

FACTORS THAT FACILITATE THE GROWTH OF TRAFFICKING

The closing decades of the twentieth century saw the re-emergence of trafficking in persons, particularly women and children -- very often for sexual exploitation, but also for forced labour, forced marriage and forced adoption. Rooted in social and economic conditions in the victim's country of origin, this scourge has grown lamentably widespread in recent years. It thrives on discrimination against women, especially the increasing "feminization of poverty". It is driven by organized gangs of traffickers, who ruthlessly exploit their victims for the easy profit they hope to gain.

In our globalizing age, many factors contribute to the growth of trafficking in women and children. These include large-scale population movements and increased disparities in production and wealth among countries and between genders. In addition, traffickers have faced few risks of detection, often because of the powerlessness of their victims.

- ❑ **Fall of the Communist system**
- ❑ **Global economic trends**
- ❑ **Increased capacity for global migration**
- ❑ **Increased wealth gap**
- ❑ **Declining economic conditions in the post-socialist countries**
- ❑ **Declining socioeconomic status of women**
- ❑ **Continuing rise in unemployment among women**
- ❑ **Increased demand for personal services in the developed world**
- ❑ **The rapid and unregulated enticement and movement of human capital via the Internet**
- ❑ **Restrictive immigration policies**
- ❑ **Explosion in transnational organized crime and corruption Government inaction, and, in the most egregious circumstances, Government complicity**
- ❑ **Enormous profitability of the business**

The trafficking crisis cannot diminish until society responds to the contributory factors that elicit illegal migration.

Poverty, Unemployment, and Lack of Education Are Root Causes of Trafficking

To reduce the number people trafficked worldwide governments, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and others are tackling some of the root factors that encourage the practice. Poverty, unemployment, and lack of education and access to resources are driving forces as people take risks to improve their living conditions.

Trafficking for forced labor is being addressed as a human rights issue, rather than an immigration problem. Historically, trafficked people, particularly those who were not trafficked for forced prostitution, have been treated as criminals and as illegal immigrants. As such, they have been arrested and deported, sometimes even prosecuted for entering a country illegally or holding fake travel documents. Their traffickers may have been convicted of alien smuggling, but were rarely held accountable for the numerous human rights violations that accompany trafficking, including servitude, slavery, rape, and physical and psychological abuse.