In cases of psychological trauma, in-person therapy has many advantages over online therapy. Metacommunication is precisely what would be missing in online therapy; this term refers to the ability of the care provider to not only listen, but to observe nonverbal communication in order to establish a closer, more trusting relationship.¹⁴⁴ In-person treatment offers the care provider an opportunity to read the patient's body language more accurately than through a screen. As research suggests, human trafficking survivors tend to have a lack of trust after that experience and in-person therapy is



one opportunity for healing in this area. In an online medical consultation, it is much harder to view the patient's emotions due to technological limitations in image quality and internet connection. In many cases survivors may be a part of the technology gap which stems from factors such as poverty, education and access. People experiencing homelessness are also a group whose access to technology can be limited; this was a topic of advocacy for UNANIMA International during CSocD59.¹⁴⁵

PERSPECTIVE

In-Person Treatment Benefits for Trauma Healing

Survivors may experience fear of meeting new people. In-person treatment allows the victim to slowly come to the conclusion that there are people that want to help and not harm. In-person therapy may help to restore that broken bond between the patient and another person. Though patients may consider their house as a safe space, PTSD symptoms, sometimes abusive relationships, and the stress of adapting to a new environment, may become overwhelming. Survivors of human trafficking of any form may experience depression, agoraphobia or shame.¹⁴⁶ In-person therapy can give an opportunity to assess one's feelings towards the home while outside of it. On the other hand, in the unconscious state of mind, going every week to the clinic creates a routine with schedules which slowly will increase the survivor's sense of safety in going out by themselves.¹⁴⁷ Lastly, during an online clinical session there could be external interruptions like phone calls, noises or other people present, which could interfere with the patient's freedom or comfort in speaking.

Opportunities in Healing Trauma

1. Trauma-informed services

These types of services not only treat trauma but also the consequences that trauma could have driven, such as drug addictions or health issues. Trauma-informed care requires the perspective that past and current abuses affect the needs of the victim, and how healing must be approached. The design of the service system must accommodate the vulnerabilities of trauma survivors.

2. Trauma-specific Therapies

These may only be accessed by referral of a clinician. These therapies focus on healing aspects like not being able to see painful images or how to cope with PTSD, through therapies such as desensitization.¹⁴⁸ Cognitive Behavioral therapies have been proven to have amazing results in treating PTSD for trauma patients.¹⁴⁹ This technique focuses on "the relationship among thoughts, feelings, and behaviors, and notes how changes in any one domain can improve functioning in the other domains."¹⁵⁰

3. Community-Building and Cultural Exchange

An essential part of trauma healing is assisting the survivor in creating a new, safe life within their community. Usually, cultural immersion is very important so they can adapt to their surroundings, which in some cases is a new community, or even a new country. Sometimes, people can feel "out of home" even when they are safe and have shelter. Because of this it is important that survivors have access to community activities they enjoy, opportunities to meet people and build trust, and healthy relationships.¹⁵¹

Cultural exchange is a necessary component here, so that survivors are not solely asked to adapt, but are also encouraged to be in touch with their roots, choose their own identities, and be mutually engaged with their community. One suggestion for fulfilling this is the implementation of a program within the community where survivors are paired with friends, who may engage in activities and cultural exchange with them.

4. Permanent, Supported Housing

As the exploration of trauma as a driver and effect of both homelessness and trafficking experiences has already been explored, it is important to acknowledge trauma as a reason why permanent, supported housing is a beneficial model for survivors. Ruhama's publication, *Importance of support and exit services for women involved in prostitution* further evidences the importance of strong and long-term support services by expounding on survivors' needs: "women in prostitution can face substantial practical and psychological barriers to exiting, including trauma, addiction, and coercion by other individuals."¹⁵² There is a need for housing services

that welcome families, as testimonies from CHD in Greece support. Other organizations such as Good Samaritans House in the USA and Sophia Housing in Ireland make sure to have a range of services which will support survivors as well as their children. An interview with Sam Tsemperis revealed that the popular "Housing First" model may not be the most appropriate or applicable for serving those who have survived trafficking, though there are many lessons that appear within permanent, supporting housing models that are reminiscent of the Housing First model, including tailoring the type, range, and frequency of services and support to each individual.

The foundation of the permanent, supported housing model, as the name may imply, is that the services will be offered to those who need it for the duration of their need (whether that is temporary or life long). Supports and a community atmosphere would be beneficial to all people, yet those with significant trauma will benefit from this exponentially.



“Trauma, Trafficking and Homelessness”

Dr. Peter Cockersell, DPsych

Chief Executive Officer at Community Housing & Therapy

The association between ‘compound trauma’ (repeated episodes of trauma including both adverse childhood events and ongoing or repeated exposure to trauma as adolescents and young adults¹⁵³) and homelessness has been well documented in numerous studies across the world.¹⁵⁴ Trafficking is defined by the UN as ‘the recruitment or movement of people, by means such as force, fraud, coercion, deception, and abuse of vulnerability for the purposes of exploitation’.¹⁵⁵ Being exploited through force, deception, coercion or abuse of vulnerability is traumatic in itself.

The prevalence of trafficking among homeless populations is not known, but a three-year study of young homeless people in Arizona, USA, found an average prevalence of 31% and another in Kentucky and Indiana found a prevalence of 40%.¹⁵⁶ The same study also found higher levels of Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE), of mental illness, self-harm and suicide, and of childhood and adolescent sexual abuse: double the number of trafficked young homeless people had experienced 7+ ACE compared to the non-trafficked cohort.¹⁵⁷

*We therefore have a picture of homeless trafficked people with very high levels of trauma before they are trafficked, who then experience the trauma of being trafficked, and the repeated experiences of abuse associated with the exploitation that is the purpose of their being trafficked. High levels of trauma, and especially compound trauma, are associated with high levels of mental health problems, dependency issues, and self-harm and suicide, all of which we find in trafficked populations.*¹⁵⁸

Services responding to homelessness need to be aware of trafficking: the US studies showed a prevalence of 30–40%, so any homelessness service, and especially any that see numbers of young homeless, will be working with a significant number of trafficked individuals. The services also need to be aware of the level of trauma that the people they work with may have experienced, beyond even the ‘normal’ levels of trauma among homeless populations in general. This in turn makes it even more important that homeless services are trauma-informed and that they have the capability to respond empathically and effectively to behaviours and interactions that arise because of the impact of trauma on their clients.

Homelessness services cannot become clinical services, but they can be therapeutic. There are many trauma-informed approaches. One worth noting is the Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) approach developed in the UK¹⁵⁹ and its development over the following years¹⁶⁰: this approach is specifically designed to enable homelessness services to respond effectively and therapeutically to clients who have experienced compound trauma. It has already been adapted to homelessness services working with women fleeing gender-based violence and can easily be adapted to specific services for trafficked homeless people.

With a small amount of clinical support such services can afford those who have experienced or are experiencing trafficking a real possibility of recovery.

“Trauma and Marginalised Groups”

Dr. Philip Timms, Consultant Psychiatrist, Maudsley Hospital, London
with grateful thanks for advice and insights from Laura Tomlinson,
retired Clinical Psychologist, Children and War Foundation

Many women and children have found themselves dislocated by reason of war, violence, natural disaster – or by poverty and victimisation in their homeland. They have often experienced life-threatening traumas. These can be single incidents, as in classic PTSD, but more often occur, again and again, over months or years. They include repeated physical and sexual abuse, experiences of being controlled, neglected and abandoned, or of (commonly) being abused and betrayed by traffickers.

The destructive power of such experiences is not surprising. Less obvious are the ways in which the effects of repeated trauma can affect a person's resilience, behaviour – and even their ability to trust those who try to help. Without understanding these, some aspects of such a person's behaviour can be written-off as incomprehensible, disproportionate or irrational. Given what has happened, the depression and grief of many women and children can be easy for others to grasp; it can be harder to understand the emotional states and “fight, flight or freeze” responses that such repeated traumas create. A woman or child may:

- Feel unsafe, even in “clearly safe” environments;
- Be unable to trust anyone – even those who try to help;
- Refuse to go to certain places or buildings – to avoid reminders of what they have been through;

- Feel pessimistic and expect to be let down, even when things are going well;
- “Freeze” and be unable to act;
- Be uncomfortably alert (or “aroused”) all the time, with a pounding heart and anxiety, and unable to sleep;
- Anticipate threat – and react in a way that others see as stemming from aggression rather than fear and vulnerability;
- “Cut off” from what is going on – a way of avoiding memories of terrible experiences, which can be mistaken for indifference;
- React to everyday events (like seeing a particular vehicle or a uniform) with flashbacks or panic attacks. Other people often just do not understand – and can dismiss these terrifying episodes as disproportionate;
- Become extremely distressed when trying to fulfill the demands of the asylum process – particularly the task of having to go through again and again, in great detail, the traumatic events they have survived.

If we don't understand these “unhelpful” behaviours, it is easy to misinterpret someone's actions – and to further alienate them. We all need to feel safe, understood – and to be able to trust other people. Demonstrating that we understand can be the first step in helping a person re-establish a sense of trust in others – and in the world.

Testimony

Voices from Dr. Angela Reed, RSM's research

“When sharing their experiences of recovery programs the women stressed that the following were of greatest value: safe accommodation; emotional support; income generation projects; education; family reunion; community engagement; and peer support. In terms of the life course paradigm, being part of the Good Shepherd recovery program represented a ‘turning point’ for the women. It gave them the opportunity to reclaim their identity, undertake further education and embark in job skills training. The women in this study valued the home-like atmosphere that was characterised by warm and accepting staff who offered encouragement...”

Note: This testimony was reprinted from Dr. Angela Reed's doctoral dissertation

Testimony

Rebecca Lorick, Former Director of My Sister's Place

The other reasons I would say are definitely mental health and substance use. I actually would say mental health issues are probably more of a result of being homeless than the cause. Sometimes it is, but you have to look at cause and effect. And being homeless and in a shelter every night, and not knowing where you're going to stay, and not knowing who's going to be next to you - that is traumatic and it exacerbates those symptoms. Again, substance use can cause it, but we see that it actually increases after people become homeless because it's a coping mechanism. Whether it is healthy or unhealthy, it is a coping mechanism, and people use that a lot. So, those are the main reasons [why people use My Sister's Place services], and of course domestic violence, sexual assault, divorce, loss of a job...Traumatic events.

Note: Rebecca participated in a formal interview with UNANIMA International in August, 2019

GOOD PRACTICE

Leading Organization: Community House Damaris, Athens, Greece

Community House Damaris (CHD) serves as a safe house and a recovery program for victims of sex trafficking and their children. CHD is a member of the RENATE network, a Christian organization based in Athens, Greece. They state, “our program is designed to guide survivors into full rehabilitation and reintegration into society by addressing the following needs –



- 1. Mental Health:** Addressing Trauma and Mental Health
- 2. Personal Development:** Teaching Life Skills, Personal Goals, Relationship Management, and Parenthood

3. Addressing Poverty: Offering Vocational Training for the Workplace Environment

4. Health: Providing Access to Medical Services and Daily Hygiene

5. Social Services: Giving Access to Public Services for Documents and Social Integration.”¹⁶¹

According to service provider, Rania Ioakeimidou, the services are offered to women and their children for as long as they require them and therefore the length of stay depends upon each family or individual. She also shared that, “the demographic that we serve is mainly asylum seekers, trafficked women with their children, who have been traumatized and are under recovery. I know that in some cases, they had to sleep on the street for some days during their journey for survival.”

For more information about Community House Damaris: www.damaris.gr

RESOURCES

- Trauma, suffering & spirituality: Sr Imelda Poole IBVM MBE on the struggle of anti-trafficking by Ian Linden
<https://www.corew.org/blog/2018/11/30/trauma-suffering-amp-spirituality-sr-imelda-poole-ibvm-mbe-on-anti-trafficking>
- Creating Safe Housing Options for Survivors: Learning From and Expanding Research by Cris M. Sullivan, PhD
<https://safehousingpartnerships.org/sites/default/files/2018-04/LearningFromResearch-Housing-NRC DV-6-2017.pdf>
- Social Exclusion, Compound Trauma and Recovery: Applying Psychology, Psychotherapy and PIE to Homelessness and Complex Needs by Dr. Peter Cockersell
https://books.google.com/books/about/Social_Exclusion_Compound_Trauma_and_Rec.html?id=km_MtAEACAAJ



10 Education

“We call on the Church to witness to the value & dignity of women/girls by promoting their proper role in all sectors. We call on governments around the world to ensure that law & policy promotes & protects the dignity & rights of women/girls.”

 @TalithaKumRome

EDUCATION IS SIGNIFICANT TO THE

issues of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking in many ways: access to education can decrease vulnerability; education directed towards decision-makers can help inform better policies in response to trafficking; similarly, educating service providers about signs of trafficking and the intersections between homelessness and trafficking can help shape better programs for protection; general education including these topics can foster a culture of awareness, and political will to end each issue. There are now resources for students seeking careers which address trafficking, including

lists of the best universities and higher education programs that are fighting human trafficking.¹⁶² Adjunct Professor Dennis McCarty wrote in a *Homeland Security Today* article, “higher education has a critical role preparing all types of professionals who are needed in the fight against human trafficking,” and that the courses he has taught on the topic have resulted in some students volunteering and fundraising for anti-trafficking, and other deciding to pursue full-time anti-trafficking careers.”¹⁶³

In the *Innovative Higher Education* journal article *Sex Trafficking and the Role of Institutions of Higher Education: Recommendations for Response and Preparedness* the authors offer recommendation intended to, “enable institutions to engage with and address the intersection of sex trafficking and higher education,” responsive to the vulnerability of the typical college students’ age range.¹⁶⁴ This article, however, does not explore how housing precarity among students increases vulnerability to trafficking.





Catholic Social Teaching on Human Trafficking

In 2020 Pope Francis stated, “Human Trafficking constitutes an unjustifiable violation of the freedoms and dignity of human beings, the constitutive dimension of the human being willed and created by God.”¹⁶⁵ The Pope’s more recent focus on condemnation of Human Trafficking is in line with Catholic Social Teaching (CST) which “proclaims the dignity of the human person and the sanctity of all human life.”¹⁶⁶ According to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops’ resource, *Catholic Social Teaching and the Church’s Fight to End Trafficking* modern-day slavery, “inherently rejects this principle, showing absolute contempt for human beings. For this reason, eliminating human trafficking and empowering survivors has been a historic concern of the Catholic Church.”¹⁶⁷ Previously, Pope Benedict XVI identified Human Trafficking as an issue of “international justice.”¹⁶⁸

For religious people, including those who serve in local capacities, and others who do international work, including at the United Nations, there seems to be a faith imperative for

addressing and preventing Human Trafficking as well as Family Homelessness. In the book *Human Trafficking: Freeing Women, Children, and Men* by Anglican Women’s Empowerment, the authors describe the necessity for religious peoples’ response to Human Trafficking terming this “The Faith Imperative” and stating,

“the young girl sold into the sex trade is my neighbor and my sister. The young boy sold into the sex trade is my neighbor and my brother. The countless numbers of migrant workers and domestic helpers who are trafficked are our brothers and sisters, When we ask what it means to love a trafficked child, we are really asking: what is our responsibility towards her and what is the appropriate attitude and action that I am to assume on her behalf? Horrifying as the statistics are, human trafficking is not only about numbers. Every trafficked person, every face has a story. What do we see when we look into the face of an exploited child? Do we see Christ looking back at us? How have our lives been interrupted by their plight? Are we able to reach out and say, “Here I am”?”¹⁶⁹

This perspective is essential, as in our globalized world peoples’ concerns and focuses are currently spread amongst so many issues, and our compassion can become diluted by stress and problems with discerning the parts we should play in solutions. It is important that we see the intersections of many of our concerns and heartaches, and therefore the intersections of how we react to them. The aforementioned book suggests that each person can gain awareness on how trafficking manifests itself in their community. Acknowledging homelessness and housing insecurity as factors that increase vulnerability to trafficking can help motivate action and resources to resolve these issues.

“Catholic Social Teaching in response to Human Trafficking and Family Homelessness”

Teresa Kotturan

NGO Representative at the
UN Sisters of Charity Federation



Our world has embraced a culture of indifference and created structures and systems to exclude people living on the margins – victims of trafficking and those experiencing homelessness. Human trafficking denies the sanctity, dignity and human rights of men, women and children who are exploited, enslaved and repeatedly sold like merchandise. Families who experience homelessness are made invisible and stripped of their humanity. Eradication of trafficking and ending homelessness are possible if one embraces the principles of Catholic Social Teaching to address the structural, social and economic inequalities.

Principles of common good, preferential option for the poor and solidarity can show the way for a culture of encounter. The foundations of these principles are grounded on the sanctity and dignity of the human person, for every human being is made out of love in the image and likeness of God and redeemed by Christ. Human dignity is grounded in God’s creative love and it invites us to love our neighbor. In Catholic Social Teaching love of neighbor demands justice, respect for human life from conception to death and the provision of an enabling environment for authentic human development, for flourishing of life.

“The infographic...shows the different dimensions of life we can apply our Catholic Social Teaching to.” - Caritas Singapore



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NGOs at the UN Highlight

Within the United Nations system, Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) play an important role in both education and advocacy. NGOs are uniquely looked to for expertise in various areas, and often bring the voices of the grassroots into United Nations (UN) discussions. During Economic and Social Council commissions, NGOs in consultative status with this UN organ are able to submit written statements. For the 2021 Commission for Social Development, the priority theme of the commission was: “Socially just transition towards sustainable development: the role of digital technologies on social development and well-being of all”¹⁷⁰; the previous (58th) session focused on homelessness and social protection floors. Of the forty accepted written statements five explicitly mentioned trafficking.

The significance of including trafficking within statements geared towards other issues is that understanding the intersections of issues will better guide policy and action, as well as necessitate continued United Nations and other high level attention. Of the statements from 2021, Concepts of Truth spoke about abortion in trafficked women¹⁷¹; a statement submitted by Congregation of our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd alongside several other NGOs discussed the “dark side” of technologies, including the risk for “Online Sexual Exploitation of Children (OSEC)” - this organization also made comment that, “the trends towards normalization of violent narrative and sexual imagery promote misogyny and exploitation of girls, women and children. It exploits a demand-driven supply chain where those who have - mostly male - take advantage of those who do not have - mostly female including children”¹⁷²; The Sisters of Charity Federation alongside several Vincentian

NGOs explored how lack of access to remote learning exposes children to poverty and hunger “forcing many to join the workforce to support families; while others become victims of forced labor or trafficking. Many girls, denied their right to education, have become child brides”¹⁷³; the Soroptimist International statement speaks to the need for international collaboration.¹⁷⁴

In honor of the NGOs who have given directives on preventing and addressing trafficking/homelessness in relation to technology, we reiterate the following recommendations to UN Member States:

Congregation of our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd, et al.:

“Strengthen specialized anti-trafficking law enforcement and court prosecution by Increasing their budget and personnel and by supporting child protective prosecutions to avoid re-traumatization”;

“Increase collaboration with international law enforcement agencies working on anti-trafficking and on cases of online sexual exploitation of children.”

Sisters of Charity Federation, et al.:

“A Socially just transition should ensure that there is no further increase in social inequalities”;

“Create platforms to monitor and eliminate cyber bullying, child pornography, trafficking in persons and modern-day slavery.”

Soroptimist International:

“International regulations must be developed to ensure cross-sector collaboration and to support evidence collection.”

PERSPECTIVE

More & Better data is needed for Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking Education and Solutions

The reality for both global data and the majority of national level data on homelessness and human trafficking is that there are significant underestimations, and the lack of standardized definitions between countries makes it more difficult to compare realities. Governmental corruption is an additional factor which impedes accurate international assessments of the scope of each of these issues. While NGOs and international institutions as well as regional coordinated groups and some governmental branches and offices seek to resolve these issues, generally, more and better data is needed for Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking education and solutions.

Sam Tsemperis, founder of Housing First, shared in an interview with UNANIMA International his concerns for the global fight to end these pervasive issues, given the lack of standardized data; he recommended the promotion of internationally recognized definitions as well as the collective work to establish typologies, to further assist classifications of the variations of these issues, including their intersections. In seeking comment from the ILO on the intersections of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking, they stated that they do not have solid research to share on the topic of homelessness and its link with human trafficking. It is necessary for these interlinkages to be explored further in data globally. One good practice for coordination and sharing of information on homelessness is the IGH Hub.

The Institute of Global Homelessness Hub (IGH Hub) connects researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to one another, to ideas, and to effective practice from around the world.

Understanding Homelessness



[Learn more >](#)

Expertise from Lived Experience



[Learn more >](#)

Testimony

Rocío Morón, UNANIMA International Intern and Catholic Scholar at St. John's University, Queens, New York

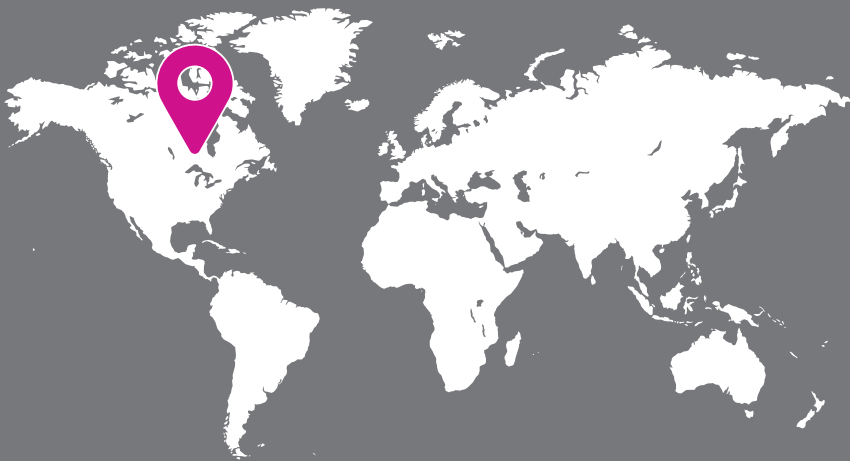
Reflecting on the research done by UNANIMA International in relation to Human Trafficking and Family Homelessness, I now feel more informed and able to share my thoughts. When a woman is being trafficked all decisions are being taken from her. The voice that she has been given since birth is taken away due to corruption, manipulation, and extreme desire for money. This desire causes humans to degrade their neighbor in order for them to get advantages. Researching about sex trafficking, I have come to the conclusion that money is the root of this evil. Money seems to have more value than the hopes, life and dreams of women, which are taken away many times unexpectedly. Young women and children are introduced into trafficking by need or lies - no one of them actually believes that it was an empowerment instrument, but rather just a survival instrument.

Everything can be taken away except for things like consciousness and dreams. When a woman decides to fight for her freedom violence is always involved. No one lets a "diamond" walk away without consequences. A lack of organizations that are willing to risk even their own life is what may cause these women to never be able to leave. They might see charities willing to help but not many actually plan an escape for them. In other cases, when they are free they find themselves alone, without community support, and facing stigma. As a consequence, they can easily end up in a situation of homelessness. All these experiences together cause a deep mental trauma which years of therapy can help treat. However, from reading many testimonies, what healed them was feeling loved by others and not labeled by their past. I think this is another barrier that survivors encounter - they might move on from their past, but society keeps reminding them that they were trafficked.



Testimony

**Jessica Desmond/
Aki'Kwe**, Lived Experience
of Homelessness and
Knowledge Carrier of
Human Trafficking from
Treaty 61 Territory located
in Ontario, Canada



My name is Aki'Kwe. I am from Garden River First Nation and my clan is Wolf Clan... The land that we're on isn't ours, it's the animals home and it's our job to protect their home and our home...If our treaties were paid, a lot of us could buy land and homes. Landlords don't like Indigenous people, I have found. And lots of us are sick of renting. My name is Aki'Kwe which means earth woman - and I don't even have a connection to the land. For years, and years and years, I've been just trying to make truth and reconciliation of the land, connecting myself back. My grandfather used to tell us about pipelines and broken treaties when I was a kid and I didn't believe it. They took him away from his home and he'd never see his parents ever again.

Without clean air, water and soil we will go extinct. On top of this, Indigenous people are suffering homelessness as if it's a normal thing and it's hidden. I personally ended up in Toronto, Ontario, Canada after the system shipped me out of the prison, They promised me I would get home and they would buy me a ticket home - which was a lie. It was so hard to get out of the lifestyle I ended up in. I got released from prison - the guards promised me I would get home and that was a lie. After that, the system put me in a cell with a girl who was being trafficked by a notorious Toronto drug dealer and pimp. So when I got out, I fell right into the hands of this man. It was so hard to get out of this lifestyle. I can't stress enough how hard it is to get out of that life we call human trafficking, or in the streets we call it "the game."

Honor the treaties across Turtle Island. We need what's been promised to us. We are getting murdered. We are going missing. We are getting beaten. We are being branded. We are being bought and sold like cattle...this trafficking happens from the North Pole all the way to the South Pole. The guy who sexually abused me is now banned from the Treaty of 61... and I did that for our people so that he can't hurt us anymore. I almost lost my foot when I was arguing with a trafficker one day, because he was telling me to leave the apartment and I wouldn't leave. I almost lost my foot for a place to live. Now I'm here today telling how I survived being homeless, being under genocide and colonial violence, domestic violence, trafficking, and the list goes on. In my opinion, what makes a home is a love connection with people, with kinship, and of course the structure of habitation. But I would also say that home is a connection to the land and culture and spirituality. Our homelessness is really about disconnection from healthy relationships over time due to colonial interruptions (through policy, through crowding out infrastructure, stealing our land, loss of our culture through residential schools). All these things, plus many, many more, are what Indigenous homelessness is.

Note: this is an excerpt of the testimony Aki'Kwe shared during the UNPFII Side Event Women & Girls' Homelessness and the SDGs in Indigenous Communities organized by UNANIMA International with the Society of the Sacred Heart at the UN



GOOD PRACTICE

Impactful Service: Human Trafficking Prevention Project



The University of Baltimore in Maryland, USA, hosts the Human Trafficking Prevention Project, a clinic which law students can take for course credit that has a strong advocacy component, and also helps the students to become trauma-informed. The project, “provides pro-bono legal services to individuals who have criminal records stemming from an involvement in the commercial sex industry... they often have significant criminal justice involvement coupled with extensive histories of trauma.”¹⁷⁵

The project is based on the knowledge:

“victims of human trafficking are often arrested and prosecuted for crimes they are forced to commit by their traffickers. The burden of a criminal conviction saddles trafficking survivors with a number of consequences, such as limitations on their ability to secure safe, stable housing, gainful employment, or government benefits. The impact of having been trafficked on the psychological and physical well-being of victims combined with these limitations on access to basic needs leaves criminalized victims vulnerable to re-exploitation and without the stability they need as they work to heal from trauma and rebuild their lives.”

For more information about the Human Trafficking Prevention Project: <http://law.ubalt.edu/clinics/humantrafficking.cfm>

RESOURCES

- New UNODC university modules to teach about Trafficking in Persons, a crime that violates fundamental human rights by UNODC
<https://www.unodc.org/dohadeclaration/en/news/2018/05/new-unodc-university-modules-to-teach-about-trafficking-in-persons--a-crime-that-violates-fundamental-human-rights.html>
- *Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret* by Peter J. Henriot, Jeames E. Hug, Edward P. DeBerri, et al.
<https://socialjusticeresourcecenter.org/resources/catholic-social-teaching-our-best-kept-secret/>
- Parent Guides for Kids & Teens by A21
<https://www.a21.org/content/parent-guides/gq3xc0?permcode=gq3xc0&site=true>



Global Values, Norms, and Culture

ACCORDING TO THE INTERNATIONAL

Labor Organization (ILO) with the Walk Free Foundation, in partnership with the International Organization for Migration (IOM), “women and girls are disproportionately affected by forced labour, accounting for 99% of victims in the commercial sex industry, and 58% in other sectors.”¹⁷⁶ Between 2008 and 2017 the number of human trafficking victims identified worldwide more than tripled from 30,961 to 100,409 according to Statista.¹⁷⁷ The Polaris Project estimates that of all human trafficking victims, 25% are children and 75% are women and girls.¹⁷⁸ The ILO estimates that the human trafficking industry is a \$150 billion industry.¹⁷⁹ To stop sex trafficking specifically, addressing gender inequality and the sexualization of women and girls is central. Halting racism and classism is also essential to halting trafficking, as systemic disadvantages for various minority groups increases their vulnerability to trafficking. The same measures are needed to end poverty, which is highly gendered and one of the most prominent drivers of homelessness, and homelessness itself, which has been proven to be highly racialized internationally.

For both homelessness and human trafficking key concerns of advocates and organizing groups should be first, how shared priorities can be identified and then acted towards, and second, how intersectional issues can be recognized and then addressed with coherence. If we look solely at data (including qualitative) we will become overwhelmed by the vastness and darkness of these topics. However, if we look at the wide range of great initiatives, research, organizations, coordinating bodies, and advocacy occurring around the issues of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking, we may be overwhelmed in a positive manner - one which encourages moving forward for further coordination and focus. We call upon



our readers to try to engage with that emotion and motivation which will advance our causes perhaps beyond what we’ve imagined to be possible, spreading them throughout our global values, norms, and culture.

Trafficking Portrayals in the Media, Popular Culture, & Societal Attitudes

In a past work of UNANIMA international, answering the question: “what can I do to stop the demand for trafficking in women and children?” One answer is: “protest against the sexualization and commodification of women and children in the media.” Violent television shows and movies are common, and often viewed by adolescents as they are developing. Sometimes these media depictions inadvertently justify and glorify violence. When it comes to human trafficking, entertainment programs can behave the same way. They offer a romanticized view of trafficking which is far from reality. For example, Netflix just released a movie called *365 Days* - which was in the “top 5” list of the streaming platform in August 2020. The main storyline talks about a young woman being kidnapped

and raped until she falls in love with the kidnapper. He gives her 365 days to fall in love, and if she doesn't love him by then she will be freed. Movies may romanticize the idea of someone "taking care of you." The reality is that many times children and women are threatened or hurt, preventing them from leaving.

On the other hand, newspapers and online news also offer a view quite disorientated about the reality of sex trafficking, specifically. News often functions for profits, sometimes presenting misinformation or selecting sensationalized stories to appear in their platforms. As a consequence, not all the cases of sex trafficking are shown and people in various countries may be led to underestimate the frequency of such crimes. When focusing on youth prostitution, there are different ways that news report this issues. One way could be portraying an image of a "willing prostitution", such as young adults choosing to sell their body in order to meet their family's needs. Minors may be held responsible and may receive consequences for prostitution, despite their



young age, should laws not prohibit this. There is advocacy in many regions, and at the various levels of governance (local, national, regional, and international) to implement "Safe Harbor" laws which would prevent minors from being prosecuted.¹⁸⁰ Another way the news approaches this topic is victimizing the survivor, while focusing on the perpetrator, many times not offering the survivor's testimony but focusing on the events that happened.

Media may be politically influenced depending on the funding. For this reason, certain news won't be seen in every channel. Human Trafficking, as it intersects with immigration for example, presents a marginalized group that may not be looked to with compassion but rather politicized. Newspapers may hide the real information or modify the stories and news in order to gain higher popularity. A solution to this issue may be having a specific non-bias person double checking every news so the public could get a more realistic view of sex trafficking. For survivors, these inaccurate depictions can hinder healing processes, and for service providers and advocates, creates another area to pursue change and education, distracting from campaigns to stop the demand, efforts for prevention, and support for survivors.

“Peace Education and Gender Equality to Combat Human Trafficking and Family Homelessness”

Michelle Macías De Pozo

Goodwill Global Ambassador for Mexico,
UN representative for Man Up Campaign
and UNESCO Center for Peace

I do believe that both Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking have a lot to do with how we, as a global society, have allowed this to happen - lack of education and inequality has resulted in dehumanization of our industries, economic systems, and even relationships. This dehumanization affects tangibly the lives of the most vulnerable, different groups including women, girls, indigenous peoples, people with disabilities and people experiencing homelessness. Peace education and gender equality and their opposites (violence, injustice and gender inequality) are powerfully interconnected to human trafficking as it exists today. Human Trafficking is a consequence of the lack of respect and education towards human rights and dignity, as well as insufficient actions to actualize human rights and activities which do not adopt a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA).

The other main factor, causing these issues to be pervasive, is the invisibility of the vulnerable groups. Human trafficking has contributed to the invisibility. Likewise, states driven by gender inequality have failed to protect and bring visibility, awareness, and the attribution of human rights and dignity to the “vulnerable groups.” In part, this is due to the convenience of not seeing the migrants, the refugees, the women and children, the people experiencing

Homelessness, the Indigenous groups, the people with disabilities, and others suffering - often intergenerationally and throughout their life in multiple, connected ways - because then they don't have to accept their responsibility to address systemic issues. Imagine just how easy it is for a state, society or system to not just feign blindness to these people and issues, but to also have the groups “disappear” through the nets of criminal organizations that perpetrate human trafficking...instead of changing the whole belief system.

Changing the belief system requires acknowledgement of reality and everyone taking responsibility for protecting each other, educating each other, bringing peace education to a grass roots level, bringing gender equality to a grass root level, and the like. Identifying the intersection of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking is necessary to address these issues, and to further show the necessity of work towards women and children's holistic well-being, support and safety within the family unit, and the relevancy of each of these issues to international politics today - 2020 and beyond.



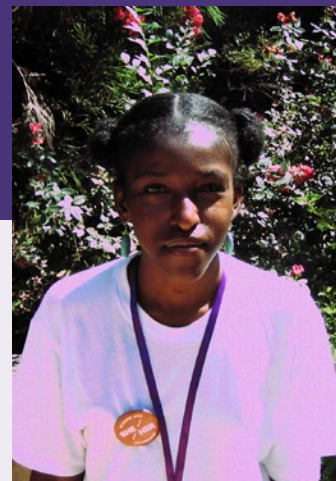
Image credit: United Nations Web TV

MAN
Stop Violence Against Women
UP
CAMPAIGN

Testimony

***Amelia**, Youth from Jamaica, living in Atlanta, GA, USA
Homeless due to Financial Difficulties

This one guy, he used to love doing a replay of slavery...And he'd pay me my money. At the end of the day it's not really worth it. But I needed that money... I had to deal with it. And that's what I feel like most people face these days, like, even if it's not escorting. At the workplace, day care, wherever you go in the store, in the mall, when I was working at Wendy's - I had to deal with racial discrimination. I'm gonna have to deal with this so I can get paid. But why should I have to? And it's not even a lot of what I'm getting. I was getting paid \$400 every two weeks, to deal with that.



Note: *Amelia participated in a formal interview with UNANIMA International in September, 2019

Testimony

Jessica Desmond/Aki'Kwe, Lived Experience of Homelessness and Knowledge Carrier of Human Trafficking from Treaty 61 Territory located in Ontario, Canada

They took our bundles away from us, then our children were stolen from us and we were terrorized by residential schools. Next, we nearly starved to death after they killed off the buffalo because they saw we do ceremonies and made homes with them. After that, our ancestors were dispossessed. We weren't allowed to speak our language and practice our culture, and ultimately we were assimilated because of genocide. Indeed we are veering back to the sacred way of life we call mino bimaadziwin. Indigenous women are godly to the land; they are the most sacred because we can give life, which goes for every woman. Our women should have a lovely home on the land, lots of thriving children inside a beautiful home. We want those traffickers to

give our missing and murdered girls back, and we want to let them know we are not for sale. Still today, we are going through genocide. If you look Around Canada, many indigenous women are homeless, and the streets don't want to give them back. We know Canada has a LANDlord and tenant dispute with Indigenous people and don't want us here. Thankfully today, we have Sisters and Doctors to allow our voices to be heard, and we are very grateful.



Note: This testimony was submitted by Aki'Kwe in May, 2021

Testimony

Jean Quinn, DW, Executive Director of UNANIMA International and founder of Sophia Housing (Ireland)



There is much in our world that is frightening, which at the present moment is overcoming the CORONA-19 Pandemic. People experiencing homelessness continually face exclusion and deprivation in the midst of this virus. Meeting homeless people I came to realize their longing to be loved, healed, embraced and to experience new possibilities. The people I worked with over the years talked about needing creative space on their journey. The Irish poet W.B. Yeats, understood this when he lived in London – he found it very noisy, and he longed to go to the lake Isle of Innisfree “to hear lake waters lapping by the seashore.” I kept that image in front of me when we were looking at developing supported housing in Ireland. Women in particular, and children, need that time to come apart from their traumatic experience, to be supported in an environment around one-to-one support, and around group support – because groups take away the isolation. These same supports are absolutely needed for those coming out of trafficking experiences.

In supporting women on their journey out of homelessness, we would take them out of the inner city and rent a cottage in the mountains. For one woman, this nearly drove her to distraction when we first took that trip up the mountain because she couldn't bear the silence. She lived in a big block of flats where suicides, people jumping off roofs, or killing one another happened. I took time walking with her out by the rivers and the lakes, as a companion on the journey. After some time in our supported housing, at one point she was able to say “when are we going to go back to that place in the mountains? I just need to have silence.” What happened for this

woman was that after discovering nature, she had a sense of wellbeing and serenity.

Supported housing isn't just about housing but the accompanying support of a supported organization and supportive companions. Art has a transformative and energetic power to create change. I used to bring the women to art galleries to look at images that reflected some of their experiences and to be able to talk about it. Art helped the women to become aware of their inner experience, their feelings and thoughts, and transform them through creative means. Journaling is another form of support as it's a helpful window into the behind-the-scenes working of their minds, their hearts, and their life's experience.

Setting up Sophia for me, with those elements, was really important so that people have a holistic experience of supported housing. The children equally needed to have the support. Childhood is a time for children to learn, play, have friendships and time to reach their full potential. However, children also experience homelessness in their own unique way, and it is deeply traumatic for them. Sophia recognises this and has dedicated qualified childcare teams working in our Nurturing Centers which provide support, care, and educational experiences that enable children to grow and develop as confident, competent learners. This kind of support is a great experience for both the women and children and hopefully breaks the cycle of homelessness.



If someone is forced to be in their living situation, is that truly their home?

#hiddenfacesofhomelessness
#endforcedmarriages

PERSPECTIVE

Forced Marriage IS Hidden Homelessness

With the COVID-19 pandemic, concerns for rising domestic violence and abuse rates have been put forth by leading experts and organizations, including those working in the anti-trafficking and housing services sectors. Women subjected to forced marriage are one group that are at heightened risk of domestic violence; the pandemic context, as noted by several of our interviewees and in written inputs, limits access to social services for this group as well, and a further dividing line would be technological access which often facilitates access to support and resources. Forced Marriages, which more often than not contain a cultural element of acceptability, are in fact forms of hidden homelessness and classified as trafficking in persons. Understanding that forced marriage falls within these categories is an important step for reshaping human trafficking prevention, as well as articulating the diverse range of homelessness experiences. The question to ask here is: if someone is forced to be in their living situation, is that truly their home?

GOOD PRACTICE

Innovative Idea: Anti-Trafficking “Observance” Days

Observance days are days that serve to raise attention to the critical issues at hand. The World Day Against Trafficking in Persons occurs annually on July 30th. Consequences include enhanced media coverage of the topic, and calls for political will and action to end trafficking. In 2019, the UNODC reported that the year’s observance was met with the United Nations, “calling for increased action to protect victims and hold perpetrators to account.”¹⁸¹ In 2020, the United Nations focused their coverage of the observance day with commentary on first responders’ contributions to anti-trafficking efforts, generally and within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic, which they assert is “often overlooked and unrecognized.”¹⁸² The UN clarified that first responders to human trafficking, “are the people who work in different sectors - identifying, supporting, counselling and seeking justice for victims of trafficking, and challenging the impunity of the traffickers.”¹⁸³

In addition to the international observance day, Europe has its own day on October 18th, established by the European Commission in 2007.¹⁸⁴ This year, again with the COVID-19 context, organizations have used the opportunity to raise awareness of Human Trafficking: “the Council of Europe’s Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) has called for full respect for the rights of victims of trafficking in human



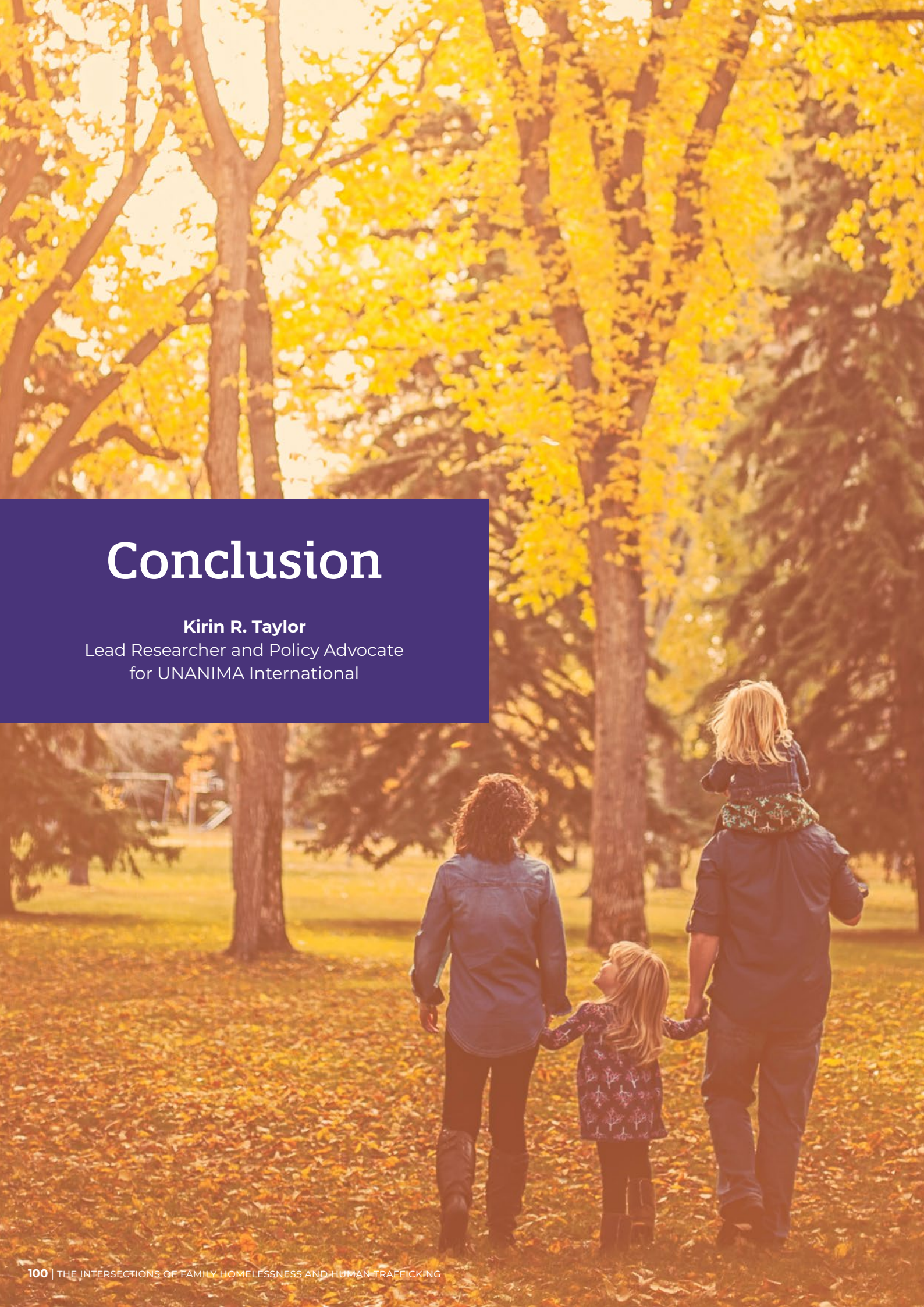
beings during the restrictions related to the COVID-19 pandemic.”¹⁸⁵ Regional networks, such as RENATE use this day as an opportunity to highlight their work and their members. In 2020, they published the video RENATE: Focus on Human Trafficking Through Film event to preview their film festival on trafficking, “and the moves to combat what Pope Francis has described as a ‘crime against humanity.’”¹⁸⁶ Additionally, these occasions are often complimented by the initiation or release of new research on the topic. In 2020 on the EU Anti-Trafficking Day, the European Commission published two research studies: Study on the economic, social and human cost of human trafficking and the *Study on reviewing the functioning of Member States’ National and Transnational Referral Mechanisms*.¹⁸⁷

Another interesting and creative way to address human trafficking is by connecting it to other observance days. On June 16th, 2009, in response to the then current statistics on trafficking in sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, the UNODC reported, “the African Union has chosen the Day of the African Child, celebrated today, to launch AU.COMMIT, an initiative to fight human trafficking in Africa. This campaign seeks to make the fight against trafficking in persons a priority on the development agenda of the continent.”¹⁸⁹ Hopefully, when World Homeless Day comes around on October 10th, Human Trafficking will similarly be a topic of focus and attention, given the extensive intersections of these two issues.



RESOURCES

- “Sisters for Sale” the Documentary by The Human Earth Project
<https://www.humanearth.net/sistersforsale/documentary/>
- Cultural change as a long-term solution for human trafficking by Adam R. Tanielian and Tina Brooks-Green
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/324905938_Cultural_change_as_a_long-term_solution_for_human_trafficking
- Son Preference Advocacy Sheet by The Working Group on Girls
<http://girlsrights.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Son-Preference..pdf>

A full-page background image showing a family of four walking away from the camera on a path covered in fallen yellow leaves. The mother is on the left, wearing a blue denim shirt and dark pants. The father is on the right, wearing a dark blue long-sleeved shirt and dark pants, with a young child sitting on his shoulders. A small child in a patterned dress is walking between them, holding hands. The background is filled with tall trees with vibrant yellow autumn foliage, and a playground is visible in the distance on the left.

Conclusion

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A STATISTIC THAT GIVES PERSPECTIVE

to the global reality is that there are 5.4 known victims of human trafficking for every 1,000 people globally.¹⁹⁰ Meanwhile according to UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency in 2020, “forced displacement is now affecting more than 1% of humanity – 1 in every 97 people – and with fewer and fewer of those who flee being able to return home.”¹⁹¹ Now that the international community has the guidance of the GCM, we must look to it in consideration of the future we want, with some of the most marginalized of our world – the displaced – at the forefront. For example, GCM Objective 19, “creating conditions for migrants and diasporas to fully contribute to sustainable development,”¹⁹² displays the necessity to include all groups in the pursuit of sustainable development. Simply that process of ensuring inclusion of everyone in political decision making and the shaping of their familial, communal, and global development – including refugees, migrants, people experiencing homelessness, survivors of trafficking, and those who fall in to multiple of these categories – would require efforts that would greatly mitigate the drivers of housing insecurity and reduce conditions conducive of experiences such as Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking. Inclusive decision-making requires safe, adequate housing for facilitation of technological access and education, space to address and heal traumas, and secure the ability to participate in and contribute to society, with survival significantly more plausible, and dignified.

UNANIMA International’s oral statement at the United Nations 58th Session of the Commission for Social Development concluded: “to achieve the UN 2030 Agenda, we must not be blindsided to issues at the

intersections and niches of others, and we must INCLUDE individuals and families experiencing such issues in efforts for their prevention and solution; cycles of poverty and complacency must be broken.”¹⁹³ For the next decade, progress on both the issues of Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking must be framed and pursued through this agenda. It is necessary for governments to document accurately the data surrounding these two issues; yet UNANIMA International, among many other NGOs, academics, and even the United Nations have recognized the insufficiency of our current data and even qualitative understanding of grassroots realities. Therefore, we must continue on in research and fostering political will to evaluate, address, and prevent these issues.

Solutions to homelessness and trafficking are intertwined. Both require attention to the family unit, causes of conflict and trauma therein, and the systems and society which are reflected within families’ realities. Grassroot testimonies from people with lived experiences as well as service providers (who may also have lived experience) provides unique and necessary insights into vulnerability and the range of human rights violations experienced when one is homeless and/or trafficked. Case studies of Human Trafficking or Homelessness/Displacement within one country are useful for identifying needs for government action, yet often also reveal the global nature of these pervasive issues; for example, the IJM study *Online Sexual Exploitation of Children in the Philippines: Analysis and Recommendations for Governments, Industry, and Civil Society* “confirmed what [the IJM] long suspected: the Philippines is a global hotspot for online sexual exploitation of children, but the crime is also emerging globally in other parts of the world.”¹⁹⁴

Increased family stability through protections for families and their members when met with instability (such as through social protection floors and social services) are vital. Something we must understand, in order to make progress on each of these issues, is that Family Homelessness is both a driver and effect of

Human Trafficking, and vice-versa. It seems like there is perspective in many societies that slavery is a relic of the past. However, “the buying and selling of women, men and children for sexual exploitation is today’s most common form of slavery.”¹⁹⁵

All forms of trafficking reflect an unstable workforce and unsustainable economic practices and demands, and failure of governments to fulfill international law, and many political actors’ failure to honor human rights. The COVID-19 context reveals the urgency of fulfilling the human right to safe, adequate housing. Access to resources and affordability of needs such as housing, water and sanitation, and education are also points of prevention for Family Homelessness and Human Trafficking alike. While we must remember the threat and vulnerability the internet creates for children and other vulnerable groups, we must also acknowledge that access to the internet and technology can provide solutions and pathways to healing.



Recommendations

The address and prevention of Family Homelessness, Human Trafficking, and their intersections, is critically important to UNANIMA International; this requires strategic action from UN Member States and their respective governments, civil society, and other political actors. In response to the information presented herein, and the research questions and human rights concerns that remain, we make the following recommendations:

We encourage more data and research connecting Human Trafficking and Homelessness, especially with a gendered lens

We encourage consideration of the provision of adequate housing as a human trafficking related matter

We encourage increased disaggregated case-level data on Human Trafficking¹⁹⁶

We encourage permanent, supported housing programs and policies

We encourage protections for migrants and refugees to reduce vulnerability

We encourage adherence to the objective of the Global Compact for Migration (GCM)

We encourage increased opportunities for voices of vulnerable people and people with lived experience of homelessness, housing insecurity and human trafficking to be heard in decision-making and international diplomatic processes

We encourage stopping the privatization and commodification of housing

We encourage popular culture and media to foster anti-trafficking mentalities and awareness of human trafficking

We encourage creation of a family and community atmosphere in public housing and shelters

We encourage trauma-informed public spaces and governmental services, as well as Psychologically Informed Environments (PIE) to support survivors

We encourage application of a Human Rights-Based Approach (HRBA) to analyses, proposed solutions and prevention of Human Trafficking and Homelessness

We encourage long-term access to support services for survivors of Human Trafficking

We encourage emphasis on these topics together in Catholic Social Teaching (CST) and educational efforts

We encourage anti-trafficking legislation at the local, national, and regional governmental levels, and passing anti-trafficking laws which protect women exploited in prostitution, and punish exploiters

We encourage clear guidelines and accountability mechanisms specified by governments for technology and social media companies to assist in preventing trafficking through online means

We encourage nations without policies prohibiting child marriage, forced marriage, and trafficking to develop these in accordance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (Palermo Protocol)

We encourage gender sensitive policies on domestic and unpaid work in accordance with International Labor Organization (ILO) Recommendation 201 (2011)

We encourage individuals to become aware of the origin of the products they consume, including the people involved throughout the supply chain

We encourage including Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) and trafficking survivors as experts in the shaping of policies and their implementation

Reflection

As we come to the end of this unique publication on Family Homelessness and Trafficking, UNANIMA International owes a debt of gratitude to all those who participated in it and those who laid the groundwork for our continued research and advocacy. We are not just learning about each other's work but learning from each other, interacting in a spirit of 'receptive generosity.' In all our publications thus far, we have tried to capture the journey we have all taken together since 2015 with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals: "leaving no one behind – especially the furthest left behind" and hearing the voices of lived experience. As we look deeply into the intersections of homelessness and trafficking, and the issues that intersect with them, we keep using the words "change" and "transformation." For us, change means becoming familiar with reality, and working to make things better around these issues. Transformation is different; transformation is about acting today to create a different future. Transformational change is radical, and ultimately aims to be sustainable.

We repeat our call for a paradigm shift in how we view homelessness and trafficking - both must be considered human and civil rights violations, rather than consequences of individual fault. The paradigm shift we envision would include openness and critical thinking, while also inspiring hope. This paradigm shift entails resisting, rather than colluding with abusive power; it refuses to shame, blame, threaten, or demonize.



In our various publications we are aiming to have a shared understanding of Family Homelessness and a shared commitment to address this serious issue in our world right now. We who comprise UNANIMA International have been blessed with our partnerships and collaborators among the religious, NGOs, civil society, and United Nations agencies and networks. When we come together to share our experiences, we gather with our gifts, skills, diversity, creativity, perspectives, and innovative ideas. And we conclude with a reflection on our Be-Attitudes, which give us a roadmap for compassion and courage.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jean".

Jean Quinn, DW
Executive Director, UNANIMA International

BLESSED IS SHE, BLESSED ARE THEY

Blessed is she whose outward beauty has been mercilessly tampered by years of exposure to the elements and untold hardship - her innate beauty is unrivaled.

Blessed is she who drowns her pain in the turbulent ocean of narcotics – she will find comfort.

Blessed is she who, like the mother hen shelters her little one from the scourging sun of the Sahara or the blistering arctic cold outside her makeshift shelter in a refugee camp – she will find a dwelling place that is warm, safe, and secure.

Blessed is she who goes without so that her little one may be fed – she will find nourishment.

Blessed is she who keeps ‘vigil’ to ensure the safety of her little one as they sleep – she will find security.

Blessed is she who loses custody of her baby because she is considered unfit to care for them – she will delight in the boundless joy of motherhood.

Blessed is she who appears to have been stripped of her human dignity – she is clothed in the inherent dignity of a beloved daughter of God.

-Amarachi Grace Ezeonu

“Blessed are they who provide shelter to the homeless, for they shall find a home in the heart of God.”

- Sister Michele Morek

“Blessed are those who are searching for the necessities of life, for they will be blessed by generous donors and caring people.”

- Sister Barbara Jean Head

“Blessed are they who nurture and shelter children for they will shape a hopeful future generation”

- Sister Margaret O'Dwyer

“Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for right, for they will be satisfied. We ask for justice and peace for all peoples.”

- Mary Ann Dantuono

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