

Why is Human Trafficking so prevalent?

Human Trafficking is defined in the Trafficking Protocol as "the recruitment, transport, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a person by such means as threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud or deception for the purpose of exploitation."

The definition on trafficking consists of three core elements:

- 1) The action of trafficking which means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons;
- 2) The means of trafficking which includes threat of or use of force, deception, coercion, abuse of power or position of vulnerability;
- 3) The purpose of trafficking which is always exploitation. In the words of the Trafficking Protocol, article 3 "exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.

Like drugs and arms trafficking, human trafficking is a market-driven criminal industry that is based on the principles of supply and demand. Many factors make children and adults vulnerable to human trafficking. However, human trafficking does not exist solely because many people who are vulnerable to exploitation. Instead, human trafficking is fueled by a demand for cheap labor or services, or for commercial sex acts. Human traffickers are those who victimize others in their desire to profit from the existing demand. To ultimately solve the problem of human trafficking, it is essential to address these demand-driven factors, as well as to alter the overall market incentives of high-profit and low-risk that traffickers currently exploit.