

HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND NGOS - WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SANLAAP

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ABSTRACT

It is a matter of bitter shame and sorrow and deep humiliation that a number of women have to sell their chastity for men's lust. Man, the law giver, will have to play a dreadful penalty for the degradation he has imposed upon the so-called weaker sex. When women freed from man's snares rises to her full height and rebels against man's legislation and institution designed by him, her rebellion, no doubt, non-violent will be nevertheless effective.

- Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi

Trafficking is '... the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of person 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 the minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or service, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs' (UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, 2000). This definition was adopted by the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, to which India is a signatory. There are various types of trafficking – drug, arms and human.

In this paper the focus will be on human trafficking, particularly of women or girl child. The concept of human trafficking refers to the criminal practice of exploiting human beings (here women) by treating them like commodity for profit. Even after being trafficked victims are

subjected to long term exploitation and their sorrows know no bounds. This paper will discuss the general features of trafficking and the laws related to it. It will also attempt to show the working of the NGOs in response to trafficking, its limitations, the possible remedies and the reasons to stop trafficking as it is increasing at an alarming rate. I have chosen to explore *Sanlaap*, a Kolkata-based NGO who has devoted themselves in the area of trafficking and have also tried to observe the way it functions.

Keywords: Law, NGO, *Sanlaap*, Trafficking, Women.

TRAFFICKING AND ITS SALIENT FEATURES

Trafficking has been a matter of concern since the early twentieth century. People with low self-esteem and lack of self-control are reported to be especially vulnerable to trafficking (United Nations Development Programme, UNDP 2002). Low levels of literacy, awareness and information can be coined as some of the risk factors of trafficking. To add to this, economic deficiency and other associated circumstances can be listed as the reasons that may lead to vulnerability. The various socio-structural factors influencing and determining the circumstances of trafficking are industrialization and globalization, economic crises, economic decline, disruption or under development, economic policies such as privatization, liberalization, loss of traditional livelihoods, inflation, natural calamity and so on. Street children living in slums, orphans, disabled children, abused or molested children, those who are away from families, children of bonded laborers and those working as domestic helpers – all these are identified as the high-risk groups of trafficking (Department of Women and Children Development, DWCD, 1996). Around 30 to 90% of women and girls are under eighteen years of age at the time of their exploitationⁱ (UNICEF 1994).

Human trafficking is increasing day by day, the demand for women's and children's bodies in the sex industry are fuelling up as they are denied equal rights and opportunities of education and economic development. This helps the traffickers to get the opportunity who are thus, able to exploit human misfortune with great freedomⁱⁱ.

If we see Japan, then there we will see that the Japanese mafia, or yakuza, does control many of the venues in Japan where trafficked girls end up, but they are more likely to purchase people

than transport them. Sources tell us that 50 % of the women and girls are smuggled into Thailand from Burma, China, and Laos to work in brothels.

People are repeatedly recruited at places like cinema halls, bus stops, railway stations, streets, airports and also within the homes. In this list also comes the cafes, the restaurants, state and national highways, construction work sites- all these places are the favourite spots of those who want to trap innocent persons. Traffickers take advantage of different periods, like before the harvesting season or during a drought, when people have less income to survive. Again, they are also well-informed about the severely impoverished areas or places suffering hazardous climate, economic or political disasters. The festival period is the most promising time for the traffickers. These festivals are under the constant survey of them.

The methods of trafficking may be extremely violent actions, like, drugging, kidnapping or abduction, persuasion, material inducements, befriending and deception. Often young girls are lured with fake jobs or with the promise of false marriage and ultimately are trafficked to various places. A study by Central Social Welfare Board (CSWB) says that 11.90% are been trafficked by deception, 11% are lured, 11% are abducted and 9.2% are sold or resoldⁱⁱⁱ. The recruiters can be the neighbours, family friends, relatives of friends, husbands, fathers, boyfriends or lovers. The person can also be a gay man whom the girls often trust for their sexual orientation^{iv}. These recruiters or the traffickers are usually young men and middle-aged women. DWCD (1996) identified two types of traffickers – primary and secondary. The latter are said to operate behind the scenes with connections in government circles and provide protections to the trafficking trade. Pimps and procurers are the primary traffickers. Trafficking can be done either through organized international or local networks or by occasional traffickers. Thus, the traffickers may operate alone, in small gangs or as part of organized crime groups.

Trafficking patterns and routes are quite complex – it involves cross-border flows between neighbouring countries to inter-continental and globalize trade. Generally, they move from less developed areas to more developed regions. One of the major problems of trafficking is that it leads to prostitution, pornography, cybersex and sex tourism. The number of women and children in sex work in India is stated to be between 70,000 and one million. Of these, 30% are below 20 years of age. 15% begin sex work when they are below 15 and 25% entered between 15 and 18 years^v. A CEDPA report states that in 1997, approximately 200 girls and women in

India entered prostitution on a daily basis and 80% were coerced into it (Save Our Sisters, SOS, an NGO based in Mumbai). These figures are quite alarming, which proves the fact that trafficking needs to be erased in order to protect human rights. According to NCRB report, trafficking has increased to 15% in 2016 than the previous year^{vi}.

Those who are been rescued from the clutches of the traffickers needs a safe place under police protection where the survivors of trafficking can be accommodated. However, women who hold the status of illegal immigrant, or who have been involved in illegal prostitution, will be fearful of coming to a police shelter since they risk detention. Countries like Italy, the Netherlands, or Germany, where police could help them contact relevant NGOs for assistance, trafficked women are afraid of escaping because they fear detention as illegal migrants, and punishment by the traffickers. Those who wish to escape from prostitution, but do not want to return to their country of origin, cannot benefit from accommodation provision, if they hold the status of illegal immigrants. Trafficked women, who have decided to continue to work as prostitutes independent of pimps and brothel owners, will be incapable to access shelter services. Shelters may also be an inappropriate solution for them. People like the illegal immigrants are often ignorant and are not aware that support services are available, or are afraid to seek help. Those who are kept in isolation or imprisonment are often unable to meet any external contacts apart from their clients and pimps. Many social and medical service providers use outreach workers to talk directly to women on the streets. It can take time for such workers to convince trafficked women that they are not linked to immigration services or the police.

After discussing what is trafficking and all the general features associated it, we need to look into the realm of the law. Law, as we know, acts as a protector and safeguards the fundamental right of every citizens of the country. Law is a system of rules to be enforced through a set of institutions. It shapes politics, economics and society in numerous ways. It is the means by which the rights of an individual become legitimate and thus, facilitates in exercising his/her rights. Law is necessary for implementing social order as it is a code that regulates the behavior of the members of a society. Women's right is often denied in a world dominated by men. In order to make their claims legitimate or to protect them, laws are essential to convert their rights into reality. It is through these laws that effectual transformations in a society are possible. Hence, the next section would discuss in brief the laws related to trafficking in India.

TRAFFICKING LAWS IN INDIA

The Indian Constitution, one of the world's best Constitution, provides law against trafficking under Article 23. The Suppression of the Immoral Traffick Act (SITA) amended to the Immoral Traffick prevention Act (ITPA) in 1986 was passed following the ratification of the International Convention on the Suppression of Immoral Traffick and Exploitation of Prostitution of Other in 1950 by India. But the laws, we find are not adequate enough. The laws have not focused on health issues. Instead, they aim to control trafficking for prostitution and to protect public order by setting forth the conditions under which women can practice the sex trade. Often the pimps are free from any punishments for such a heinous act.

In 2011, India ratified the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organised Crimes, 2000, including its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in person. In 2015, the Ministry of Women and Child Development constituted a Committee to examine the feasibility of a comprehensive legislation on trafficking. In 2018, The Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill, was introduced in Lok Sabha by the Minister of Women and Child Development and passed on July 26, 2018. This Bill provides for the prevention, rescue, and rehabilitation of trafficked persons.

The Bill has certain key features. Like, it defines the word 'trafficking' and also classifies certain purposes of trafficking. In order to arrest such phenomenon, the Bill endeavours to sets up various authorities at the district, state and national levels for rescue of trafficked persons as well as investigates the offences. The Bill also talks about providing shelter homes to the trafficked persons, rehabilitation homes at the district and state level as well as to set up anti-trafficking committees. It talks about preventive measures like the district and state anti-trafficking committees will take measures to protect and prevent vulnerable persons from being trafficked. It provides the scope to set up special courts in districts with the aim to complete the trail within a year. Depending on the nature of the crime, the Bill talks about punishment. All offences under this Bill are cognizable and non-bailable.

In spite of the Bill with its different measures to arrest such a heinous crime, the Bill suffers from certain limitations.

Instead of simplifying the enforcement process, the new Bill adds more complication to it. Critics pointed out that this Bill fails to provide an effective rehabilitation model. On the contrary, the rehabilitation process does not pay attention to the wishes and choices of the 'rescued' person, especially the sex workers. The Bill is also accused to be too broad and vague in its approach. It often fails to point out clearly who is behind the actual crime. Not only that, it is also been accused of misusing. People who have limited resources, lack of access to resources or lack of education or awareness fail to enjoy the fruits of the law. Hence, the Bill remains to be inadequate in nature, though it may be used for the greater benefit of those who are the victims of trafficking. Lastly, it is also been pointed out that if this Bill is passed into law, it can further aggravate the problems of the sex workers.

To bridge this gap between the Bill and its implementation into reality, we need government initiatives as well as NGOs, who would play an active part in this regard.

The next section would try to discuss how the NGOs function in general and the role of *Sanlaap*, a Kolkata-based NGO who works with the trafficked victims, in particular.

ROLE OF NGOS

NGOs are often viewed as being the conscience of government, and representatives of civil society. They have traditionally stepped in where governments have failed to take the initiative. In this case, trafficking is not an exception. NGOs are well-placed to work with trafficked women for several reasons. Many trafficked persons fear and distrust state-based organizations as they frequently enter destination countries illegally, or have had their documentation removed on arrival. Concerns over their immigration status, fear of deportation, fear of the traffickers, torture, death, and being pressurized to testify lead to mistrust and, consequently, reluctant to approach statutory agencies for support. Corrupt officials and the involvement of the police and other law enforcement officials can augment this distrust. Many female victims prefer to converse their situation in a more gender-sensitive environment. For this reason, women-based NGOs have often come in the forefront to raise awareness, fighting for change within the legal system and providing assistance to the victims. It is important to emphasize that NGOs are not a homogeneous group with similar interests. Their diversity is reflected in

the interests and issues they promote. Many women's organizations have worked to raise understanding of the importance of gender roles and its relations within the national and international arena. They have also worked on issues such as violence against women, promotion and protection of women's human rights worldwide, and women's access to democracy and economic decision-making. Despite the inclusion of 'gender' within the development programs and human rights sectors over the past ten years, not all NGOs are intrinsically gender-sensitive. Some have a more conservative approach.

Despite cultural, political, and geographical differences, the work and services provided to victims and survivors of trafficking by NGOs have some common features. Such as the NGOs support the victims which often includes social and psychological assistance, shelter provision, financial, return, and reintegration assistance, telephone advice and counselling, housing, vocational training, legal advice, and documentation assistance. Survivors of trafficking are referred to support services administered by local NGOs on repatriation. NGOs in countries of origin are largely involved in assisting trafficked women on their return. They meet them at the airport and provide them with first aid, emergency housing, food and other supplies, medical care, and immediate psychological assistance. In some cases, they help the victims to contact their families, or may contact the families directly.

Women, who are trafficked, experience complex post-traumatic stress disorders, and for which psychological assistance or hospitalization becomes indispensable. Many of the NGOs offer free counselling services or run counselling centers. Counselling centers provides a safe and supportive environment for female survivors where they can share their experiences and receive non-judgmental support and understanding. Working with the victims who experiences severe trauma is difficult and requires trained specialists working under close supervision. Organizations that offer psychological counselling to victims often have to deal with the other immediate practical problems that the women may have (such as housing, food, medical assistance, and safety). Legal assistance in countries of origin is essential in cases where women want to instigate legal action against their trafficker. NGOs can offer legal advice and communicate with the respective law enforcement institutions on women's behalf. However, there is very little that NGOs can do to protect the victim and her family, if she decides to testify in court, since witness protection is a prerogative of the state. Very often, traffickers are local people, who know the victim and her family. If the trafficker or their associates are not in

detention, there is nothing to prevent them from seeking vengeance. Women often refrain from testifying in court against their traffickers. There are complex reasons for this, including the fear that they or their relatives may be in danger of retaliation attacks. This is reinforced by weak or non-existing witness protection schemes. Survivors, who wish to testify, find it very difficult to discuss what happened to them. Sometimes it may take considerable time before they are able to talk about their experiences, to discuss what happened to them.

Legal and administrative support is provided by NGOs to help trafficked women to deal with local authorities, immigration, and police. They may support trafficking victims in court, provide legal advice and documentation assistance, and produce and disseminate information on the rights of migrant and trafficked women. Many anti-trafficking organizations in origin and destination countries play an important role in research, prevention, advocacy, and awareness-raising. Prevention activities carried out by NGOs include information campaigns, gender education in schools, vocational training for women, training teachers and school advisers to recognize those at risk, and also facilitating women at risk to access employment and career development opportunities. An important component of prevention work in origin countries is the tackling of gender stereotypes, and increasing sensitization on themes related to violence against women and women's rights. NGOs in destination countries publish educational materials for migrant women, and provide training and technical and financial assistance to their partners from the countries of origin. International and local NGOs also carry out valuable lobbying and awareness-raising work in bringing trafficking issues to the attention of governments, and advocating for the need to treat trafficking as a human rights violation. Besides, many local and international organizations are active in writing recommendations for legislation and policy developments, and participating in political forums. As a result of the various efforts of the NGOs, the government has tended to focus on introducing and implementing new and existing legislation and hosting conferences as well as have begun to provide variable amounts of funding for a range of anti-trafficking initiatives.

The role of the NGOs as far as dealing of trafficking is concerned is indubitable but at the same time, it also raises questions regarding its prevention. The next section would be an attempt to deal with this issue.

As it is clearly understandable that trafficking as a crime needs to be curtailed with an immediate effect, but at the same time have raised serious questions regarding its possible prevention.

The 2002 ADB (Asian Development Bank) Country Report on India describes various poverty alleviation and pro-women scheme launched by different ministries to prevent vulnerable sections from being trafficked. Government initiative includes the Integrate Child Development Scheme (ICDS) and the Swarn Jayanti Swa Rozgar Yojana. We need to develop more anti-trafficking organizations to work at the grass-root level in India.

Besides this, the borders with other countries need to be sealed. But, will tightening of the borders will stop trafficking? In southeast Europe, a GTZ study found that more stringent border controls have led to an increase in trafficking, as people turned to third parties to smuggle them out of the country. Legalization is also not the solution as countries like Netherlands, Australia, and Germany, where prostitution is legalized, show increase in the rate of trafficking.

Incentives, instead of sanctions, might encourage others to do the same. We can also aim to raise awareness regarding trafficking added with risk recognition, vulnerability avoidance, as well as to build up support networks, which are essential components of any anti-trafficking strategy. Long term prevention initiatives require that we confront and address the gender roles and relations that exist (albeit in different forms) in every society, which manifest themselves in discriminatory practices and limited opportunities for girls and women at home and the workplace. Women need to have access to viable economic opportunities as well as the opportunity to participate in the political decision-making within their countries of origin. Besides, analysis of 'gender' as a category in support of prevention would also provide a useful approach for tackling trafficking issues.

The NGOs, though work sincerely in the area of human trafficking, still have certain limitations. They undergo considerable barriers in combating trafficking for sexual exploitation. Some of these difficulties arise from the lack of a strong political will to confront and address the pertinent problem. Governments, NGOs, police, and law enforcement personnel need to work together to arrest trafficking. Government will and effort is integral to addressing this serious issue. There is also very little attention paid to gender issues within decision-making processes and with regard to policy formulation and service provision. Gender-inequality is a major factor contributing to the problem of trafficking of women for sexual exploitation. In addition to this, there are strong social and cultural constraints that contributes to unequal gender relations, which make women's position vulnerable in the society. These barriers and

constraints severely limit the contributions that NGOs can make to address the grave issue of trafficking.

Rehabilitation centers also experience certain shortcomings like corruption, poor infrastructure facilities, meager budgets. Most women end up doing nothing for long period in these homes, while those who do not wish to be rescued view the home as a prison. Social stigma is the greatest obstacle to reintegration. Besides, there are not enough models of recovery, repatriation and reintegration that prioritize the preference and interests of trafficked women and children. It is also found out that NGOs in origin countries are not equipped well enough to provide all the basic needs of returning trafficked survivors. Therefore, they must work in co-operation with other professionals and organizations. Regarding the issue of shelter, either they have the arrangement of permanent shelter or are kept in hotels before they meet their families. The need for a long-term solution to the problem of providing safe accommodation for female survivors is crucial, particularly considering the fact that while some women are happy to return to their families, in many cases this is a dangerous or inappropriate solution. Assistance to trafficked women requires substantial financial resources, and NGOs face limited capacity to offer financial support.

In order to deal with this situation, we can chalk out certain measures, which are as follows-

- a. We need to recognize the importance of human rights. Approach to arrest trafficking should be holistic, participatory and rights-based, with an underlying commitment to ensure human dignity. The programmes should be directed towards the interests of the victims, providing maximum protection to the prospective victim.
- b. Law enforcement agencies should be properly trained in their work as well as must inculcate a gender-sensitive approach.
- c. Government must have guidelines based on the standards of care, attention and service, which need to be extended to the victims and survivors of trafficking.
- d. Different NGOs, working in the area of trafficking, must come together and work as a cohesive unit.
- e. There should be public awareness campaigns – NGOs need to carry out such programs. There is a need to have more extensive and sustained awareness programmes focused on the rights of individuals.

- f. There should be sensitization of adolescents as well as of the family members. Not only family, but also the teachers, school staffs, panchayats, media persons have to play a very important role in order to elevate the attentiveness of people regarding trafficking.
- g. Police needs to be sensitized towards the issue of trafficking. They should work in collaboration with the NGOs related with trafficking and with the public. Such initiatives are imperative to prevent trafficking.

These are some of the ways we can think with the help of which we can handle sensitive issues like trafficking in a more sensitive way. We need a collective effort to fight against such an evil phenomenon. After discussing the role of the NGOs and its possible remedies to work sincerely towards the issue of trafficking, the last section of the paper would try to highlight the working of a Kolkata-based NGO named *Sanlaap* in the field of trafficking.

SANLAAP

Like many other cities, in Kolkata also stories are common of trafficking among young girls, who are brought into the services of sex through some kind of coercion. Children in the sex industry face significant problems - younger prostitutes are more in demand and are forced to entertain more clients. A study by Development Dialogue in Kolkata reveals that 15 -18 years old prostitutes serve an average of 2.8 clients a day^{vii}. With other survivors of sexual abuse, children in the sex trade undergo mental strain and face human rights violations that have severe impacts on their health.

Being one of the leading NGOs, *Sanlaap* is well known and is committed to the cause of anti - trafficking. Established in 1989, *Sanlaap* begins its research initiatives in the red-light areas of Kolkata. Besides this, it fights against the violence meted upon women and children. It also supports child protection programs in 16 red-light areas in Kolkata and its districts. It has also formed a group of youths in the red-light areas, who are always informing about the trafficked victims or about the children in distress. Also, *Sanlaap* has in its agenda the regular surveys and socio- economic studies in red-light areas of Kolkata and other vulnerable districts. *Sanlaap* conducts activities related to both rehabilitation and prevention. Under rehabilitation, it comes

to provide options to women and children who are in distress. *Sanlaap* runs a psycho – social rehabilitation programs for rescued children. The programs provide counselling, occupational training and legal aid to facilitate the restoration of the victims after their release from state custody. These victims are kept in the *Sanlaap* home named *Sneha*. There is also a hostel for working girls. They also provide dance therapy, training in tailoring, literary classes, taking care of their physical and medical needs and so on. Among the various activities of *Sanlaap*, many campaigns are conducted to increase gender-sensitivity and various awareness raising programs are being held in order to draw the attention to the issue of trafficking. *Sanlaap* also tries to sensitize the police by conducting training programs for them.

Their economic rehabilitation program, *Srijoni*, provides the victims with different kinds of training and workshops. Such an initiative helps them create unique items for sale at the *Sanlaap* Hub and can also be ordered online. Some of their products include clothes, accessories, household décor and stationery and so on.

Working as a nodal NGO, *Sanlaap* networks with several district level NGOs. Moreover, it endeavors to make the various developmental programmes at the government level more gender-sensitive in nature. This NGO holds the view that the problem of repatriation is been faced by several NGOs. The court takes pretty long time to give the release orders to the girls. Problems are often faced due to the dearth of clear-cut laws and rules regarding repatriation of the trafficked victims. Lack of appropriate legal protocols is a stumbling block even in undertaking effective coordination of NGOs with police.

This NGO, as said by its Executive Director, stresses on child participation. Girls are encouraged to participate in all the activities. This in turn ensures that they play an active part in the decision-making process. They have a legal aid department named *Salah*. *Sanlaap* believes in 4 R's – Rescue, Rehabilitation, Restoration and, lastly, Reintegration. With these principles in mind, they have fought a long battle where they have successfully rescued more than 30,000 women from Bangladesh and Nepal. Besides this, they have also tried to ensure that these victims can lead a dignified life in the society.

In spite of all the hurdles they face, in the year 2018, *Sanlaap* is successful to rescue and rehabilitate more than ten thousand girls from at-risk situations and have provided them with a job and a shelter of their own. This makes clear that as an NGO, *Sanlaap* has certain strengths

which make their work possible in reality. For example, their preventive and rehabilitative approach are praiseworthy. They have an excellent work in the area of documentation, which helps other interested researchers in accessing materials on trafficking. It also works in partnership with government.

Since their focus areas in the red-light districts are common with other NGOs, it may lead to overlapping of activities. But this does not undermine the phenomenal work performed by *Sanlaap*. Its rapid growth and constant presence in this sector help to bring to focus their preventive and rehabilitative strategies in the international arena. Thus, one cannot expunge the importance of the workings of *Sanlaap*, delivering an essential function to the women in distress.

CONCLUSION

In spite of government efforts to eliminate trafficking, it has acquired grave dimensions worldwide in the recent context of globalization as well as in the pandemic we are experiencing today. Though India has reported successfully various convicted cases and also have initiated investigation into various cases, still an increase in the global sophistication, complexity and consolidation of trafficking networks are said to incorporate diverse and sophisticated mechanisms which show that prevention of trafficking has to be multi-faceted process, addressing a vast arena of policies and programmes. The crime of trafficking manifests itself in various ways. Like it displaces the trafficked person from his or her community and exploits the victims physically, sexually and emotionally.

The government did not meet the minimum standards in several key areas. Various NGOs have pointed out that government law enforcement and victim identification efforts are limited in nature compared to the scale of the problem. There is a lack of accountability for misconduct and corruption continued at various levels of government. NGOs reported that in a number of instances police refused to register FIRs for cases in which officials were the alleged perpetrators, which have aggravated the situations at large. It was reported that some law enforcement officers were bribed from sex trafficking establishments either in the form of money or by receiving sexual services from victims. In return, such officials alert the traffickers of any upcoming raids.

Preventive measures should be proactive and deterrent. The best method of prevention is its integration with prosecution and protection. Prosecution includes several tasks like the identification of the traffickers, to compensate for the damages they have done. Protection of the trafficked victim includes all steps towards the redress of their grievances and violations, thus, helping the victim to survive, rehabilitate and re-establish herself as an 'individual'. This protection and prosecution will eventually lead to prevention. Researches show that trafficking is a low priority issue for law enforcement agencies. Similarly, among the NGOs very few are genuinely committed to preventing trafficking. There should be appropriate attitudinal operation, both in government and in non-governmental agencies. To name a few NGOs who are playing an active role to combat trafficking are – YMCA, ECPAT (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking, an international NGO), JWP (Joint Women's Programme, NGO in Delhi), *Sanlaap* (an NGO in Kolkata),

In the era of poverty and illiteracy it is necessary to uphold community values and create a culture against the misuse of women and children. Time has come for the people to become proactive as well as it is necessary to convert community of silence into community of involvement. Inadequate and insufficient laws and the poor enforcement of them, futile penalties, minimal chances of prosecution, corruption and complacency, invisibility of the issue, failure of government to implement policies and to furnish the victims with adequate services – are some of the factors in perpetuating trafficking.

Sending victims home may simply place them back in the same conditions that endangered them in the first place. If criminal gangs were involved in the trafficking, they will threaten the safety of the victims and their families. To add to this, people may have no home to which they can return. Lack of legal status is a major risk factor in trafficking, impeding and often precluding victims' return and reintegration. This problem is particularly true for minorities, indigenous peoples, and informal migrants who often have no way to prove their nationality.

Many NGOs faced difficulties dealing with the remains of the outdated and oppressive social system, and the absence of a proper legislative framework or administrative regulations to legitimize their work. A lack of experienced personnel and limited capacity constitute further challenges. Skills in project management, fundraising, and networking are also largely absent.

Despite the multifaceted problems NGOs face, most NGOs are taking lead in combating trafficking in their respective countries. Their anti-trafficking activities, objectives, and orientation are linked to the social and cultural background of their respective countries and regions, which reflect local patterns of trafficking. Besides NGOs, a wide range of local, national, and international groups and individuals are involved in anti-trafficking work -women and human rights and development organizations, social services and law enforcement agencies, refugee groups, academic institutions, and other professionals. These are varied approaches toward particular problems related to trafficking. Different measures and services are required depending on the cultural context, country laws and policies, resources, and the support of local institutions and society.

But it is to be remember that NGOs cannot work in isolation. They need financial support, community support, state and institutional support to prevent women from becoming victims again. Without sufficient support for recovery from their traumatic experiences, women face difficulties regarding regaining control over their lives and reintegrating into society. The reintegration process cannot be carried out by a single NGO. Reintegration also requires improving the economic and social conditions of women, and the efforts of various professionals and institutions. In many patriarchal societies, such as Albania, Bangladesh, Iran, and others, it is very difficult for women to reintegrate into their communities, as their options are very limited. Society must change its outlook along with the community-based approaches. Such approaches must lead to the sensitization of society towards human rights issues, therefore, becoming an essential part of the reintegration process.

NGO assistance is very much dependent on the national legislation on trafficking and the immigration policies of host countries. Experts are unanimous regarding on thing – that the number of trafficked people is increasing every year, thus, expanding the sex industry worldwide in a very rapid manner. Unless there is a sincere political will to address this issue of trafficking, no NGOs can work in an efficacious manner. It will be just beating around the bushes. Hence, all the governmental and the non-governmental agencies and all the community-based approaches must come together and join hand in hand to uproot trafficking, which is a social evil causing misfortune and bringing disgrace to numerous women.

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