



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

The Trafficking of Women and Children in the Southern African Region

Presentation of Research Findings

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**IOM Research Study on Trafficking in Women and Children
in Southern Africa**

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IOM Research Study on Trafficking in Women and Children in Southern Africa

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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From August 2002 to February 2003, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) conducted a research study of the trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation in the Southern Africa. The methodology was primarily interview-based, relying on statements from victims, sex workers, traffickers, police and government officials, grassroots NGOs, and media – with the South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC)'s *Special Assignment* programme making a major contribution to researching the trafficking of Mozambican victims. In total, IOM researchers conducted 232 interviews, including 25 interviews with victims from eleven countries.

IOM concludes that Southern Africa hosts a diverse range of human trafficking activities, from the global operations of Chinese triad groups, and Russian 'mafia' that touch the region, to the local trade in persons across land borders perpetrated by local syndicates. The region's young women and children are especially vulnerable to the recruitment tactics of traffickers because civil unrest and economic deprivation leave them with few opportunities at home, and makes migration to South Africa or Europe a natural and common solution. The forthcoming report is summarized as follows:

- Refugees are both victims and perpetrators of trafficking to South Africa. As male refugees struggle to survive unemployment and xenophobia in South Africa, many choose to recruit female relations from their countries of origin to South Africa. These women are 25 years and older, are married and have children. Individual refugee traffickers are assisted by ethnically-based refugee syndicates in delivering the recruiting letter to the victim in her country of origin, escorting her to South Africa, and sexually assaulting her as an initiation to sex work should she resist upon arrival. The refugee trafficker will take all earnings she receives as a sex worker and, to protect his investment, he will assist the victim in applying for refugee status to prevent her deportation should she be detained by police.
- In Lesotho, children from rural areas gravitate to Maseru to escape domestic violence, or the effects of HIV/AIDS. As street children, they are coerced or forcibly abducted by white, Afrikaans-speaking men, and taken across the border with the consent of border officials to border towns and asparagus farms in the Eastern Free State. They are held captive in private houses and sexually assaulted in a sadistic manner over several days by small groups of white men in "a feeding frenzy for fantasies of hatred, humiliation and revenge", according to a psychologist at the University of the Western Cape. Victims are then returned to Maseru, and deposited in the street. Street children in Maseru are also trafficked by long-distance truck drivers, who keep them as sex slaves on their routes. Victims have traveled as far as Cape Town, Zimbabwe, and Zambia.
- Mozambican victims are between the ages of 14 and 24, and are offered jobs as waitresses or sex workers in Johannesburg. They pay their traffickers 500 ZAR to smuggle them across the border in minibus taxis either at Komatipoort, or Ponta do Ouro, and stay in transit houses along South Africa's border with Mozambique and Swaziland for one night where they will be sexually assaulted as an initiation for the sex work that awaits them. Once in Johannesburg, some are sold to brothels in the CBD for 1000 ZAR. Others are sold as slaves on private order, or shopped around to mine-workers on the West Rand as 'wives' for 850 ZAR. IOM estimates that at least 1000 Mozambican victims are recruited, transported, and exploited in this way every year, earning traffickers approximately 1 million ZAR annually.

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- Malawi is characterized by three different trafficking flows. *Firstly*, women and girl children are recruited by Malawian businesswomen to pursue employment or educational opportunities in Europe. Sometimes payment is made to the victim's parents. Upon arrival in the Netherlands, the victim is sold to a Nigerian madam for US\$10 000, and told that she must work as a sex-worker to pay off a debt of US\$40 000. The Nigerian madam will ask for her panties, hair, and nail clippings in a ritual that threatens death by magic if she is not cooperative. The victim is then sold to other Nigerian agents from Belgium, Germany, and Italy, or rented to local brothels. One brothel in the Netherlands brands with an identifying mark the sex slaves who work there. If a victim does not perform sexually to the satisfaction of the brothel owner, she is beaten, and given sex lessons, or resold. *Secondly*, women and girl children are recruited along major transportation routes in Malawi by long distance truckers who promise marriage, jobs, or educational opportunities in South Africa. Once in Johannesburg, the victim is held as the trafficker's sex slave in a flat in the CBD, and he will bring clients to the flat that will pay him to have sex with the victim. Malawian businesswomen also traffic victims to brothels in Johannesburg. *Thirdly*, both girls and boys may be recruited in the holiday resorts along Lake Malawi by European sex tourists who pay money to the child's parents with promises of educational opportunities for the child in Europe. The victims are featured in pornographic videos that are transmitted over the Internet with victims' names and contact details included. In Europe, the children are sexually exploited in private homes, and are sold to pedophile rings.
- Recruited by Thai agents in Thailand, Thai victims may be unwitting young women from rural Thailand, or ageing sex workers from Bangkok. The former are promised restaurant jobs in South Africa, while the latter are told of the money to be earned in sex work. They travel by air, either directly from Bangkok, or through Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, or Singapore to Johannesburg International Airport (JIA), where they are met by a Thai or South African agent who sells them to brothels throughout the country. Victims are told that they must earn 60 000 ZAR for their freedom, and are confined and forced to work 12 – 16 hours a day, even when sick, until the debt has been paid. South African clients may marry victims by buying their contracts, although victims are often be forced to continue doing sex work after the marriage to earn profits for her husband.
- Victims may be actively recruited by Triad-linked Chinese or Taiwanese agents for work in Chinese-owned businesses in South Africa, or to study in English language schools, or they may pay to have themselves smuggled out of China. When recruited to work in Chinese-owned restaurants, clubs, or on fishing vessels in South Africa, they are forced into sex work indefinitely. If they come to South Africa to study English, they are often allowed to complete their courses before being told that they have a ZAR 100 000 debt that they must pay by doing sex work. In either case, victims have no freedom of movement, and their traffickers take their earnings. In addition to being a destination country for Chinese trafficking victims, South Africa is also a transit country for others who are being taken to Europe or the United States.
- The Russian and Bulgarian mafias traffic Russian, and other Eastern European women to upscale South African brothels on South African visas fraudulently obtained in Moscow. Victims are promised jobs as waitresses, dancers, strippers, and hostesses in South Africa, but are not told that they must pay a debt of US\$2000 per month for six months as sex

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workers until they arrive in South Africa. If they refuse to cooperate, they and their families in their countries of origin are threatened with violence.

Despite the immense profit such activities generate for criminal syndicates, trafficking in persons has yet to be adequately addressed in Southern Africa. For trafficking in persons to be curtailed in Southern Africa requires cooperation between states to criminalize the trade, share information, protect victims, prosecute traffickers, and raise public awareness in source, transit, and destination countries. Just as organized crime has exploited the opportunities and openness of globalization to expand this sordid trade, so must States, intergovernmental agencies, and civil society exploit those same factors and turn our moral outrage into collective action.

Pretoria, 24 March 2003

PROLOGUE

“Baartman was made to parade naked along a ‘stage two feet high, along which she was led by her keeper and exhibited like a wild beast, being obliged to walk, stand or sit as he ordered’....she was depicted as a wild animal in a cage, dancing for her keeper.”¹

Saartjie Baartman was a twenty-one year old South African Griqua woman employed as a servant on a farm near Cape Town. Already past the traditional age of marriage among her people, and with few, if any, prospects or opportunities to improve her condition, when a visiting English surgeon, Dr. William Dunlop, promised her fame, fortune, and freedom in a far away land, Baartman readily accepted his offer, and traveled with him to London by ship in 1810.

What awaited her in London was neither fame nor fortune nor freedom, and the doctor had had something quite different in mind. Fascinated by her elongated labia and large buttocks, neither of which were uncommon physical features for the people of the Cape, Dunlop chose to exhibit her in the nude in front of endless crowds of Londoners, who paid one shilling apiece to gawk at the “Hottentot Venus” from Africa.

Whether Baartman herself received any of the profits of her exploitation is doubtful. Without family or friends, or the linguistic and socio-cultural skills of Europe that she needed to defend herself, she later turned to prostitution in order to survive. When she died, abandoned and alone in France, only six years after leaving Cape Town, her body was dissected, her skeleton was removed, and her brain and genitals were pickled and displayed as curiosities in the *Musee de l’Homme* in Paris for the next 160 years.²

With the surge of publicity that accompanied an official request by then-President Nelson Mandela to have the remains of Saartjie Baartman returned to South Africa in 1994, her story may be the most notorious case of African trafficking never to have been named as such, but her experience of recruitment by deception and cross-border transportation for sexual exploitation is one common to millions of women and children worldwide.³ Typically lured by promises of well-paying jobs abroad, many victims willingly accept the services offered by human traffickers without realising the full nature of their future employment, or the conditions in which they will work. Once firmly trapped within an illegal migration environment, and disadvantaged by their foreign surroundings, they are forced into sex work, or other forms of bonded labour, to earn profits for their traffickers. Victims of trafficking are prevented from escaping by security guards, violence or threats of violence, by having their identity documents withheld, and very often, by their unfamiliarity with a foreign environment.

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TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS IN THE SADC REGION

INTRODUCTION

▪ General Overview

Saartjie Baartman is one of tens, if not hundreds of thousands of women and children who have been trafficked to, from, and through the African continent for at least a hundred years, and for considerably longer if the African slave trade to the Americas can be considered a prelude to the contemporary trafficking phenomenon. Although the slave trade depended primarily on wars, raids, and other chaotic theatres of forced abduction, and contemporary trafficking relies to a greater extent on deception and false promises, with both practices, the victim's exploitation was and is facilitated largely by her relocation from a place with which she is familiar to one with which she is not.

For the same reason that plantation owners in the Americas preferred slaves from distant Africa, expecting their displacement and resultant disorientation to limit their options, and deter escape, so too do modern traffickers prefer to exploit their victims far from home. Most absorbing for historians, perhaps, is the similarity with respect to the scale of the trades. Between 1540 and 1850, an estimated 15 million Africans were transported to the Americas, while some recent estimates indicate that as many as 4 million women and children are trafficked worldwide every year.⁴

Conducted over a period of 7 months, from August 2002 until February 2003, IOM's research assessment of human trafficking in Southern Africa reveals a diverse range of trafficking activity, from the well-known global operations of Chinese Triad groups and Russian and Bulgarian mafia that touch this region as an afterthought, to the local land-border trade in African women and children. The focus of this paper tends towards these latter – the trafficking of Africans, by Africans, within and out of Southern Africa – about which little is known, and less has been written.

▪ Definitions

For the purposes of this research study, IOM has relied on the definition of trafficking in persons that is provided in the Optional Protocol to the *United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime*⁵. Article 3 of the Protocol reads as follows:

(a) "Trafficking in Persons" shall mean 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.

(b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;

(c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in

persons” even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;

(d) “Child” shall mean any person under eighteen years of age.

Despite the apparent wide breadth of the U.N. definition, the range of related crimes and criminal activities occurring in Southern Africa often challenged IOM researchers to identify them as human trafficking in the absence of another name for them. At the same time, the research team has been reluctant to follow the global tendency to read the trafficking definition too broadly out of a concern that an overly-broad reading of the definition, and an attempt to cluster an assortment of other crimes within a trafficking definition may ultimately result in distracting assistance designed for the unique plight of victims of a more narrowly defined ‘trafficking’.

▪ **Background**

In Southern Africa, documentation is scarce but persistent, and suggests that human trafficking as a contemporary form of slavery has existed for at least a century between Southern Africa and Europe, and within Southern Africa itself. At the turn of the 19th century, young women were being trafficked into Cape Town from Europe as part of, but distinguishable from, an increased flow of European prostitutes to the city.⁶ Others were trafficked to South African mines in response to the demand by white mineworkers for European women.⁷ In 1966, *Jeune Afrique* reported that some 6,000 young African girls were being trafficked to Europe each year, and that many of these ended up as sex slaves in French ports.⁸ In 1990, Anti-Slavery International (ASI) confirmed that children from Mozambique were being trafficked into South Africa where they were sold as “sex chattels,”⁹ and a year later, ASI noted fifteen cases of young women and girl children who had been trafficked from Mozambique into South Africa, primarily as concubines for South African men.¹⁰ Most recently, Cape Town-based NGO, Molo Songololo, published one of the first in-depth studies of the trafficking phenomenon in South Africa, noting that victims trafficked into South Africa included women and children from all corners of the African continent, and abroad (Molo, 2000, 21).

▪ **Vulnerabilities**

Despite its rising profile in many parts of the World, and periodic efforts made to raise public awareness to the problem in Southern Africa, the region remains fertile ground for traffickers who easily capitalize on the vulnerabilities created by war, endemic poverty, minimal education, unemployment, and a general lack of opportunity for much of the region’s population. For women, vulnerabilities are particularly acute, with many having been ‘sexualized’ and/or ‘commoditized’ as young girls within the context of cultural practices that undermine their sexual integrity. The HIV/AIDS pandemic is also having its impact, leaving many widows, or orphan-headed households - often teenagers who must provide for a number of younger siblings. Not to be discounted is the effect the region’s on-going food crisis has had in exacerbating the vulnerabilities of households, so that it is not uncommon to read stories in the press about parents who have sold their children to passers-by, believing that nowhere could the conditions be worse than here.¹¹

But poverty, unemployment, or lack of opportunity are not sufficient conditions for trafficking to occur; a criminal syndicate must also be present to exploit the latent vulnerabilities they create, and so into this tumult steps the trafficker who, like Dr. William Dunlop did in 1810, typically offers an escape with realistic promises of opportunities abroad. For communities in Southern Africa having to deal with difficult or desperate circumstances, migration seems a natural solution, particularly since so many have returned from South Africa fashionably dressed, with stories of wealth and opportunity to be had in the City of Gold.*

▪ **Organized Crime and Law Enforcement**

The range of organized criminal activity in Southern Africa is vast, with the Institute for Security Studies (ISS) reporting in 1999 that as many as 500 organized criminal groups were operating in South Africa at the time, many with African and global networks which facilitate the cross-border flow of illegal goods and people.¹² Some of the more notorious, such as the West Africa/Nigerian networks, Chinese Triad groups, and the Russian and Bulgarian mafia, are known to manage global trafficking empires, while other, ethnically-coherent enterprises operate on a smaller scale, using their comparative advantage to traffic women and children across a particular border where they have developed a network of official and unofficial contacts.

It is not known how much human trafficking profits organized crime in Southern Africa, but the global estimate is as high as US\$ 7 billion per year, making the trade one of the largest sources of profit for organized crime worldwide; only drug trafficking and the weapons trade may be more lucrative.¹³ While penalties for drug trafficking and weapons smuggling tend to be severe, many countries have yet to criminalize trafficking in persons, despite the obvious consequence of failing to do so.

The money made from the sexual exploitation and often enslavement of trafficked women enriches transnational criminal networks. Trafficking in women has arguably the highest profit margin and lowest risk of almost any type of illegal activity.¹⁴

The recurrent civil and political unrest and gross economic disparities that characterize Southern Africa have long generated a potent mix of push and pull factors that, when coupled with borders so porous as to be nearly irrelevant, have ensured a consistent southward flow of documented and undocumented migrants. In most cases, victims of trafficking are a nearly indistinguishable part of these flows, typically displaced from their communities or motivated by dreams of stability and prosperity abroad. The women and children that are lured by traffickers are not particularly naïve, nor are the choices they make necessarily foolish, and yet the exploitation they endure is severe. Many are trapped by unexpected debt that they are forced to pay off in the sex industry, while for others, there is no pretence of debt; they are slaves, forced into sex work for the financial and/or physical benefit of their masters. In either case, their working hours are long, their right to refuse clients limited, and their freedom of movement non-existent.

Most countries in Southern Africa have yet to ratify the Trafficking Protocol, and the absence of domestic anti-trafficking legislation offers law enforcement little incentive to pursue the criminal syndicates responsible for the activity. Indeed, in much of the region, law enforcement officials are unable to distinguish

between human trafficking, which concludes with the exploitation of the victim, and human smuggling, where a client pays a smuggler to assist him with an undocumented border crossing. Typically, police and immigration officials who identify trafficking victims are required to treat them within an illegal immigration regime that offers immediate deportation as its primary solution. Southern Africa also offers little in the way of rehabilitative support for trafficking victims, and the illegal status of most victims gives them little motivation to seek it. Many shelters for battered women in South Africa, for example, require that an applicant produce a South African Identity Document before she is allowed access.

Many countries beyond Southern Africa are increasingly concerned by the excessive human rights violation inherent in the exploitation of trafficking victims, as well as substantial profits exploitation of victims delivers to criminal syndicates, and are implementing legislation aimed at preventing the trade, protecting the victims, and prosecuting the perpetrators. This is an example that the countries of Southern Africa should follow.

OBJECTIVES and STRATEGIC FRAMEWORK: Limits and Methodologies

The impetus for this research was the IOM-sponsored Migration Dialogue for Southern Africa (MIDSA) programme. Initiated by IOM and its partners¹⁵ in 1999, MIDSA aims to provide a forum for senior officials from the member-states of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) to discuss migration issues of common concern. In March 2001, delegates to the MIDSA Workshop in Gaborone, Botswana, identified as a pressing need a research assessment on trafficking in persons in the region, and it was pursuant to this request, that IOM's Regional Office for Southern Africa proposed its six-month Research Study on Trafficking in the SADC Region, which was eventually financed through IOM's own funding mechanism.

Given the quick-impact nature of the 6-month assessment, and the impression created by several Southern African-based NGOs that an ambitious assistance programme was needed sooner rather than later, IOM narrowed the parameters of its research to consider the trafficking of women and children for sexual exploitation only. Although there is considerable evidence suggesting the existence of trafficking for other kinds of forced labour, and of men, IOM targeted its assessment on trafficking for sexual exploitation of women and children largely because of the extreme vulnerability of such victims, its highly abusive and dehumanizing nature, and the Organization's global expertise in responding to this form of trafficking. IOM chose to focus further on the practice of cross-border trafficking, where the Organization has some comparative advantage, rather than include in-country trafficking with which a number of local NGOs, notably Cape Town-based Molo Songololo¹⁶, have substantial experience and a considerable field presence.

At the outset, IOM assumed that South Africa was the primary country of destination for victims of trafficking in the region, given its pockets of extreme wealth, its first class financial and transportation infrastructure, and the growing influence of organized crime. As a research strategy, then, IOM researchers planned to spend the first half of its six-months in South Africa's four major cities – Johannesburg, Durban, Cape Town, and Pretoria – identifying and interviewing victims and other sources whose stories could then be traced back along the trafficking routes to the source countries in the Southern African region. During the second phase of the research, IOM intended to locate source

communities in the region to assess the reasons for, and extent of their vulnerability. While this two-part strategy proved successful for the most part, some flexibility was required, and the researchers were often required to return to South Africa during the second phase to fill gaps in the data. As a result, field researchers concentrated on Lesotho, Malawi, Mozambique, and Swaziland, at the expense of other countries equally deserving of study, such as Botswana, Namibia, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe, but about which information was uncovered in South Africa much later. Since the project began in August 2002, IOM has conducted 232 interviews and identified 25 victims; the first in October, with the number multiplying exponentially with every succeeding month.

The report that follows is divided into two parts. The first part, ‘the Trafficking of Africans within Southern Africa and Abroad’, focuses on Refugee Trafficking in South Africa, Child Trafficking from Lesotho, Trafficking from Southern Mozambique, and Malawi. The second part, ‘Extra-Regional Trafficking into South Africa’, looks at the Trafficking of Thai, Chinese, and Eastern European Women to South Africa. In each chapter, a trafficking flow is discussed in terms of the conditions contributing to the particular vulnerability for the victim, the recruitment strategies employed by the trafficker, the transportation routes and hazards, and the end result sexual exploitation and the pressures and mechanisms used to control her. The report concludes with a brief narrative summary, followed by IOM’s principal findings and recommendations.

Carried out over a seven-month period, beginning in August 2002 and ending in February 2003, this research study does not aim to provide a comprehensive picture of human trafficking in Southern Africa, but rather attempts to construct a snapshot of the trade to which IOM and others may add with future research and operational efforts, and supplemented by recommendations that governments in the region may wish to consider.



ENDNOTES

¹ “Special South Africans: Saartjie Baartman Tragic Venus” Insane Tree Promotions, www.insanetree.com/images/special/saartjie.htm.

² L. Davie, “Living History: Sarah Baartman, at rest at last” (12 Aug, 2002), www.safrica.info/ess_info/sa_glance/history/saartjie.htm; “Special South Africans: Saartjie Baartman Tragic Venus” Insane Tree Promotions, www.insanetree.com/images/special/saartjie.htm; “Saartjie (Sarah) Baartman” The Saartjie Baartman Centre for Women & Children.

³ Christopher Marquis, “A Crackdown on the Traffic in Humans” New York Times (February 26 2003) A3.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ *Optional Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children*. UNGAOR, 55th Sess., UN Doc. A/55/383 (2000).

⁶ Elizabeth B. van Heyningen, “The Social Evil in the Cape Colony 1868 – 1902: Prostitution and the Contagious Diseases Acts” (1984) 10 *Journal of Southern African Studies* 171 at 186; Edward J. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance: Purity Movements in Britain since 1700* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Totowa, 1977) at 173.

⁷ Edward J. Bristow, *Vice and Vigilance: Purity Movements in Britain since 1700* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan Totowa, 1977) at 181.

⁸ Cited in Stephen Barlay, *Sex Slavery: A Documentary Report on the International Scene Today* (London: Heinemann Ltd., 1968) at 32.

⁹ Alex Vines, “Mozambique: Slaves and the Snake of Fire,” London: Anti-Slavery International, 1991.

¹⁰ Sally McKibbin, “Slavery of Mozambican Refugees in South Africa.” London: Anti-Slavery International, 1992.

¹¹ Basildon Peta, “Children up for Sale to Keep Families Alive” The Sunday Independent (9 November 2002). http://www.iol.co.za/index.php?set_id=1&click_id=68&art_id=ct20021109200959628S360364
* i.e. Johannesburg

¹² Peter Gastrow, “Main Trends in the Development of South Africa’s Organized Crime” (Presented at the Conference: South Africa After the Elections – Stock-taking and Future Perspectives, Wildbad Kreuth, 22 and 23 September 1999).

¹³ Francis T. Miko, “Trafficking in Women and Children: The U.S. and International Response,” *Congressional Research Service Report 98-649 C*, 10 May 2000. <http://usinfo.state.gov/topical/global/traffic/crs0510.htm#4a>

¹⁴ Donna Hughes, “The ‘Natasha’ Trade: The Transnational Shadow Market of Trafficking in Women.” (2000) 53:2 *Journal of International Affairs* 9.

¹⁵ I.e. The Southern African Migration Project (SAMP); International Migration Programme (IMP); and United States’ Immigration and Naturalization Service (US – INS).

¹⁶ See Molo Songololo, “Trafficking of Women for Sexual Exploitation – South Africa” and “Trafficking of Children for Sexual Exploitation – South Africa”, 2000. <http://www.duram.de/molo/english/index.htm>

FINDINGS

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General Findings

1. Trafficking in women and children for sexual exploitation is a significant problem in Southern Africa.
2. Angola, Botswana, DR Congo, Lesotho, Mozambique, Malawi, South Africa, Swaziland, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, and Zambia are source countries for trafficking activities in Southern Africa. Thailand, China, and Eastern Europe are the extra-regional sources for victims trafficked to South Africa.
3. Botswana, Malawi, Mozambique, South Africa, Tanzania, Zambia, and Zimbabwe are transit countries for trafficking activities.
4. South Africa is the destination country for regional and extra-regional trafficking activities.
5. Regional victims of trafficking are recruited by deception, coercion, and force. Extra-regional victims are recruited by deception.
6. Regional victims are transported primarily overland, while extra-regional victims are transported by air.
7. The exploitation suffered by African victims in South Africa ranges from exploitation for the personal sexual gratification of the trafficker, sexual exploitation for the financial benefit of the trafficker, and forced 'marriage' for sexual and labour exploitation.
8. The exploitation suffered by extra-regional victims is primarily for the financial benefit of the trafficker, and occurs at brothels throughout South Africa.
9. When identified by police in South Africa, victims of trafficking are deported as illegal immigrants without being questioned about their experiences.
10. Victims are afraid of law enforcement, and do not trust police to assist them.
11. South Africa has no public services specifically designed to assist victims of trafficking.
12. The absence of specific legislation criminalizing trafficking in persons in Southern Africa is a main obstacle preventing police and prosecutors from investigating the practice, and charging the perpetrators.

Refugee Trafficking in South Africa

13. Trafficker recruits as a survival mechanism: "vulnerable prey on the more vulnerable".
14. Trafficker is a close family relation or best friend of the victim.
15. All traffickers have refugee status in South Africa, and have been in South Africa for more than one year.
16. Victims come primarily from refugee-producing countries in Africa.
17. South Africa-based refugee clan members will deliver recruitment letter, and escort victim to South Africa.
18. Victims travel undocumented, with no single route, as part of general migration flows.
19. Victim sells all to pay for transport; increased vulnerability because remittances expected to follow her arrival in South Africa.
20. Clan is an ethnically-based criminal syndicate involved in recruitment, transportation and exploitation/captivity.
21. Exploitation occurs in private accommodation or on the street.
22. Each trafficker exploits one trafficked woman, and she is a family relation.
23. Victims are married women between the ages of 25 and 44, with children.
24. Victims are required to earn ZAR 250+ each night.

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Child Trafficking from Lesotho

25. Victims are male and female street children from Maseru.
26. Traffickers are white, Afrikaans-speaking men; and long-distance truck drivers.
27. Half of all victims are forcibly abducted in Maseru, while the other half are recruited with job offers in South Africa.
28. Possibly the world's shortest international trafficking route – between 20 and 150kms.
29. Physical and sexual abuse at home, or the death of a parent from AIDS forces children from rural areas and border towns to Maseru.
30. Victims trafficked by long-distance truck drivers are taken as far as Cape Town, Zimbabwe, and Zambia.
31. Victims recruited by white men are taken individually, and also in groups of 2 to 4.
32. Victims recruited by white men are transported between 20 and 150kms from Maseru in private vehicles. Corruption of officials at border post facilitates the trafficking process.
33. Victims recruited by white men are taken to private homes in the small towns of the Eastern Free State, asparagus farms in the border region, and Bloemfontein.
34. Victims are locked up in private houses for 3 to 7 days, and suffer sadistic sexual, physical, and verbal abuse, and food deprivation.
35. All sexual assaults are perpetrated by groups of 2 – 4 white men in a “ritual male bonding” and “as a feeding frenzy for fantasies of hatred, humiliation, and revenge”.
36. Abuse of victims is not about sex or money, but power and control, and the “need to humiliate, punish and exploit”.
37. Victims dumped on the streets of border towns of the Eastern Freet State, and make their way back to Maseru on their own.

The Maputo Road

38. Victims come from rural and urban backgrounds, from Maputo and Nampula provinces.
39. Two types of victims: (i) sex worker victims in Maputo who are offered sex work in Johannesburg; (ii) victims who are not sex workers are offered restaurant jobs.
40. Victims are recruited by Mozambican women, working in partnership with Mozambican and South African men responsible for transportation of victims and exploitation.
41. Victims are transported by mini-bus taxi from Maputo to Komatipoort to Johannesburg, Maputo to Ponta do Ouro to Johannesburg, or Maputo to Ponta do Ouro to Durban.
42. Mini-bus taxis transport victims together with other undocumented migrants.
43. For victims taken by way of Komatipoort, they will spend one night in transit houses in Mpumalanga near the Mozambican and/or Swaziland border where their documents and personal possessions are taken, and they are sexually assaulted to initiate and intimidate them into sex work.
44. Transit houses are well known to local population and police.
45. Victims taken through Ponta do Ouro border crossing are taken directly to Johannesburg or Durban, and do not spend a night in a transit house.
46. Upon arrival in Johannesburg, victims who were expecting restaurant jobs are taken to transit houses in Soweto and Lenasia before being sold.
47. Sex worker victims are sold to brothels in Johannesburg central business district (CBD) for ZAR 1000.
48. Victims who were promised restaurant jobs are sold on private order, or sold as ‘wives’ to mine-workers on the West Rand for ZAR 850.

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49. IOM estimates that at least 1000 Mozambican victims are recruited, transported, and exploited in this way every year, earning traffickers approximately ZAR 1 million annually.
50. The same recruitment, transportation, and exploitation methods used to bring victims from Botswana and Zimbabwe through Botswana.

Malawi

51. Trafficking in Malawi is characterized by three distinct trafficking flows: (i) Victims trafficked to Europe; (ii) land border trafficking to South Africa; and (iii) victims trafficked by sex tourists.

Victims Trafficked to Europe

52. Traffickers are Malawian businesswomen with links to Nigerian criminal syndicates in Europe. Other Malawian women are married to Nigerian nationals living in Malawi.
53. Victims are Malawian and Zambian, and are between 15 and 26 years old.
54. Victims are recruited from Lilongwe with offers of jobs in fashion, sales, fruit factories, hotels, and restaurants in Europe.
55. Victims stay with their traffickers for 1 to 7 weeks in houses in Lilongwe prior to departure.
56. The trafficker pays every expense, and victims travel on passports that have been fraudulently obtained for them by the trafficker.
57. Victims leave in groups of 3 or 4, and travel from Lilongwe or Blantyre to Amsterdam, by way of Johannesburg, Frankfurt, London, and/or Brussels. From Amsterdam, victims are taken to cities and towns by train, and are sold to Nigerians for US\$10 000 per victim.
58. Victims are told that they must do sex work to repay a debt of US\$40 000 each.
59. Within a week of arrival, the Nigerian trafficker conducts a ritual to convince victims that she can kill them by magic.
60. Nigerian madam sells victims to Nigerian agents from Germany, Belgium, and Italy, or rents them to local brothels. Nigerian madam is obliged to take a particular victim back if she is uncooperative.
61. Victims endure abusive conditions of sexual slavery, and must do anything the client demands. If they are uncooperative, they are beaten by the Nigerian trafficking.
62. One brothel in the Netherlands brands trafficking victims just below the left collarbone with an identifying mark.
63. If victims do not perform sexually to the satisfaction of the brothel owner or clients, they are given sex lessons.
64. Victims can be resold after they have paid off the US\$40 000.

Land Border Trafficking to South Africa

65. Traffickers are long-distance truck drivers, and Malawian businesswomen.
66. Victims live in border towns and along transportation routes.
67. Victims are between 14 and 24 years old.
68. Victims are recruited with offers of marriage, study, or employment in South Africa.
69. They cross borders without documentation, and enter South Africa through Beitbridge or Komatipoort.
70. Long-distance truckers take victims to flats in Johannesburg CBD as personal sex slaves, or rents them out for sex to his friends.
71. Malawian businesswomen sell victims to Johannesburg brothels.
72. Long-distance truckers gang-rape or murder victims who resist.

FINDINGS

(Embargo Until: 24 March 2003)

73. Of the 80 people deported from South Africa to Malawi every month, at least two are trafficking victims.

Victims Trafficked by Sex Tourists

74. Victims are boys and girls all under the age of 18 years.
75. Victims live in tourist spots in districts of Nkhata Bay, Nkhotakota, Salima, Monkey Bay, and Mangochi.
76. Victims are recruited with gifts and money by male and female sex tourists from Germany, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom, and are lured into a sexual relationship with them while in Malawi.
77. Victims feature in pornographic videos that are distributed over the Internet. The names and contact details of the victims are included.
78. Sex tourist traffickers give victim's parents expensive gifts, including money, and offer employment and educational opportunities for the child victim in Europe.
79. In Europe, victims are kept as personal sex slaves by the trafficker or distributed to pedophile rings.

Thai Victims to South Africa

80. Seventy per cent of Thai victims are 25 to 35 year old sex workers who have limited earning power in Bangkok, and are recruited with offers of greater earnings in South Africa. Thirty per cent of victims are non-sex workers, and are recruited with offers of jobs as waitresses, cleaners, and *au pairs* in South Africa.
81. Trafficker makes all arrangements for victims' travel.
82. Victims travel from Bangkok, Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, and Singapore to enter South Africa at Johannesburg International Airport on a visa-free regime.
83. Once in South Africa, victims become the responsibility of Thai *mama-sans* or male agents, and are told that they are expected to pay ZAR 60 000 debt within 6 months.
84. Victims are forced to work 12 to 16 hours a day, seven days a week. They have no freedom of movement, and all earnings are taken as debt-repayment, and are divided among Thai agents, Thai *mama-sans*, and South African brothel owners.
85. Victims are circulated among brothels throughout South Africa.
86. South African clients marry Thai victims by purchasing their contracts, and may force them to continue doing sex work so they can keep the profits.
87. Traffickers bribe immigration officials to extend the legal stay of victims in South Africa.
88. IOM estimates that between 800 and 1100 Thai victims are trafficked into South Africa every year.

Chinese Victims to South Africa

89. Victims may be actively recruited by Chinese or Taiwanese agents with links to Triad groups for work in Chinese-owned businesses, or to study in English language schools, or they may have paid to have themselves smuggled out of China.
90. Victims come from southern China, and enter South Africa through Johannesburg International Airport, or over the land borders from Lesotho or Mozambique. They arrive with tourist visas, study permits, or false Japanese passports.
91. Victims recruited to work in restaurants, clubs, and on ships with exclusive Chinese clientele are forced into sex work indefinitely.

FINDINGS

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92. Victims who come to study at English language schools are told that they must pay at debt of ZAR 75 000 – 100 000 as sex workers.
93. Victims have no freedom of movement and all their earnings go directly the restaurant or club, or in payment of the debt.
94. South Africa is a transit country for trafficked women to Europe and the United States.

Victims from Eastern Europe

95. Traffickers in Russia and Eastern Europe recruit women for the Russian and Bulgarian mafia based in South Africa.
96. Victims are Russian or other Eastern European professional women between the ages of 18 and 35.
97. Victims are lured to South Africa with job offers as waitresses, dancers, strippers, and hostesses. Few victims are aware that they will be doing sex work.
98. Victims travel from Moscow to major Western European capitals and then to Johannesburg International Airport. Maseru International Airport is occasionally used, before victims cross the border into South Africa.
99. South African visas are fraudulently obtained in Moscow.
100. In South Africa, victims are told of a debt burden they owe the traffickers, and that they must do sex work to pay it. If they resist, they and their families in the country of origin are threatened with violence.
101. Victims are placed in up-market brothels in Johannesburg and Cape Town, and must pay US\$2000 per month for six months.

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in Southern Africa**

RECOMMENDATIONS

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Legal Framework and Policy Development

1. Sign, ratify, and implement the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, and the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children.
2. National legislation on trafficking in persons should, at a minimum,:
 - define precisely the crime of trafficking in accordance with international standards, and include expressly all exploitative practices covered by the international definition of trafficking such as debt bondage, forced labour, and forced prostitution;
 - ensure that definitions of trafficking reflect the need for special safeguards and care for children, including appropriate legal protection;
 - ensure that trafficked persons are not punished for any offences or activities related to them having been trafficked, such as prostitution and immigration violations;
 - ensure that victims of trafficking are protected from summary deportation, or return where there are reasonable grounds to suspect that such return would represent a significant security risk to the trafficked person or to his/her family;
 - consider temporary or permanent residency in countries of transit or destination for trafficking victims in exchange for testimony against alleged traffickers, or on humanitarian and compassionate grounds;
 - ensure that victims of trafficking are offered the possibility of obtaining compensation for damages suffered;
 - provide for proportional criminal penalties to be applied to persons found guilty of trafficking in aggravating circumstances, including offences involving trafficking in children or offences committed or involving complicity by State officials; and
 - provide for the confiscation of the instruments and proceeds of trafficking, and related offences, to be used for the benefit of trafficked persons.

Investigation, Identification, and Prosecution of Traffickers

3. Identify a national government official as the country's trafficking focal point, and establish a National Task Force on Trafficking in Persons that brings together relevant ministries, agencies, intergovernmental organizations, non-governmental organizations, and representatives of civil society to develop and implement policy to combat trafficking.
4. Develop guidelines and procedures for relevant State authorities and officials involved in the detection, detention, reception and processing of irregular migrants, to permit the rapid and accurate identification of trafficked persons, and ensure that special procedures are in place for the rapid identification of trafficked children.
5. Create a specialized police unit or task force, rather than local police forces, to deal with trafficking cases, including both trafficking investigations and the protection of victims from reprisals.
6. Recognize the important contribution that victims of trafficking can, on a voluntary basis, make to investigations of trafficking and organized crime.
7. Strengthen training for law enforcement personnel, immigration and customs officials, prosecutors and judges, and other relevant officials on the prevention of trafficking, prosecuting the traffickers, and protecting the rights of victims, including child victims.

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Data Collection and Information Sharing

8. Standardize the collection of statistical information and field data on trafficking, and related movements, such as irregular migration and migrant smuggling, which may include a trafficking element.
9. Ensure the disaggregation of migration data on the basis of age, gender, nationality, date and place of entry and departure, place of visa renewal, overstay, and deportation.
10. Facilitate access to victims of trafficking for intergovernmental agencies and non-governmental agencies for interview and assistance purposes.
11. Establish direct channels of communication within and between countries linking investigators, law enforcement agencies, regional and intergovernmental agencies.
12. Develop and disseminate information materials on trafficking in persons that focus on raising public awareness.

Assistance and Support to Victims

13. Together with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, develop the capacity of reception centres to receive trafficked persons by providing physical security, basic material assistance, medical care, psychological counselling, and legal assistance to victims.
14. The provision of shelter and assistance should not be made contingent on the willingness of victims to give evidence in criminal proceedings.
15. Develop special witness protection measures to secure trafficking victim witnesses against reprisals.
16. Establish a fund to provide for the voluntary return and reintegration of victims of trafficking to their countries of origin.
17. Adopt policies and programmes specifically designed to protect and support child victims of trafficking.

Regional Cooperation

18. Adopt regional and bi-lateral agreements aimed at preventing trafficking, and protecting the rights and dignity of trafficked persons.
19. Develop procedures and protocols for judicial cooperation and the conduct of joint investigations by law enforcement authorities of concerned states within the region.
20. Introduce standard procedures within the region for the voluntary return and reintegration of victims of trafficking in their countries of origin, and the extradition of traffickers for prosecution.
21. Establish and maintain regular contact with national focal points in the region on all issues pertaining to trafficking operations and victim assistance.