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WHITE PAPER: The New Face of Slavery

Natalya lives in a small village in Moldova, one of the poorest countries in Eastern Europe. A single mother of two young girls, she must also take care of her sick brother, and struggles to find work in her economically depressed town. Natalya's neighbor Katerina tells her of an employment opportunity in Odessa, Ukraine, with a local bar owner. Katerina says she can get Natalya work as a waitress in a bar and offers, for a fee, to help arrange Natalya's travel to the northern port city.

Within a few weeks, Natalya is on a plane to Odessa, eager to make money and support her brother and daughters. However, once she arrives, Natalya realizes that she has been horribly deceived—that there never was a bar, or waitress job, and that Katerina—her neighbor and friend—has helped to sell her into sexual slavery. The bar owner turns out to be a small-time criminal and pimp, and the bar is his brothel. Before she has time to process what's happened, Natalya's passport is confiscated and she is driven from the airport to a cramped apartment where she—along with a dozen other young women— will stay for the duration of her servitude.

Raped by the pimp who claims he must “try out the goods,” Natalya has her first taste of the violence and degradation to follow. Before long, she is forced to service more than a dozen clients a day—business men, locals, and tourists—interested in quick sex for cash. After several months of sexual abuse and physical violence, Natalya is mentally and emotionally destroyed and is resigned to her situation. She no longer dreams of going home. She is broken.

Defining Trafficking

Human trafficking is the exploitation of human beings, within national or across international borders, for the purposes of forced labor. Human rights groups estimate that anywhere between 12.3 million and 27 million people are enslaved in forced or bonded labor, child labor, sexual servitude, and involuntary servitude at any given time. The United Nations defines human trafficking as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, 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 purposes of exploitation.”

According to the U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation, human trafficking is estimated to annually generate 9.5 billion dollars of revenue.¹ Furthermore, the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services concluded that human trafficking is the second largest criminal industry in the world today.² While the estimates of people involved and the profits earned are shocking, it reveals only part of the

¹“Trafficking in Persons Report.” 2006, page 13. U.S. State Department.
<<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006>>

² Polaris Project: What is Human Trafficking?
http://www.polarisproject.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=26&Itemid=86

story. Human trafficking is difficult to track and quantify, and its total cost is probably far higher than officially noted.

Although there are many different types of trafficking, this paper focuses on the sex trafficking of women and girls because it is the most prevalent type of trafficking (79 percent), and women and girls make up the majority of human victims (66 and 13 percent respectively).³ Sex trafficking includes the recruitment, transportation, harboring, transfer or sale of women and girls for sexual exploitation. Frequently the term trafficking is used to describe cross-border activity but it is increasingly clear that the majority of trafficking takes place within nation-state boundaries.

A report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women and the United Nations Inter-agency Project on Human Trafficking in the Mekong Sub-region argues that sex trafficking appears to be growing in scope and magnitude, with increasing numbers of countries involved due in large part to globalization and the relative ease with which traffickers are able to transport victims between countries.⁴ Domestic sex trafficking has always been an issue, but the ease in which people can be moved around the globe continues to exacerbate the problem of human trafficking.

Sex trafficking and prostitution are inextricably linked; it is impossible to know where one ends and the other begins. Both trafficking and prostitution are caused by a seemingly endless supply of men willing to buy and sell women for their own sexual pleasure. As long as this demand exists, it will be met by criminals—traffickers or pimps—preying on the vulnerabilities of women and girls in order to turn a quick profit. This demand and its exploitation have at its root gender inequality—the belief that women and girls have little value and are a commodity that can be bought and sold to serve someone else’s purpose.

Sex trafficking is a widespread problem, implicating nearly every country in the world:

- Estimates suggest that between 700,000 and two million women are trafficked across international borders annually. Adding domestic trafficking would bring the total much higher, to perhaps four million persons per year.⁵
- 66 percent of all human trafficking victims are women, and 13 percent are girls.⁶
- Sex trafficking constitutes 79 percent of all human trafficking, and nearly all victims of sex trafficking are women and girls.⁷
- About two million women and children are held in sexual servitude around the world, but many experts believe the actual number is far higher.⁸ Because of its clandestine nature, it is difficult to determine the magnitude of sex slavery. In fact, it is estimated that the number of identified

³ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2009*, page 11.

⁴“Trafficking in Persons: A Gender Rights Perspective Briefing Kit.” 2002. United Nations Development Fund for Women and the United Nations Inter-agency Project on Human Trafficking in the Mekong Sub-region. <<http://www.unifem-eseasia.org/resources/others/traffic.htm>>

⁵ United Nations Population Fund. *Trafficking in Human Misery*. www.unfpa.org/gender/violence1.htm.

⁶ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2009*, page 11.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸“The Cause of Sex Trafficking is the Demand for It.” 2006. Captive Daughters. <<http://www.captivedaughters.org/demand.htm>>

human trafficking victims represents just 4 percent of the total number of all victims in the world.⁹

- According to the Dutch National Rapporteur Against Trafficking in Human Beings, only around 5 percent of trafficking cases are ever reported.¹⁰

Sex trafficking happens in both public and private locales. In some cases, trafficking victims are highly visible and engage in street-level prostitution, but in most cases, sex trafficking takes place in underground venues, such as private homes or brothels. Often, public and legal locations such as massage parlors, spas and strip clubs will be a front for illegal prostitution and trafficking.¹¹

Trafficking is the term most frequently used to describe this phenomenon but slavery is a more accurate and descriptive term. Sex trafficking is the new face of slavery because it retains many of the same characteristics of a slave (trafficking victim)/master (trafficker) relationship. Women and girls are purchased cheaply and sold to customers at a high profit margin. Rather than serve one master or in one locale, victims are passed around among a variety of “owners.” And because of the seemingly endless supply of women and girls, slaves are ultimately disposable.¹²

Many countries lack tough anti-trafficking legislation and even when legislation is in place, laws are often not enforced. Relatively few trafficking cases are prosecuted, and of those, very few result in convictions. Fear and shame keep many women and girls from seeking help, and widespread police corruption makes it unsafe for trafficking victims to approach local and national authorities.¹³

Occasionally, women and girls are rescued from traffickers and receive support, care and compassion. More often, though, trafficking victims are treated like criminals by the police. Women and girls arrested in international trafficking circles are often processed as illegal immigrants rather than trafficking victims, and are immediately deported to their home countries where, because few economic alternatives exist, they begin the cycle of trafficking and exploitation all over again. Domestic trafficking victims are arrested for prostitution and jailed or fined when what they need is help. Instead of recognizing that these women were forced and/or trafficked into prostitution and giving them the support and treatment they need, law enforcement regards and treats them as criminals.

Trafficking and Prostitution

Many people believe prostitution is a choice and/or that it is a victimless crime. Both of these beliefs are incorrect. Women and girls are, almost without exception, forced into prostitution. This force can take many different guises. They can be trafficked internationally, removed from their homes and everything familiar, and forced to serve as prostitutes by their traffickers and/or pimps. They can be trafficked domestically, remaining in their countries of origin but still removed from all comfort and

⁹ “Trafficking in Persons Report” 2010, page 7. U.S. State Department.
<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/142979.pdf>

¹⁰ “Trafficking in Persons Global Patterns.” 2006, page 4. United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) <http://www.unodc.org/pdf/traffickinginpersons_report_2006ver2.pdf>

¹¹ “Fact Sheet: Sex Trafficking.” U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/about/fact_sex.html>

¹² Bales, Kevin. *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy*. University of California Press: Berkeley, 2004.

¹³ Richard, Amy O’Neill. *International Trafficking in Women to the United States: A Contemporary Manifestation of Slavery and Organized Crime*. 1999, page 8. DCI Exceptional Intelligence Analyst Program, Center for the Study of Intelligence. <<https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/books-and-monographs/trafficking.pdf>>

safety, and forced to serve as prostitutes by their traffickers and/or pimps in the same manner as international trafficking victims.

Although negative circumstances—lack of money, education, and opportunity—can make these women and girls vulnerable to trafficking, it is the exploitation, force, and coercion by the traffickers that is the crime. No matter the method of force, prostitution is not a choice, and the women and girls who are forced into it are most certainly victims. They are exploited by their traffickers and/or pimps, and forced to have sex against their will. Once prostituted, they are put into severe danger: one study found that 73 percent of victims were assaulted while in prostitution and 68 percent have post-traumatic stress disorder.¹⁴

There is little difference between prostitution and sex slavery. Prostitution is a form of sex slavery. The chief reason women and girls are trafficked is so that traffickers and pimps can profit from their sexual exploitation. The root cause of both sex trafficking and prostitution is gender inequality. Worldwide, people believe that women and girls are commodities that can be bought and sold. The economic vulnerability coupled with men's demand for sex—their willingness to purchase it—is what causes the prostitution industry to exist and grow. Sex trafficking occurs in order to ensure a steady supply of prostituted women for the men who want to purchase them. To end prostitution and sex trafficking, demand for purchased sex must be ended.

The Supply: Who is Trafficked

While adult women constitute 66 percent of all transnational victims, 13 percent of victims are girls.¹⁵ Certain women and girls are especially vulnerable to trafficking and prostitution. These include impoverished and drug-addicted women, and runaway girls. These women and girls have few economic alternatives, and runaways are highly susceptible to the false love and support proffered by traffickers and/or pimps. In all cases, poverty contributes to the vulnerability of women and girls.

Children as young as 1 and 2 years old have been found in brothels; children are typically forcibly taken or sold into sex trafficking by their parents, many of whom believe their children are being sold to adoption agencies. In some cases, poverty, along with the relatively low value placed on girl children, drives parents to knowingly broker their daughters into sex slavery.

Internationally, the former Soviet Republics and other Eastern Bloc countries, which struggle with rampant poverty and political and social corruption, are fertile breeding grounds for the trafficking industry. The same applies to many Asian countries, including Thailand and China, which play major roles in the international trafficking industry.

According to the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women, “the rise in competition in the labor market, unemployment and the loss of job security have undermined women's incomes and economic position. A widening gender wage gap, an increase in women's part-time and informal sector work, as well as atypical work arrangements have pushed women into poorly paid jobs and long-term and hidden unemployment,” leaving them vulnerable to traffickers.¹⁶

¹⁴ Farley et al. “Prostitution and Trafficking in Nine Countries: An Update on Violence and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder.” 2003.

¹⁵ United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. “Global Report on Trafficking in Persons.” 2009, page 11.

¹⁶ O'Connor, Monica, and Grainne Healy. “The Links Between Prostitution and Sex Trafficking: A Briefing Handbook.” 2006, page 6. Coalition Against Trafficking in Women and the European Women's Lobby. <<http://action.web.ca/home/catw/attach/handbook.pdf>>.

One thing all victims of sex trafficking and slavery share is that they are human beings—somebody’s daughter, mother, sister, friend.

The Suppliers: Who Traffics

Organized crime is largely responsible for the proliferation of international human trafficking.¹⁷ Crime groups involved in the sex trafficking of women and girls are often also involved in the trafficking of drugs and firearms, and frequently use violence as a means of carrying out their activities.¹⁸

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the greatest numbers of transnational traffickers are from Asia, followed by Central and Southeastern Europe, and Western Europe.¹⁹ Traffickers tend to have strong national connections to the destination countries their victims are being trafficked to, allowing them to cultivate strong client bases and develop channels of cooperation with local protective authorities.²⁰

Domestic traffickers and pimps often operate within networks and gangs as well, although some act alone or within less formal networks.²¹

Unfortunately, due to the secret nature of the behavior, the vulnerability of victims, and widespread corruption among local and national protective authorities, traffickers are rarely apprehended or prosecuted. Additionally, most trafficking cases are dependent on victims’ complaints, and trafficking victims rarely speak out.²² If prosecuted, human traffickers typically receive light sentences when compared to drug or weapon traffickers.²³

How Women and Girls are Trafficked

Some women are lured into trafficking with the offers of legitimate and legal work as shop assistants or waitresses, for example. Others are lured with promises of love, marriage, educational opportunities and a better life. Some are sold into trafficking by boyfriends, friends, neighbors or even parents.

In international trafficking, women and girls are abducted or recruited in a country of origin, transported through transit countries, and then forced into exploitative labor or sex work in destination countries. Trafficking victims often pass among multiple traffickers, moving further and

¹⁷ Organized crime tends to be less of an issue in domestic trafficking. However, in countries such as Japan, organized crime is a central factor in domestic and international trafficking.

¹⁸ Ibid, page 24.

¹⁹ “Trafficking in Persons Global Patterns.” 2006, page 80. United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) http://www.unodc.org/pdf/traffickinginpersons_report_2006ver2.pdf “Trafficking in Persons Global Patterns.” 2009, page 45. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) <http://www.unodc.org/documents/Global_Report_on_TIP.pdf>

²⁰ Ibid, page 10.

²¹ Raymond, Janice G. and Donna M. Hughes “Sex Trafficking of Women in the United States: International and Domestic Trends” 2001, page 48. <http://www.uri.edu/artsci/wms/hughes/sex_traff_us.pdf>

²² “Protocol for Identification and Assistance to Trafficked Persons and Training Kit.” 2005. Anti-Slavery International. <<http://www.antislavery.org/homepage/resources/PDF/Protocoltraffickedpersonskit2005.pdf>>

²³ “The Race Dimensions to Trafficking in Persons—Especially Women and Children.” 2001. United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. <http://www.un.org/WCAR/e-kit/trafficking_e.pdf>

further from their countries of origin.²⁴ In many cases, traffickers and victims share the same nationality. A trafficker in the Ukraine, for example, may traffic her neighbor to Turkey. Once there, she may sell her victim to a Turkish trafficker, who will take the woman to Thailand, her final destination.

Both men and women participate in the international trafficking of women and girls into sex slavery. Men generally control a trafficking ring, but women are instrumental in effectively managing the trafficking victims. Female traffickers gain the trust of their victims in order to better psychologically manipulate them. In domestic trafficking, pimps/traffickers are virtually all men.

Typically, once in the custody of traffickers, a victim's passport and official papers are confiscated and held. Victims told that they are in the destination country illegally, which increases victims' dependence on their traffickers, and are often kept in captivity. Victims are also trapped into debt bondage, whereby they are obliged to pay back large recruitment and transportation fees before being released from their traffickers. Many victims report being charged additional fines or fees while under bondage, requiring them to work longer to pay off their debts.²⁵

Domestic trafficking and prostitution victims are often "groomed" for exploitation. In one possible scenario, a man—who is either a pimp/trafficker or working for one—befriends a vulnerable woman or girl. He capitalizes on her vulnerability, entices her into a sexual relationship, and persuades her to stay away from home more and more often until she eventually ceases returning home altogether. This makes the woman increasingly dependent on the pimp/trafficker (who she thinks is her boyfriend) for emotional and financial support. Next, the pimp/trafficker persuades his victim to go on a short trip and at this point forces her to prostitute herself. At this stage, the victim realizes that her family and friends have no idea where she is, and she herself might not know where she is. The pimp/trafficker assumes full control of her life and forces her to serve as a prostitute indefinitely.²⁶

A similar scenario has the pimp focusing on runaways. A man approaches a girl in a bus station and offers to buy her a meal or give her a place to stay. The desperate girl agrees. Over time, the man convinces the girl that he loves her and will take care of her. But one day, he tells her that they need money and if she loved him, she would sell her body to make some money for them. If she resists, he

²⁴In 2006, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) examined the flow of trafficking victims around the world. Countries were ranked according their involvement in the trafficking industry and their role in the cycle of trafficking. Origin countries are countries from which trafficked women and girls originate. Typically, origin countries are developing countries with high levels of economic strife and social unrest. Major origin countries include Albania, Belarus, Bulgaria, China, Lithuania, Nigeria, Romania, the Russian Federation, Thailand and the Ukraine. The UNODC found 127 countries of origin. Transit countries are countries through which trafficked women travel. Transit countries may also function as destination and origin countries for various populations of trafficked women. Major transit countries include Albania, Bulgaria, Hungary, Italy, Poland and Thailand. Though there is less data available on transit countries, the UNODC identified 98 transit countries. Destination countries are countries to which trafficked women are sent to work in the sex industry and the point of exploitation. Major destination countries include Belgium, Germany, Greece, Israel, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Thailand, Turkey and the United States. In all, the UNODC, found 137 destination countries.

"Trafficking in Persons Global Patterns." 2006, pages 17-20. United Nations Office on Drug and Crime (UNODC) <http://www.unodc.org/pdf/traffickinginpersons_report_2006ver2.pdf>

²⁵"The Race Dimensions to Trafficking in Persons—Especially Women and Children." 2001. United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance. <http://www.un.org/WCAR/e-kit/trafficking_e.pdf>

²⁶ Human Smuggling and Trafficking Center. "Domestic Trafficking: An Internal Issue." 2008, page 4. <<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/113612.pdf>>.

uses force. Either way, once she submits, she has less resistance the next time. Before long, she becomes part of the group of girls he has “working” for him.

Pimps and traffickers use multiple tools to control their victims. Domestic and international trafficking victims experience various stages of degradation and physical and psychological torture. Victims are often deprived of food and sleep, are unable to move about freely and are physically tortured. In order to keep women captive, traffickers prevent their victims from leaving by telling them that their families or their children will be harmed or murdered if they try to escape or tell anyone about their situation.²⁷ Their own lives are threatened and they are beaten and raped. International victims, because they rarely understand the culture and language of the country into which they have been trafficked, experience another layer of psychological stress and frustration.

Often, before servicing clients, women are forcibly raped by the traffickers themselves, in order to initiate the cycle of abuse and degradation. Some women are drugged in order to prevent them from escaping. Once “broken in,” victims of sex trafficking and prostituted women can service up to 30 men a day, and are vulnerable to sexually transmitted diseases, HIV infection and unwanted pregnancy.

The Demand: Who Purchases Trafficked Women and Girls

There is a misconception that sex trafficking only occurs in and affects developing nations. However, many of the major destination countries for victims of international trafficking are developed nations, and domestic trafficking is a widespread problem in nations both developing and developed. Though sex trafficking takes place around the world—on city streets, in suburban neighborhoods and in rural villages—little emphasis has been placed on the demand-side of the trafficking equation.

Demand is at the root of sex trafficking; to eradicate sex trafficking, demand must first be eradicated. This is because sex trafficking, prostitution and commercial sexual exploitation follow the laws of economics. Without demand for purchased sex, there would be no need for supply (women and girls) and sex trafficking would diminish rapidly. Demand fuels both domestic and international trafficking.

At the heart of demand is gender inequality which creates and reinforces the belief that women are a commodity that can be bought and sold. Worldwide, cultural beliefs and practices encourage and allow demand to flourish. In nearly every country in the world, it is believed that prostitution is a victimless crime that has been around forever and can never be eradicated. In many countries, there is little to no perceived stigma to purchasing sexual favors for money. In Japan, for example, many men consider visiting prostitutes a sensible solution to the difficulties of juggling work and relationships. Patriarchal and misogynistic beliefs about the status and value of women underscore many men’s attitudes toward sexual trafficking and prostitution. There are instances of parents in Thailand financing a new television set with the sale of a daughter. “A recent survey in the northern provinces found that of the families who sold their daughters, two-thirds could afford not to do so but instead preferred to buy color televisions and video equipment.”²⁸

These perspectives ignore the fact that women are forced into prostitution either physically, mentally, or circumstantially, and that prostituted women almost uniformly want to get out—surveys consistently find that 89 to 96 percent of prostituted women want to exit prostitution but cannot due to a lack of basic resources.

²⁷“Trafficking in Persons: Amnesty International Fact Sheet.”

<http://www.amnestyusa.org/women/trafficking/pdf/trafficking_of_persons.pdf>.

²⁸Bales, Kevin. *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy*. University of California Press: Berkeley, 2004, 40.

One major component of the proliferation of trafficking is sex tourism. Sex tourism is the practice of traveling or vacationing for the purpose of having sex, and is estimated to be a billion dollar annual industry worldwide.²⁹ According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), sex tourism makes up between 2 and 14 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP) of Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. Many sex tours explicitly feature prepubescent girls, marketing almost exclusively to pedophiles who prey on young children, and men who believe that having sex with virgins, or young girls, will cure sexually transmitted diseases. Often, these men spread HIV and other STDs to their young trafficking victims, creating localized disease epidemics.

A recent study from the UN Commission on Human Rights found that “the influx of international aid workers, military personnel, peacekeepers and employees of international organizations in situations of armed conflict or political instability often brings about a demand for services deriving from sexual exploitation.”³⁰ In an effort to combat this, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has enacted a zero tolerance policy regarding trafficking by NATO forces and staff.³¹ This policy was enacted in 2004 and updated and renewed in 2007. The Palermo Protocol also holds countries accountable to end trafficking as it calls upon governments to take social and legislative measures to discourage demand. As of June 2010, 116 countries have enacted legislation against all forms of trafficking.³²

There is no one profile of men who purchase sex. A study in the United States found that the average age of men at the time they first purchase sex ranged from 9 to 62.³³ A similar Canadian study found that age at time of first purchasing sex ranged from 12 to 57.³⁴

Men who demand purchased sex are not limited to any one race, education level, socioeconomic status or religion. A study of men who purchase sex in Chicago found that 40 percent were African American, 36 percent were white, 14 percent were Latino, 5 percent were Asian/Pacific Islander, and 5 percent were multicultural or “other”.³⁵

Their education levels ranged from a few years of high school to graduate degrees.³⁶ The yearly income levels amongst these men ranged from less than \$20,000 to more than \$140,000.³⁷ Of these men, 44 percent were not religiously affiliated and 56 percent were—and of these, they were divided

²⁹“United States: The Role of Military Forces in the Growth of the Commercial Sex Industry.” 2003. Equality Now. <http://www.equalitynow.org/english/actions/action_2301_en.html>

³⁰Commission on Trafficking. “Integration of the Human Rights of Women and a Gender Perspective.” 2006, page 18.

<<http://action.web.ca/home/catw/attach/Special%20Rapporteur%20trafficking%202006%20report%20dem and.doc>>

³¹NATO Policy On Combating Trafficking In Human Beings <<http://www.nato.int/docu/comm/2004/06-istanbul/docu-traffic.htm>>

³² “Trafficking in Persons Report 2010” U.S. State Department. Letter from Luis CdeBaca. <<http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/142979.pdf>>

³³ Martin A. Monto, “Focusing on the Clients of Street Prostitutes: A Creative Approach to Reducing Violence Against Women—Summary Report,” Report submitted to National Institute of Justice, October 30, 1999.

³⁴ Kennedy, Alexis M., Boris B. Gorzalka, John C. Yuille, “Men Who Solicit Prostitutes: A Demographic Profile of Participants in the Prostitution Offender Program of British Columbia,” Prepared for the Vancouver Police Department and the John Howard Society of Lower Mainland, February 2004.

³⁵ Durschlag, Rachel and Samir Goswami. “Deconstructing the Demand for Prostitution: Preliminary Insights From Interviews with Chicago Men Who Purchase Sex,” 2008.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Ibid.

between Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, and Jewish.³⁸ Sixty-two percent of these men had a partner (girlfriend or wife), and 38 percent were unattached.³⁹

A study of men who purchase sex in London also found that the men are highly varied. In this study, 47 percent of men were white, 11 percent were black or African, 10 percent were Asian, 10 percent were Indian or Pakistani, 4 percent were Eastern European, 4 percent were multicultural, and another 14 percent included Afghan, Australian, Brazilian, Central American, Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, Western European, South African, and African American.⁴⁰ Their incomes ranged between less than \$32,000 and more than \$80,000.⁴¹ Half of these men were politically moderate and the other half were split between right-leaning and left-leaning.⁴² Fifty-four percent of these men were in a relationship, and 44 percent were not.⁴³

These numbers do not necessarily represent exact breakdowns of all men who purchase sex, but they illustrate a critical point: men who purchase sex and thereby create demand for victims are incredibly varied. It is impossible to dismiss any type of man as being innocent of purchasing sex or to claim that any one group of men is solely responsible for purchasing sex. Men of all kinds engage in this practice.

One of the things that all of the men who purchase sex share is a belief that the bodies of women and girls are available for their sexual pleasure for a price. And that once the price has been paid, those women and girls will do what the men want. These men can turn a blind eye to the reality of these women and girls and believe the faked smiles and come-ons. As Victor Malarek, a prominent Canadian journalist and author that studies trafficking and demand puts it: “Without men, there would be no demand. There would be no supply, either: it would not be profitable for pimps and criminals to stay in this business if platoons of men weren’t prowling side streets in search of purchased sex— male buyers who are willing to close their eyes and shell out \$50 or \$100 for a few minutes of physical bliss while deepening the misery of countless women and children.”⁴⁴

The High Cost of Human Sex Trafficking

Sex trafficking of women and girls has astronomical costs, both to the women and girls who are its primary victims, and to society as a whole. Trafficking is an abuse of physical and mental integrity, security of the person, freedom of movement, and privacy. Trafficking “violates the universal human right to life, liberty and freedom from slavery.”⁴⁵

Sex trafficking also has widespread negative consequences for individuals and societies:

- Sex trafficking helps to promote societal breakdown by removing women and girls from their families and communities. If and when victims are able to return to their communities, they often find themselves doubly victimized by social stigmatization, discrimination and rejection.

³⁸ Ibid.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Farley, Melissa et al. “Men Who Buy Sex: Who They Buy and What They Know.” 2009.

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² Ibid.

⁴³ Ibid.

⁴⁴ Malarek, Victor. *The Johns: Sex for Sale and the Men Who Buy it*. Arcade Publishing, New York. 2009.

p xv.

⁴⁵ “Trafficking in Persons Report.” 2005, page 13. U.S. State Department.

<<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2005/>>

- Sex trafficking fuels organized crime groups that usually participate in many other illegal activities, including drug and weapons trafficking and money laundering.
- Sex trafficking negatively impacts local and national labor markets, due to the loss of human resources. The effects of trafficking on economies include “depressed wages, fewer individuals left to care for elderly persons, and an undereducated generation. These effects leads to the loss of future productivity and earning power,” especially in child trafficking victims.⁴⁶
- Sex trafficking burdens public health systems. Trafficking victims often suffer from myriad physical and psychological traumas, including sexually transmitted diseases, AIDS/HIV, anxiety, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder. Victims also often suffer physical complications from unsanitary living situations and poor nutrition.
- Sex trafficking erodes government authority, encourages widespread corruption, and threatens the security of vulnerable populations.⁴⁷

Combating Trafficking

In order to end the sex trafficking and prostitution of women and girls, efforts must be made on both the supply side (the traffickers and victims) and demand side (trafficking clients and sex buyers) of the problem.

Eradicating demand for purchased sex is a critical step in the fight against sex trafficking. If there were no demand for purchased sex, the market would collapse and the women and girls who are forced to serve as the supply would no longer be trafficked and exploited. Laws must be crafted to punish men for commercial sexual exploitation, while offering victims support and rehabilitation. It is critical that men and boys be educated about the truths behind sex trafficking and prostitution, as well as about healthy relationships and respect for women.

As mentioned previously, gender inequality is at the heart of demand for purchased sex. It is crucial to elevate the status of women and to close the gender gap in order to bring about parity between men and women and end demand for purchased sex, which objectifies and exploits women.

Addressing gender inequality is important in terms of supply-side solutions to ending trafficking as well. Economic opportunities and alternatives must be developed for potential trafficking victims. Examples of such initiatives include micro-lending programs, job training and counseling, educational programs, and grants to non-governmental organizations to accelerate and advance the political, economic, social and educational roles of women.⁴⁸ Women and girls are especially vulnerable to sex trafficking and sexual exploitation because of the dearth of economic opportunity, which can be exacerbated by gender inequality. Creating gender parity and engineering avenues for women and girls to become economically stable and self-sufficient will help to protect them from being vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation.

The fight against sex trafficking requires the cooperation and coordination of multiple national and international law enforcement and governmental agencies. This includes both international and domestic trafficking because multiple agencies within each country work to fight trafficking. Thus

⁴⁶Ibid, page 14.

⁴⁷“Trafficking in Persons Report.” 2006. U.S. State Department. <<http://www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006>>

⁴⁸“Needs Assessment for Service Providers and Trafficking Victims.” 2003, page 4. National Institute of Justice. <<http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/202469.pdf> >

far, efforts to counter trafficking have been largely inefficient and ineffective. In many countries, trafficking victims do not receive adequate assistance. A recent report from Anti-Slavery International found that authorities tend to give trafficking victims irregular migrant status, rather than consider them as victims of trafficking, which makes it difficult to track and manage cases of trafficking. It also prevents trafficking victims from getting the social services they desperately need. The report also found that trafficking victims lack access to shelters and legal services, as well as inadequate security and few alternatives if returning to their homes. Most countries lacked special services for trafficking victims under 18.⁴⁹ Prostituted women are trafficking victims, but they are rarely treated as such and are instead prosecuted for selling sex. In order to combat trafficking and to ensure that exploited women and girls receive needed assistance and services, it is extremely important that laws and law enforcement officers properly recognize victims as what they are.

In order to prevent sex trafficking, and better serve victims, countries and regions are encouraged to increase public awareness about trafficking and develop educational materials. Lawmakers and law enforcement officials are urged to create and enforce legislation that punishes traffickers and those that purchase sex. Domestic violence shelters and social support services are encouraged to develop programs to handle the needs of trafficked women and girls. And rehabilitative transitional living programs should be implemented to serve trafficked women and girls who are attempting to return to mainstream society.

SIA endorses and advocates that the Swedish model of anti-prostitution legislation be adopted at all levels of government in all member countries. The Swedish model incorporates all of the elements needed for a successful fight against sex trafficking as outlined above. This model criminalizes purchasing sex while simultaneously decriminalizing the selling of sex. This ensures that the men who create demand for purchased sex are punished while the women who are exploited by being trafficked and forced into prostitution are not. This model also mandates that prostituted women are provided with comprehensive social support services. It calls for public education efforts so that citizens can fully understand the horrific nature of sex trafficking and its connection to prostitution, and for careful training of law enforcement officers to ensure proper implementation.

How Soroptimist Works to End Sex Trafficking of Women and Girls.

As an organization of business and professional women working to improve the lives of women and girls and local communities throughout the world, Soroptimist undertakes a number of projects that help potential trafficking victims. In 2007, the organization launched a major campaign—

Soroptimists STOP Trafficking—aimed at raising awareness about the devastating practice of sex trafficking. Soroptimist club members place sex slavery awareness cards in highly visible locations including police stations, women’s centers, hospitals, legal aid societies, etc. The program has evolved to include a multi-dimensional approach to end sex trafficking including raising awareness, assisting victims, preventing slavery, and advocating for better laws and enforcement. For more information about the campaign, visit the website at <http://www.soroptimist.org/stoptrafficking.html>.

In addition, Soroptimist undertakes a number of projects that help victims and potential victims. These projects provide direct aid to women and girls—giving women economic tools and skills to achieve financial empowerment and independence:

⁴⁹“Protocol for Identification and Assistance to Trafficked Persons and Training Kit.” 2005, page 10. Anti-Slavery International.
<<http://www.antislavery.org/homepage/resources/PDF/Protocoltraffickedpersonskit2005.pdf>>

Soroptimist Women’s Opportunity Awards program—Soroptimist’s major project—provides women who have primary financial responsibility for their families with the resources they need to improve their education, skills and employment prospects. By helping women to receive skills and resource training, Soroptimist provides trafficking and potential trafficking victims with economic options. Each year, more than 1,000 women receive almost \$1.5 million dollars through this program.

Soroptimist Club Grants for Women and Girls provide Soroptimist clubs with cash grants for innovative projects benefiting women and girls. Many clubs undertake projects benefiting trafficking victims and addressing the demand side. A Soroptimist club in the Philippines, for instance, supports a shelter for abused women and girls escaping from sex trafficking. A club in California held a conference in support of the Western Regional Task Force on Human Trafficking. A club in Chicago has held several educational events related to trafficking. Clubs in Southwest Washington, Vancouver and Camas-Washougal partnered with other organizations to create the Northwest Coalition Against Trafficking. NWACT held a conference in January 2010 bringing together multiple partners to educate attendees that trafficking is happening in their communities. The conference drew more than 400 people, a U.S. senator and national press attention. In addition to raising awareness, the conference raised more than \$3,000 for a future shelter in Portland, Oregon. Other clubs around the world educate young people about healthy relationships free from violence and control.

The Soroptimist Ruby Award: For Women Helping Women honors women who work to improve the lives of other women and girls. Kathryn Xian, a past recipient, led a grassroots campaign in Hawaii against a local tour company offering Asian sex tours. She also testified at a Hawaii State House of Representatives hearing on trafficking. The hearings resulted in the passage of Act 82, which makes “promoting travel for prostitution” a Class C felony violation in Hawaii. Act 82 now serves as model legislation for other states.

The Soroptimist Disaster Grants provide financial assistance to regions affected by environmental disasters or acts of war, to specifically benefit women and girls. Women and girls affected by disasters are often vulnerable to traffickers.