

» There are all types of vulnerable persons in our communities, and they all deserve our love, protection and support, regardless of their race, nationality or disposition.

Everyday around us, there are live-in domestic workers and migrant workers who are exploited daily in the sugar cane industry, bananas, construction industry. In some countries, many undocumented migrants work in these industries for decades, without contracts and with no pension to receive at the end of their decades-long tenure.

» Human Trafficking Facts:

- Political will is critical in any country's fight against human trafficking
- Over 80% of victims identified in Trinidad and Tobago are foreign nationals
- According to a Human Trafficking Caribbean study conducted in 2019, 81% of the demand for commercial sex in Trinidad and Tobago is local demand
- Between 2013 and 2022, persons charged for human trafficking and related offences include Chinese nationals, male and female Venezuelan nationals, Trinidad and Tobago nationals and local police officers
- According to INTERPOL, once you locate the exploitation, you will find the victims, once you find the victims, you will find the traffickers
- Many victims fear being arrested or imprisoned by the authorities
- Victims are in constant debt because they have to be able to pay back all costs accrued by the trafficker, as well as make a profit for the trafficking network. This recurring debt is referred to as "debt bondage"
 - Many victims are afraid to leave and to report their



traffickers because of control and possible retaliation

- Many victims believe that their traffickers are being protected by the authorities. This, coupled with threats, ensures the victims' silence and compliance
- Traffickers are schemers – they prey on a victim's vulnerabilities, circumstances and weaknesses by beatings, lies, deceit, emotional and verbal abuse, intimidation, forced drugs and alcohol use, threat of deportation or child custody, confiscation of ID documents, witnessing severe abuse of other victims, starvation, causing victim to have illegal immigration status or to commit illegal acts.

» Safety Tips when Seeking Safe Employment:

- Know the minimum wage in the country of work
- Don't be fooled by promises of an unrealistically high salary if you are applying for a temporary and/or unskilled position
- If you receive an offer that sounds "too good to be true", then it is likely to not be true
- Check the average salary on the internet for the position you are applying for. If they promise you much more, there is probably something wrong
- Ensure there is a contract: Even if your friend or family member coordinated this employment opportunity, it is important to ensure that there is a contract
 - Your potential employer and/or the intermediary agency are obliged to provide you with a contract in your native language or in a language you are fluent in

- Do not sign a contract in a language you do not understand well. Even if the intermediary agency provided you with a bilingual contract, seek out an independent translator to make sure it is transparent
- Do not sign a contract that states that you will carry out "other activities" without describing them
- Maintain contact with your family and friends and provide them with updated contact and location information
- Give them an updated photo
- Create a code word or phrase that will let your family know if you are in a dangerous situation
- If you have doubts about your potential employment, find a lawyer who you trust and show him a contract
- Be aware of your rights in the country where you are going to be employed
- Have a small amount of money with you at all times in case of an emergency
- Learn at least a few necessary phrases in the language of any foreign country where you will be working, such as "please help me" and "where is the police station?"



» Trafficking in Persons for Organ Removal and Organ Trafficking

Did you know that there is a growing demand for and shortage of supply of organs available for transplant worldwide? According to the UNODC, organ transplantation is the preferred, and sometimes the only, treatment for patients who suffer from organ failure. Disparity between the need and supply of organs has resulted in sick patients trying to obtain an organ illegally from vulnerable and/or impoverished populations, often with the help of facilitators who organized the illicit transplants.

The most common organs and tissue sought on the 'organ market' that are obtained from living donors are kidneys, livers and corneas. In recent years other forms of trafficking in human body parts came to light, including human egg trafficking, skin trafficking; trafficking in human embryos; and blood plasma.

Trafficking in persons for the purpose of organ removal can also occur

in cultural and ritualistic contexts that may involve the removal of body parts in addition to organs. In some States, counter-trafficking legislation goes beyond organ removal to also include body parts (to capture cultural and ritualistic practices).

According to UNODC, for medical reasons, organ donors between 20 and 40 years of age are preferred due to the optimal organ size and its vitality. Existing data indicates that men are the main source of organs. The nationalities of organ donors vary but research indicates that the majority come from low income countries (with a large proportion of the population living below the poverty line), middle income countries, or from countries affected by political turmoil.

According to Section 3 of Trinidad and Tobago's Trafficking in Persons Act Chapter 12:10, exploitation includes the "illicit removal of human organs", which is the unlawful removal of organs, tissue or body parts from a victim irrespective of whether the victim consented to such removal.

» How can you make a difference?

- Lobby for changes and amendments to legislation to make the laws more operational and applicable to penalise companies and businesses that purchase raw materials or goods made by exploited workers
- Lobby for best practise labour standards across all sectors and industries
- Change any addictions to cheap goods and services made by exploited workers
- As a consumer, lobby against the businesses that buy and sell goods and services made by exploited workers
- Report suspicious activities or observations to a TRUSTED law enforcement officer - activities such as houses/apartments being used for commercial sexual activity, for adult entertainment or for sex parties.