



USAID
FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE

Combating Trafficking in Persons in the 21st Century



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Cover photo: Kay Chernush for the U.S. State Department
United States Agency for International Development
Office of Women in Development

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October 2008

Introduction

21st century human slavery is unthinkable, yet the truth is that it exists on every continent, crosses borders, and affects women, men and children. It is an affront to the rights, dignity and physical well-being of the individuals, and a stain on the humanity of us all.

Spawned by poverty, a lack of education and opportunity, ethnic discrimination, and unequal gender relations, the trafficking of persons is fueled by the demand for cheap sex and labor. The problem is exacerbated by porous borders, a lack of legislation, ineffective enforcement, and corruption.

Illegal and largely hidden, the number of persons trafficked is difficult to measure with certainty. The United States Government estimates that approximately 800,000 persons are trafficked across borders annually and a great many more are trafficked within countries. Together with drugs and weapons, trafficking in persons is a leading source of profits for its perpetrators. Victims of trafficking can be sold and re-sold, and coerced by their owners into exploitative and often dangerous circumstances.

Trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation has forced many women and children into brothels. Boys and girls have been forcibly abducted into the ranks of child soldiers or sex slaves. Individuals are trafficked into various types of labor from domestic service to construction, agriculture, and fishing.

Fortunately, worldwide government and public awareness of the problem has increased significantly in the last decade. U.S. Government leadership is at the forefront in the fight against trafficking in persons. The U.S. Congress passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act in 2000, which identified trafficking in persons as a major issue for the international community, called on U.S. Agencies to take coordinated action on trafficking, and established an annual report on countries' compliance with the Act and the consequences for a lack of compliance. The U.S. Department of State's annual Trafficking in Persons Report describes trafficking in persons in countries with significant levels of severe

forms of trafficking.¹ The report goes a step further by ranking countries in tiers according to the efforts made by their governments to meet minimum standards to combat trafficking, and clearly delineates areas of concern. As a result, there has been an increased focus on human trafficking at all levels in developing and developed countries. The U.S. Government has spent more than \$528 million on anti-trafficking activities worldwide since 2001. USAID alone has provided \$123 million of this total for activities in more than 70 countries.

Trafficking in persons is a complex development issue, rooted in many of the same development problems that USAID addresses through poverty reduction, education, governance, security and post-conflict programs. The latter experiences have informed USAID's efforts to combat trafficking, and the programs themselves have provided a platform from which to reinforce anti-trafficking activities. This publication is based on the result of an analysis of what has worked, both in development programs and in direct anti-trafficking activities that draw upon selected examples of activities implemented between 2001 and 2008.

Because trafficking in persons occurs within different cultures and circumstances, a simple list of best practices is not appropriate; however, there are lessons learned as well as some fundamental principles and program elements to capture from USAID's efforts. The original names of victims that appear throughout this report have been changed for their protection.

1. U.S. Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report. Washington, DC, 2008. The 2008 Report includes 153 countries.

The Context

WHAT IS TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS?

THE DEFINITION

The UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which supplements the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime², was adopted by the UN General Assembly and has been ratified by 118 nations, including the United States. The UN Protocol defines trafficking as:

“the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of deception, or 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 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.”

THE PERSONAL REALITY

Fourteen-year-old Urmila Tamang from a small village in Chitwan, Nepal was trafficked by a woman from a neighboring district. In 2002 the woman approached Urmila’s parents with promises of a profitable circus job in Varanasi, Northern India. Ignorant about human trafficking, her parents sent her without asking further questions about the job. During that year, Urmila was forced to work without pay and mistreated sexually.

Encouraged by her success in luring Urmila and other girls away from their families, the woman contacted two other girls with similar tales of riches and luxury. These girls, who had received information on trafficking, recognized her overtures and reported her to their school’s facilitator, who notified the police. The woman was subsequently arrested and confessed to having taken many girls to the circus for personal gain.

2. Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, 2000.

Urmila's trauma is echoed by that of Dritan from Albania, trafficked to Greece at the age of six for forced labor. He begged, stole, washed car windows, and sold everything from flowers to cigarette lighters. When he was unable to earn money, he was left hungry, beaten and forced to sleep on the streets. He spent eight years living on the streets and trying to return home. Dritan eventually managed to take a bus back to Albania where he was referred to Tjeter Vizion, a local organization that helps trafficked children live normal lives. Now 14 and living in a Tjeter Vizion secure apartment, he is training to become a car mechanic.

Natalia from Ukraine was lured by the promise of a legitimate job in Europe. Instead she was subjected to physical and psychological trauma. Oksana learned of her sister's nightmare through a call from Natalia, whom she had not heard from in months and believed to have taken a job in Portugal. Natalia never reached Portugal but instead had been sold into a trafficking network. Natalia's story began when a local woman told her about the job in Portugal. She was taken to Poland where her passport was confiscated and replaced with a false Polish passport. Two Polish men then brought her to Germany, where they sold her to an Austrian drug dealer who forced her into prostitution and into dealing drugs. Only after her physical and mental health had deteriorated dramatically, leaving her unable to earn the profits expected of her, was Natalia set free.

Benito had a nine-year old daughter to support, so when his brother found work at a brick kiln at Transcamete in the Brazilian Amazon, Benito followed. The pay he was promised never came. Instead he was told he was working off the cost of food and lodging. He worked six days a week. He did not have the money to go home -- it was 500 miles away and Benito and the other slave laborers were not paid anything for months. If he left, he might never see any wages. Benito lived in a shack next to the brick kiln where he eventually contracted malaria³.

Multiply these stories by 800,000 and you will understand the magnitude of the tragedies suffered by individuals trafficked across national borders each year.

A GLOBAL ISSUE AND A LOCAL PROBLEM

Trafficking in persons is a global issue, transcending national borders; at the

3. U.S. Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report, Washington, DC, 2007, p. 28

same time, it is a local problem. The nature of trafficking varies by region and country, by the nature of the exploitation, and by the victim's age and gender, although women and children are its primary victims. In Southeastern Europe, Russia, Ukraine, and Central Asia, women trafficked into commercial sexual exploitation are generally somewhat older than the children forced to engage in commercial sexual exploitation in Southeast Asia and South Asia. In Africa, both girls and boys have been seized and forced into on-going internal and external conflicts as child soldiers, sex slaves, and laborers. Women and children are trafficked into the Middle East for sexual exploitation and domestic servitude. In Latin America and the Caribbean, girls and women are made especially vulnerable to trafficking due to the prevalence of gender-based discrimination, cultural tolerance for prostitution, domestic abuse, and migration patterns which contribute to labor trafficking.

THE DEVELOPMENT LINK

Across the world, human trafficking is a development problem, as well as a criminal activity, and a human rights abuse. Vulnerable and often desperate populations within many countries are a source of unwitting and unwilling victims, exploited by those who seek profit from control or even ownership of other human beings. Poverty, a lack of education, little opportunity, low status and desperation contribute to this vulnerability. Natural disasters and conflict, as well as family emergencies including domestic violence, illness, death and abandonment exacerbate the vulnerability. Where violence against women is endemic, women and girls are more likely to try to leave the area to escape the violence, often finding themselves exploited in a different country. In Eastern Europe, trafficking victims often have a family history of violence or abuse. Furthermore, the experience of violence within the family at an early age disrupts the fabric of children's lives, placing them at greater risk.

Trafficking is not an event, but a process through which individuals may be physically forced, psychologically coerced or duped into leaving their homes with the trafficker. Sometimes they cross national borders, but they may be moved within their own countries. Force and exploitation may occur at the beginning of the process through the abduction or sale of the person, at times by parents or relatives. It also occurs after the individual has been duped into leaving with the trafficker who then exploits, sells or coerces the victim into sexual exploitation, forced labor, marriage, debt bondage, and even organ removal.

The trafficking process involves source, transit and destination countries: some countries fall primarily into one of these categories. Others combine all three of these characteristics simultaneously. The stage of development and the geographic location of the country may influence whether it is primarily a source, transit or destination country. Western Europe is a destination for trafficked individuals from Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Republics. The Gulf States are the destination for many South Asians. Although the United States has initiated many anti-trafficking and development programs to combat commercial sexual and labor exploitation, the United States also serves as a transit and destination country for individuals from Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa and Asia. Where countries share a border, but differ in level of development, and borders are relatively porous, as between the Dominican Republic and Haiti, trafficking can become a major problem. In large countries such as Russia and India with wide variations in levels of development within the country itself, poorer and marginalized groups may be trafficked internally.

Child sex tourism is an extremely disturbing type of child exploitation in which people travel to engage in commercial sexual acts with children. These sexual predators come not only from Western countries, but also from throughout the world. In 1998, the International Labor Organization estimated that sex tourism provided between two and fourteen percent of gross domestic product in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. Recently Mexico and Central America have been destinations for sex tourism.⁴

4. U.S. Department of Justice Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section (CEOS)
www.usdoj.gov/criminal/ceos/sextour.

Bringing Development to Bear on Human Trafficking

USAID's development experience over three decades, and on-the-ground presence in nearly 90 countries are significant strengths in designing and implementing anti-trafficking programs. The approaches to combating trafficking involve prevention, protection of victims, and prosecution of traffickers. These three elements are all necessary and interrelated, and they reflect the wide range of governmental and non-governmental actors who play important roles in the anti-trafficking effort locally, nationally and globally. Prevention may take place before an individual has been trafficked, or it may be important after escape or rescue to prevent re-trafficking. Protection is critical to victims who have been trafficked, and prosecution is necessary to punish the perpetrators and lessen the impunity with which they are able to operate in many places. The following sections illustrate how development underlies effective anti-trafficking efforts.

AWARENESS-RAISING — A STARTING POINT FOR PREVENTION

Many populations, particularly in remote areas, are unaware of human trafficking and its risk factors or do not fully comprehend what trafficking really is. USAID's experience with awareness raising campaigns related to HIV/AIDS, family planning, health care, law, and human rights has provided valuable lessons applicable to awareness campaigns on human trafficking.

MASS MEDIA CAMPAIGNS

Using popular stars in modern media campaigns has had a wide impact on awareness. In Asia, USAID and MTV Europe Foundation, together with MTV Networks Asia Pacific, collaborated to develop television programming, online content, live events, and partnerships with anti-trafficking organizations. To target a young, media-savvy audience, the campaign invited well-known models,

actors and musicians to donate their time to present short films and documentaries. Screened on television and made available on the MTV EXIT Website, they are also available rights-free to anti-trafficking organizations, government agencies, law enforcement agencies, and other anti-trafficking stakeholders. This public-private partnership has reached an estimated 380 million households on MTV networks. Collaboration with Radiohead, one of the world's top bands, is taking the Asia MTV EXIT campaign to a global audience, reaching as many as 560 million households worldwide.

In Indonesia, with funding from USAID, the American Center for International Labor Solidarity and the International Catholic Migration Commission mounted a campaign to eliminate the trafficking of women and children with a popular Indonesian TV star as its national spokesperson. The partners created the first Indonesian website devoted solely to fighting human trafficking, developed "Safe Migration" comic books, placed public service announcements in food packages, and produced a video on trafficking prevention for use by government and civil society.

COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP

Trusted local officials, religious leaders and civil society groups play an important role in raising awareness about trafficking. In South Africa, with USAID assistance, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) certified 75 individuals as counter-trafficking trainers who in turn trained more than 500 community members to be able to discuss the dangers of trafficking within their communities. The certified trainers will play a role in anti-trafficking awareness campaigns in each of South Africa's nine provinces.

In Indonesia, the Asia Foundation encouraged Muslim leaders to use their influence to help prevent trafficking and protect victims, working with the government. Anti-trafficking leaflets were distributed during Friday prayers, and a book containing interpretations and arguments (Fiqh) of Islamic teachings on the evils of human trafficking was published.

In India, the United Nations Development Fund for Women worked with grassroots religious leaders to address trafficking in rural areas, creating an interfaith Religious Leaders Forum to support anti-trafficking measures.

LOCAL MEDIA

In Mali, USAID in collaboration with NGO partners, supported radio drama to educate people about trafficking in poor rural areas where residents are often illiterate, rarely own televisions, but are frequent consumers of radio drama. “Listener club leaders” were trained to hold group discussions. An impact survey showed that listeners placed greater value on girls’ education and became more concerned about exploitative child labor. Having drawn 3.1 million listeners with very positive responses, USAID expanded the program to Burkina Faso and Ivory Coast.

In Cambodia, USAID supported the efforts of the IOM to mount provincial-level multimedia information campaigns in 18 provinces. By using local situations and materials in video, live and recorded theatre, and live comedy, more than 275,000 people learned about the risks and dangers of human trafficking.

As impressive as these efforts are, raising awareness is not enough. It provides needed information and a warning, but it does not always erase the vulnerability of individuals to traffickers.

POVERTY — A FERTILE ENVIRONMENT FOR TRAFFICKERS

The desperation that can result from poverty and a lack of opportunity contributes to human trafficking. When economic opportunity and appropriate training are provided, especially for women, there is less need to migrate in search of better prospects. Targeting economic programs toward areas that are at high risk of trafficking, for example border regions, areas with significant ethnic minority populations or refugees who lack official documentation, can contribute to poverty reduction and help prevent trafficking.

Economic opportunity can be effectively incorporated within broader services for at-risk groups. In Moldova, Winrock International—partnering with Moldovan NGOs and with USAID funding—set up regional centers that combined job skills, job search preparation and technical training with legal assistance and counseling for trafficking victims most at risk. More than 25,000 women received services at the centers, and the initiative was expanded to reach nearly 10,000 women in rural areas through mobile units.

In Ukraine, Winrock International supported seven trafficking prevention centers for at-risk girls and women managed by local NGOs. The centers offered job-related training, legal services, counseling and referrals to medical facilities. More than 39,000 women were trained in basic job skills and in the dangers of trafficking. Over 4,600 women started formal training or continuing education programs, and over 5,000 women found new jobs.

The Asia Foundation helped provide increased opportunities for younger women at risk of trafficking, and trafficking survivors in eight districts of Nepal. The most vulnerable young women were selected to participate—the extremely poor, school drop outs, and victims of domestic violence. After receiving job training, participants were placed with local businesses. Those who wished to stay in rural areas tended to prefer traditional skills such as weaving and tailoring. Others were eager to learn traditionally male-dominated skills such as driving. Of 2,388 women trained, 1,906 (83 percent) found employment in the formal and informal sectors.

In Jamaica, USAID supported the efforts of People’s Action for Community Transformation, a Jamaican federation of NGOs that works with young people, especially women, unable to find gainful employment and at risk of sex trafficking. In the effort to facilitate their entry or re-entry into the job market, the NGO federation offered catch-up basic education, computer training and job skills that matched local demand, especially in the hotel industry.

Through USAID’s South Asia Regional Anti-Trafficking program, at-risk female textile and garment workers in Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka obtained employment skills training. Program activities provided market-based skills and vocational training to 3,000 women.

EDUCATION — THE TRAFFICKER’S ENEMY

When boys and girls stay in school, the risk that they will be trafficked or unwittingly embark on unsafe migration is reduced. Staying in school is primarily a parental decision and parents must realize the value of education and be able to obtain the means to invest in education, which has an actual and an opportunity cost.

In Benin, a USAID partnership with World Education demonstrated that girls' education can be a powerful trafficking prevention tool in rural communities where young girls between the ages of seven and twelve are vulnerable to trafficking. General support for girls' primary education was combined with specific anti-trafficking messages and advocacy programs that involved parents and communities. The outcome was an estimated 63 percent increase after four years in girls' school registration, an estimated 71 percent reduction in dropout rate, and an estimated 76 percent increase in their promotion rate. Although not quantified, the evaluation noted a considerable decrease in trafficking of girls.

To help reduce childrens' vulnerability to trafficking in Bulgaria, USAID supported a pilot emphasizing education in an area of the country where a high proportion of children were at risk of trafficking. With the active participation of teachers and parents, children and youth benefited from a variety of formal and non-formal education activities, reinforced by anti-trafficking messages. Over 600 students between the ages of six and seventeen received academic support, and all but two returned to school the following year.

Information about trafficking and preventive measures can be incorporated into primary and secondary school curricula, and students themselves can help spread anti-trafficking messages. USAID and Winrock International worked with teachers and selected students, who served as anti-trafficking mentors for other students, in a prevention program in Russia's Far East. More than 1,700 teachers received training on how to integrate human trafficking topics into their curricula, and over 600 student mentors were trained in trafficking prevention.

The use of art to reach children at risk can be particularly effective when addressing sensitive subjects, including trafficking. In Ecuador, USAID sponsored an arts-based program for school children aged five to twelve who were vulnerable to trafficking. Students learned about trafficking dangers and participated in an art contest with trafficking as the subject matter. Plaques prominently displayed by the six participating schools serve as a reminder to students to keep safe and to increase awareness.

KEEPING GIRLS IN SCHOOL

In Vietnam, where the costs associated with primary schooling pose a great financial burden on poor families, severe poverty limits educational opportunities for girls. Girls who have dropped out of school must often help their families bear financial burdens, yet with limited education and no vocational skills, they find few options for work. These girls are prime targets for traffickers, who lure them across the Cambodian border with promises of jobs as nannies or waitresses in Phnom Penh and other parts of the country. Once in Cambodia, they may be trapped in the city's brothels and forced into prostitution.

Since 2005, USAID has worked to prevent trafficking of girls and women in the Mekong Delta by improving their life options. The An Giang/Dong Thap (ADAPT) Alliance is a girls' education program implemented by the Pacific Links Foundation (PALS), International Children Assistance Network (ICAN), and East Meets West Foundation. ADAPT provides scholarships, vocational training, and job placement services to at-risk girls in three Vietnamese provinces along the Cambodian border. The scholarship program supports the same recipients year after year, covering the cost of their school fees, supplies, and after-school tutoring from their entry into the program in 4th or 5th grade until their graduation from high school. For girls who have already dropped out of school, ADAPT works with local businesses to provide vocational training and job placement services that cater to the local market, enabling participants to pursue stable employment with reasonable wages. For women and girls who have escaped prostitution, ADAPT provides comprehensive reintegration services — including counseling, vocational training, income earning opportunities, and health care — to prevent them from being trafficked again.

ADAPT builds on USAID's extensive experience in vocational training and education for effective trafficking prevention. Its education effort is modeled on a successful PALS project in central Vietnam that transfers cash to families with disadvantaged children as long as they remain enrolled in school. ADAPT mandates high levels of community and parental involvement and strives to limit the obstacles that prevent girls from attending school. For example, the program provides bicycles to participants whose distance from school would otherwise limit their attendance. Of the 495 scholarship recipients the program supports, ADAPT records a dropout rate of only 11.6 percent, lower than the provincial average. Similarly, the vocational component provides job placement and trains participants on workplace culture to facilitate a smooth transition and increase job retention rates. To reduce the likelihood that returned trafficked victims will be trafficked again, ADAPT helps their parents find stable sources of income.

GOVERNANCE, LEGISLATION AND ENFORCEMENT—ENDING IMPUNITY

A lack of anti-trafficking legislation or enforcement aids traffickers, and leaves victims without protection. Corruption, widespread in many countries, facilitates traffickers' activities and protects pimps, brothel owners, and those who use forced labor. Many law enforcement officials are not corrupt, but lack training in how to deal with the victims or traffickers and evidence collection for prosecutions. USAID experience with rule of law, governance and civil society has been instrumental in supporting efforts to develop anti-trafficking legislation, train judges, prosecutors and law enforcement, and to address corruption.

ANTI-TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION

Many of the countries severely affected by human trafficking lack the legal framework to effectively address the problem. Furthermore, there is often a delay in implementing newly enacted legislation.

In some countries USAID has linked anti-trafficking initiatives with ongoing rule of law programs. In Mexico, where Mexican states lacked a mechanism to prosecute traffickers, a USAID sponsored network of legal professionals revised the criminal codes to ensure that perpetrators are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law.

In Zambia with USAID support, information on trafficking was gathered through fact-finding visits to immigration posts at major border crossings, and meetings with officials in different regions to identify gaps in current legislation and define issues in developing new legislation. Consulting broadly on draft legislation not only ensured that it was tailored to local context, but also secured buy-in from government ministries, the police, and civil society.

Broad anti-trafficking legislation may be essential, but it is not always sufficient. More specific legislation, ordinances or agreements may also be necessary. In Ecuador, it was determined that an anti-trafficking law passed in 2005 did not adequately address victim and witness protection, and in 2007 Ecuador's president signed an agreement to implement the country's national anti-trafficking plan, which increases protections for children and youth. USAID provides technical assistance and training for the implementation of this plan.

NEW LAW TARGETS TRAFFICKING

Mozambique is both a source and destination country for trafficking victims. Women and children are trafficked across the border to South Africa, where they are forced to work on farms or are sold as concubines to miners. Orphans transported to Tanzania and Malawi are forced into servitude. Girls from Zimbabwe are trafficked into Mozambique for sexual exploitation and domestic labor. Yet despite the gravity of the situation, until 2008 Mozambique had no legislation prohibiting trafficking or providing protection for its victims.

In 2005, USAID began facilitating the passage of anti-trafficking legislation through the Women's Legal Rights Initiative. The project partnered with the Ministry of Justice and a local NGO network to draft a bill while leading outreach and advocacy efforts in support of its passage. Early in the process, a memorandum of understanding secured the ministry's commitment and formalized a working relationship between government and civil society. The bill, drafted by experts, was reviewed through a collaborative process, incorporating input from a working group of government and NGO stakeholders. Meanwhile, the NGO network carried out a public awareness campaign to educate Mozambicans about trafficking in persons and solicit their comments on the final draft. The NGOs held meetings with legislators and organized regional and provincial forums. In a town known to be a border crossing for human traffickers, activists staged a demonstration in favor of children's rights that drew further attention to the issue.

In April 2008, the National Assembly unanimously passed legislation to punish traffickers and protect victims and witnesses of human trafficking. The collaborative drafting process ensured broad support and paved the way for smoother implementation. The awareness campaign brought a traditionally taboo topic to light, increasing public understanding and support.

LAW ENFORCEMENT AND PROSECUTION

Many countries need assistance in building the capacity to fight human trafficking. In Nigeria, the American Bar Association worked with the Nigerian government to train state prosecutors, judges, police officers and immigration officers. Twenty judges and nine state prosecutors participated in workshops on the international legal context for trafficking in persons, Nigeria's 2003 trafficking legislation, and procedural issues surrounding trafficking cases. Training is also being provided to immigration officers to help detect and prevent trafficking.

In Albania, USAID supported the production of an anti-trafficking resource manual to help the judiciary implement new criminal laws and procedures to combat trafficking, and created an anti-trafficking course for the magistrate school.

In the Philippines, USAID incorporated trafficking concerns into an ongoing program to improve judicial and public sector governance. Partnerships with the Office of the Ombudsman, the Supreme Court, the Court of Appeals, and civil society have strengthened the government's ability to fight trafficking. Anti-graft personnel improved their investigative and prosecutorial skills. More efficient courts and intensified capacity in trafficking hotspots have contributed to an increase in the number of human trafficking convictions.

In Cambodia, the International Justice Mission (IJM) trained the anti-trafficking police unit on how to conduct a trafficking investigation. IJM worked closely with court personnel during the investigation and prosecution of individual cases of sex trafficking and commercial sexual exploitation. The organization also rescued trafficking victims and referred them to NGO-managed shelters. As a result, 129 victims were rescued and 36 traffickers were convicted.

CROSS-BORDER INTERVENTIONS — CRITICAL CONNECTIONS

The challenges in addressing cross-border trafficking include negotiating and formalizing cross-border agreements, building regional networks for information sharing and action among governments and NGOs, and creating workable procedures for cross-border victim support and repatriation.

Proximity to an international border increases the risk of trafficking. The World Vision Foundation of Thailand's assistance to women, children and youth along the Thai border with Burma, funded by USAID, illustrates community-level cross-border efforts. Networks were formed using volunteers, community groups, and NGOs involved in anti-trafficking activities, and network members were trained in trafficking prevention. Assistance was provided to victims and high risk populations on both sides of the border.

In Croatia, as part of a prevention effort, World Learning worked with government officials to increase their ability to curb cross-border trafficking as part of the country's National Action Plan. Cross-border community workshops, mainly in Bosnia and Herzegovina, facilitated greater cooperation and knowledge-sharing among government officials, NGOs and public prosecutors on

CROSS BORDER NETWORKS

Trafficking is a pervasive problem throughout South Asia. Although each country faces its own challenges, the phenomenon crosses borders and affects communities across the subcontinent. Bangladeshi men and women migrate to Malaysia, the Persian Gulf, and Jordan to work in the construction or garment industries or as domestic servants. Recruitment offers are sometimes misleading or fraudulent, and victims may find themselves in situations of involuntary servitude or abuse. Women and girls are trafficked in India for commercial sexual exploitation and forced marriage, and men, women, and children are held in debt bondage. As a result of decades of conflict in Nepal and Sri Lanka, both are now source countries for men, women, and children trafficked for involuntary servitude, forced labor, and commercial sexual exploitation in India, the Middle East, and Southeast Asia. Despite a desire across the subcontinent to address this problem, a lack of institutional capacity and cross-border networks has hampered the ability of governments and civil society to respond effectively to the problem.

Between 2000 and 2006, USAID supported the South Asia Regional Initiative/Equity Support Project (SARI/Equity) in its efforts to build and strengthen local capacity to address trafficking and violence against women in South Asian countries. SARI/Equity launched regional action forums, awarded small grants and fellowships for action-oriented research, provided technical support, and set up a Web site to serve as a platform for sharing best practices. The initiative built partnerships with almost 600 organizations in Bangladesh, India, Nepal, and Sri Lanka.

SARI/Equity strengthened networking and cooperation within and across borders by identifying effective approaches, encouraging their replication, and enhancing the knowledge and skills to fight trafficking. The regional action forums brought together prominent experts from the region to collaborate on anti-trafficking initiatives. They produced several guides, including a *Victim Witness Protection Protocol*, a *Handbook for Practitioners on Minimum Standards of Care and Support*, and a *Resource Book on Livelihood Options for survivors of trafficking*. All were translated into local languages and widely disseminated. These guides are now used globally as a model by the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN GIFT). SARI/Equity's sub grants program encouraged innovation and sharing. For example, one sub grant enlisted rickshaw drivers to distribute anti-trafficking stickers and watch for unusual movements and events. Finally, SARI/Equity created a cross-regional NGO exchange program to build capacity and establish stronger networks.

trafficking and victim protection. Educational materials on trafficking were disseminated to border communities and border police.

In India, USAID supported a cross-border anti-trafficking effort along the border with Bangladesh and Nepal. Non-governmental groups and local and religious leaders in border areas were trained to help persons at risk realize a spectrum of opportunities to earn a living. Over 40,000 women and children crossing the border were counseled on safe migration and more than 700 Nepalese women and girls were rescued along Nepal's border with India.

USAID supported a regional effort by the International Center for Migration Policy Development to institutionalize transnational trafficking victim support within Southeastern Europe. The resulting referral mechanism — including standard operating procedures, safety plans, and risk assessments — supports the need for comprehensive victim and witness assistance and protection in the region.

SHELTERS AND SERVICES FOR VICTIMS — CRUCIAL CARE

Safe shelter for victims of human trafficking who have escaped or have been rescued is critical; however, shelters are not a magic cure for the trauma — physical, psychological and social — which these individuals suffer. Many victims of sexual exploitation face diseases including HIV/AIDS, mental problems, stigma, inability to return home or marry, and a lack of skills and the opportunity to earn income. Victims of forced labor can have physical injury or disability and a loss of self confidence with little hope for starting a new life.

Shelters include emergency centers for immediate safe haven, transit centers, or short term and long-term residential facilities. Some offer a complete range of services while others cannot provide the needed services on site and must rely on links with other service providers. Although each shelter is unique, all shelter programs should adhere to a standard of operations that includes physical security, psychological counseling, legal assistance, and an adequately trained staff.

Upgrading the quality of existing shelters depends on an assessment of the specific needs of the population. In Nigeria, in coordination with the IOM and the American Bar Association, USAID helped refurbish an inadequate shelter and assisted its counseling staff to improve communications with victims, and

identify and assess trauma. Counseling was also coupled with vocational skills training to help victims find employment.

In South Africa, the IOM is helping a local partner refurbish a shelter to provide services, which meet established best practices in legal and psychosocial counseling. IOM is enhancing shelter security to provide a protected environment to counsel and assist victims. IOM is also helping staff with procedures to screen victims and take account of background information to include cultural sensitivities when assisting trafficking victims from other countries.

In some places holding children or women in shelters against their will is an issue. Length of time, under what conditions and for what reasons individuals are held in shelters are sensitive topics that must be addressed on a case-by-case basis and must be consistent with the country's laws. In some situations releasing children to their parents would expose them to greater risk if it is determined that their parents or relatives have been complicit in trafficking.

For victims cooperating with law enforcement additional security may be necessary. In India, USAID supported a program that addressed the shelter needs of victims who were willing to testify against their traffickers. A consortium of NGOs and civil society institutions came together to provide holistic care and support to survivors in eight shelter homes by providing, among other things, psychosocial counseling, life skills, formal and non-formal education, a health check, and legal services. Complaints were lodged against 43 traffickers, and eight were arrested based on information from the rescued girls.

REINTEGRATION AND REPATRIATION — PATHWAYS TO THE FUTURE

Many trafficking victims are not eager or even willing to identify themselves as victims because of the associated stigma. This leaves them unable or unwilling to access services even where they exist. The assumption in some countries is that girls and women who have been trafficked are infected with HIV, and for those girls whose virginity has been sold the prospects of marriage are bleak and their futures uncertain. Those who have escaped from coerced roles in armed conflict may be afraid to return to their communities because they have committed atrocities. Victims who find themselves in foreign countries may face additional difficulties if they don't speak the language, and are unable to access help to

return home or stay legally in their new country.

Rehabilitation and reintegration are often part of a long-term process that can involve extended psychosocial care, and should include educational and economic opportunities. Special reintegration centers or longer term shelters can help prepare trafficking victims for reintegration with their families or in new communities.

In Moldova, USAID supports the United National Development Programme in implementing a network of nine NGO-run social reintegration centers. The centers provide training for economic activities, job placement support, life skills training and psychosocial care in a safe, supportive environment. More than 374 people have received a full range of assistance services and have been reintegrated into their communities.

Repatriation and reintegration often involve partnerships between local groups engaged in different aspects of victim support. In Albania, USAID supported the work of Terre des Hommes to repatriate and reintegrate child victims who had been trafficked from Albania to Greece and Italy. Five child protection units brought together officials from the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, local municipalities, and NGOs with ties to the community and to vulnerable groups to act as case managers for reintegrated children. More than 600 suspected child trafficking victims were assisted.

Sustainable, safe and humane reintegration requires follow-up with victims to ensure that their needs have been met. In Ukraine, IOM with USAID support

REPATRIATION — THE SPECIAL SITUATION AT AIRPORTS

Human trafficking through international airports poses special challenges to those working to repatriate victims. In the Philippines, the Asia Foundation partnered with local NGOs and the Manila International Airport Authority to address human trafficking in airports. The program created airport help desks staffed by interagency airport task force members to identify trafficking victims, arrest traffickers, and refer victims to halfway houses. Working in conjunction with the Philippines Commission of Human Rights, the International Justice Mission and Interpol, the project worked to repatriate victims. In April 2007, 26 victims were rescued from Ivory Coast and repatriated to the Philippines.

and NGO partners developed a referral and monitoring system to monitor the reintegration process, including whether or not victims had been threatened. This was within the framework of a comprehensive effort that provided medical and psychological care, legal support, educational grants, and vocational training to more than 4,500 victims of trafficking.

Trafficking in Conflict Areas

Many developing countries are involved in an internal or external conflict, or are in a state of post-conflict. The displacements caused by such conflicts create vulnerabilities among the population, and women and girls are particularly at risk for trafficking. The presence of warring parties, peacekeepers, and aid or refugee assistance workers unfortunately become additional concerns within an already complex environment. In some cases, those sent to protect refugees and displaced persons have preyed upon them, or contributed to trafficking. USAID experience in conflict-affected areas providing humanitarian assistance and care for orphans, victims of violence, and displaced persons is invaluable in addressing trafficking concerns in these situations.

In Sierra Leone, the International Rescue Committee and Search for Common Ground built on previous experiences in caring for and reintegrating war-affected children, to help abducted children in conflict zones. These children were cared for at community resource centers that were supported by community volunteers and child welfare committees trained through the program. More than 1,300 separated children were traced and reunited with their families, including 196 girls.

Reintegration efforts should actively involve communities and community leaders. In Uganda, USAID supported the International Rescue Committee, which established four “reception centers” for children abducted by the Lord’s Resistance Army. The centers provided medical care, family tracing, counseling, and prepared children for reintegration through education and vocational training. Community leaders, teachers, religious leaders and traditional leaders participated in learning how to follow-up with the children during the reintegration process.

REINTEGRATION AFTER CONFLICT

During 10 years of conflict in the eastern part of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), armed groups abducted many girls and boys under the age of 18 and forced them to work with fighting forces. Female abductees were forced into marriage or sexual slavery and faced high levels of gender-based violence. Upon leaving — whether through escape or voluntary release by armed groups — and returning to their communities, these girls faced enormous challenges. Ostracized by their families or distrusted by the community at large, many tried to hide rather than seek help.

Reintegration programs need to address the challenges openly with communities. In the DRC, USAID supported COOPI, an Italian NGO working in Ituri district, to assist and reintegrate abducted boys and girls, along with children conceived by abducted girls during their time with the fighting forces. The project used many innovative methods to reintegrate victims into their communities safely and prevent future abduction, trafficking, and sexual violence. An extensive communication campaign addressed discrimination directly through meetings with community leaders to change attitudes and door-to-door outreach to abducted girls. Through its support center, COOPI provided a comprehensive package of services to victims, including psychosocial counseling and support, health assistance, education and skills training, and social activities. Among the victims were the hard-to-reach — those in hiding, or those who self-demobilized and refused association with care programs for fear of being identified as ex-combatants. Attracted by social activities, they stayed on for other services, such as education and health support.

The program reached often-hidden girls by working to change the behavior of communities toward abductees, reducing stigma and shame and helping victims improve their self-identification. Through social activities, workshops on discrimination, and dialogue with parents and neighbors, the program encouraged girls' participation in education and training. For victims and other women and girls at risk, COOPI provided psychosocial support and life skills training. Communities that once ostracized the abductees are now helping to protect them.

The Demand Side of The Equation

As long as the demand for cheap sex and labor is not addressed, and there is a culture of impunity not only for the traffickers but also for the clients and employers, trafficking in persons will continue to thrive. Some cultural beliefs feed the demand for trafficked victims. The desire for sex with virgins in some cultures has led to increasing numbers of children being trafficked into the sex trade. Technology and globalization have facilitated sex tourism and the procurement of foreign brides, who are sometimes the victims of traffickers. These challenges are only now being addressed and more needs to be done.

The private sector has an important role to play in addressing demand for sex tourism. Internationally, travel and hotel industries have tried to prevent sexual predators from using their services. The International Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism is a voluntary code of conduct that requires members to take steps to provide information to travelers, educate their employees, establish corporate policies, and include anti-trafficking clauses in contracts with suppliers. Since 2004, the number of member companies has grown from 50 to over 600, including tour operators, travel agencies, tourism associations, and hotels. The organization End Child Prostitution, Child Pornography and Trafficking of Children for Sexual Purposes (ECPAT) has played a major role in championing the Code of Conduct.

Demand for sex tourism also needs to be addressed through focused programs in problem locations. In Goa, India, UNIFEM and USAID worked to reduce demand by bringing together and training government and tourism industry representatives, including the hotel, transport and tour operating sectors on various trafficking issues. The local tourism industry also developed a code of conduct. Actions by industry were conducted in coordination with a public information campaign about commercial sexual exploitation that reached approximately two million people through street theatre, posters and local radio.

Labor trafficking includes forced labor, bonded labor, debt bondage, and involuntary domestic servitude. Trafficking for the purposes of factory and field work is fueled by unscrupulous employers who are driven by greed and enabled by gaps in law enforcement and regulation. Domestic servitude resulting from trafficking is very difficult to detect because it occurs in the privacy of the home.

USAID supported the Cocoa Sustainability Alliance, working in West Africa with cocoa farmers and the international cocoa industry. Based on concerns about child labor and past evidence of child trafficking, the effort included steps to reduce the likelihood that children will be exploited as the sector expands. Child labor issues were built into the training on sustainable agricultural production that growers received. In Ghana, for every 1,000 farmers trained on how to recognize and avoid child labor, over 200 children were voluntarily removed from dangerous farm work.

Better regulation and monitoring of labor recruitment agencies, which are often the first stop in luring unsuspecting workers, are important areas for intervention. In Bangladesh, USAID will soon begin the Action for Combating Trafficking in Persons Program, an effort to reduce the exploitation of migrant workers through administrative and legal reforms, and building government capacity to monitor and regulate labor recruitment agencies. The program will provide victim care support to trafficking survivors and will disseminate prevention messages.

Seeing Progress — Measuring Impact

Measuring the impact of anti-trafficking efforts is an on-going challenge. The underground nature of trafficking, the changing routes and methods of operation used by traffickers, and the fact that many victims are reluctant to identify themselves as having been trafficked make it difficult to obtain an accurate baseline against which to measure progress. The operations of many individual traffickers may be difficult to track, and even their arrest may not result in widespread disruption of trafficking. Furthermore, concerns for victim safety and privacy may preclude or complicate the collection of information on trafficking victims.

Qualitative and anecdotal evidence can provide useful information. For example, the presence of fewer underage girls in situations of commercial sexual exploitation in a particular location over a period of time could be attributed to increased political will and law enforcement; however, there could also be alternate explanations including the possibility that traffickers moved the girls to different locations.

Although it may be difficult to obtain accurate national and international statistics on trafficking, data on smaller areas may be available. Surveys can document increases in knowledge about trafficking as a result of awareness campaigns. Information from local people and officials can help map areas where trafficking is most prevalent and identify the methods used by traffickers.

It is also possible to collect data on numbers of arrests, prosecutions and convictions. Brothel owners are often the targets of law enforcement, and where underage girls are found in brothels, trafficking clearly can be documented and prosecuted.

There is increased attention within the U.S. Government, among NGOs and other donors to the importance of developing indicators and innovative ways of

measuring progress in fighting trafficking. Determining the success of reintegration efforts requires a continuous update on the status of victims after they have left shelters and finished training courses, which in itself is challenging and expensive, particularly in hard to reach areas. Despite the difficulties in obtaining accurate statistics, USAID's experience provides valuable information, lessons and programming principles.

Conclusion: Lessons from the Past — Guides for the Future

THE NATURE OF TRAFFICKING

For nearly a decade USAID has worked to combat trafficking in persons. Its efforts against human trafficking in over 70 countries have resulted in a better understanding of the problem. We know that:

- Individuals are made vulnerable by a number of factors including the low value accorded women and children, poverty, a lack of education, a lack of opportunity, conflict, disaster, family emergency and abusive family relationships.
- When births are not registered or citizenship documentation is not readily available to some ethnic minorities or displaced persons, vulnerability is increased.
- Culture, economics, geography and history together determine the nature of trafficking in regions and individual countries.
- The demand for virgins and younger girls for commercial sexual exploitation has led to an increase in child trafficking.
- Prevention of trafficking is the only way to avoid the physical and psychological damage that results.
- Traffickers are agile and quickly adapt to new law enforcement measures, often leaving governments, donors and NGOs steps behind.
- If rule of law in a country is weak or non-existent or if corruption is ram-

pant, enactment of strong anti-trafficking legislation will not automatically lead to more prosecutions or better protection for victims.

- The stigma associated with having been trafficked must be thoroughly understood because it plays a key role in the successful reintegration of victims to society.
- Reintegration of trafficking victims into society can be difficult, expensive and lengthy, and even the best efforts at reintegration usually fail to change those conditions that were responsible for the victims' initial vulnerabilities to trafficking.

LESSONS FROM EXPERIENCE

USAID has supported direct anti-trafficking activities as well as development efforts targeted at populations known to be especially vulnerable to traffickers. These efforts have provided a wealth of experience and lessons upon which to build and strengthen the on-going fight against human slavery. Despite the regional, sub-regional and even within-country differences in the nature of trafficking, and the varying political, economic and cultural environments surrounding it, there are a number of principles that should underlie all anti-trafficking efforts.

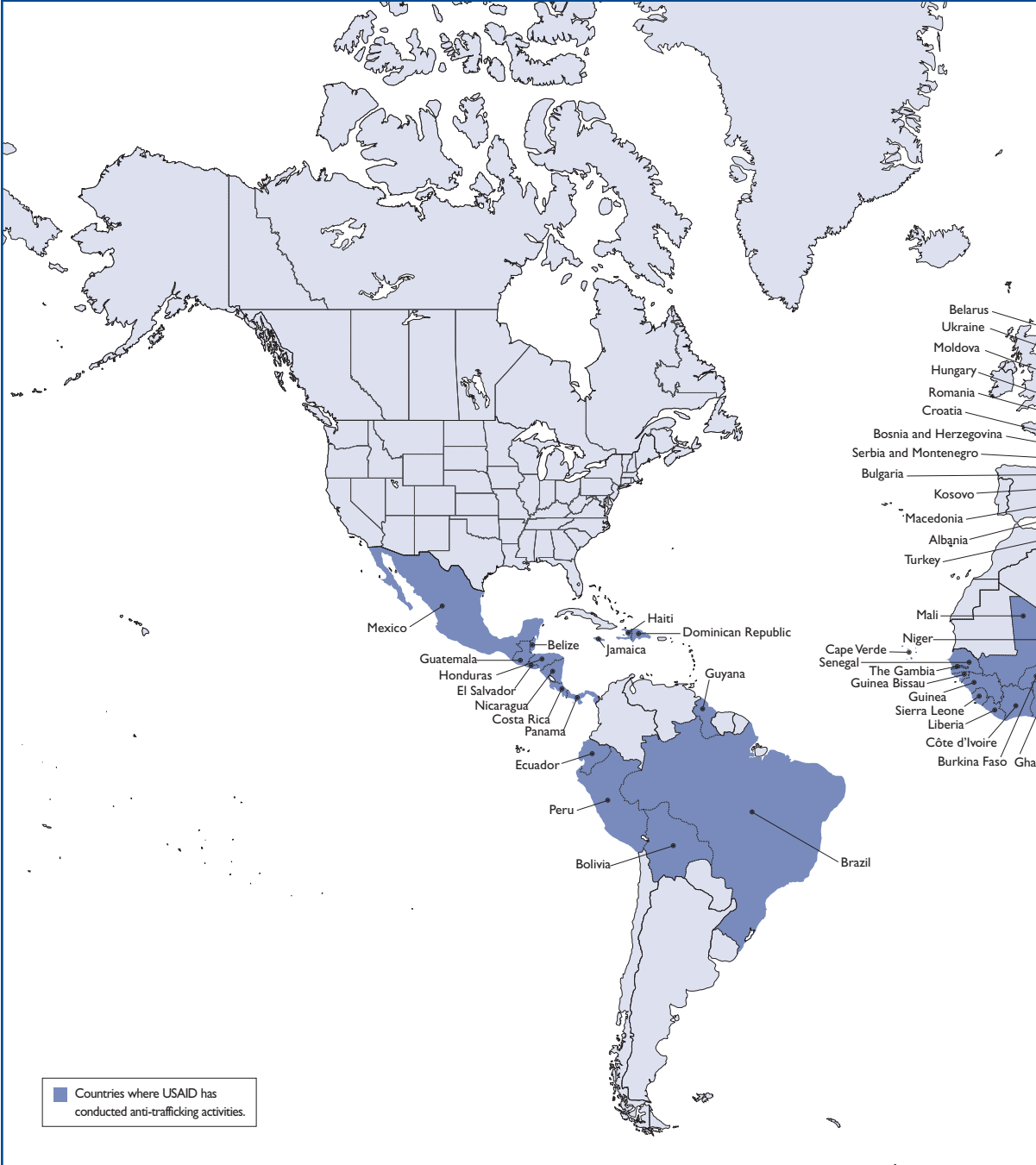
- **Political will at the highest levels of government to fight trafficking through legislation, law enforcement, and provision of resources to anti-trafficking activities is critical.** When government Ministries recognize and take action to support victims and vulnerable populations, and arrest and prosecute traffickers, the risk to human traffickers increases and the trade becomes less profitable.
- **Anti-trafficking activities must be designed to fit the specific cultural, economic and political environment.** There is no one solution appropriate to all cultures. Assessment of the local situation and buy-in by local stakeholders are critical first steps in the design of an anti-trafficking strategy.
- **Direct anti-trafficking messages and targeted activities are reinforced when they are supported by development programs.** Development activi-

ties designed to reduce vulnerability, protect victims of abuse, empower women, strengthen local capacity, and develop legislation and train law enforcement and the judiciary are particularly relevant.

- **The complexity of trafficking demands the collaborative efforts of many actors since no one group or organization has the capacity or expertise to address all aspects of the process.** Intra-country and cross-border agreements and collaboration are crucial.
- **Victims must be protected and their well being given highest priority.** All too often the victims of trafficking are further abused, treated as criminals, stigmatized and even re-trafficked.
- **Services for trafficking victims are expensive and even where they exist, the physical and psychological trauma to trafficking victims can be irreversible.** Shelters for victims must be located where there is real need. More shelters are not the only answer.
- **Recurring costs of shelters must be taken into account when they are established or supported.** Shelters are not self-sustaining. Only rarely can they generate the resources needed for continued maintenance, and some have had to close when outside funding stopped.
- **Raising awareness of the abuse and exploitation of trafficking victims is necessary to address the demand for cheap sex and labor, but it is not sufficient.** The travel and hospitality industry must self-regulate and governments and the private sector must join to confront sex tourism and labor trafficking and to punish the perpetrators. The demand for cheap sex and labor, and the government's and public's disregard for what is occurring, further contribute to the profits and motivation of traffickers.
- **Combating human trafficking is a long-term battle that must be fought on many levels by many actors.** There is no magic bullet or easy path to eliminating human trafficking. Small, short term and stand alone activities do not tend to have lasting effects. Increasing community awareness of the risks can help sustain the movement, but external support is essential to support local organizations.

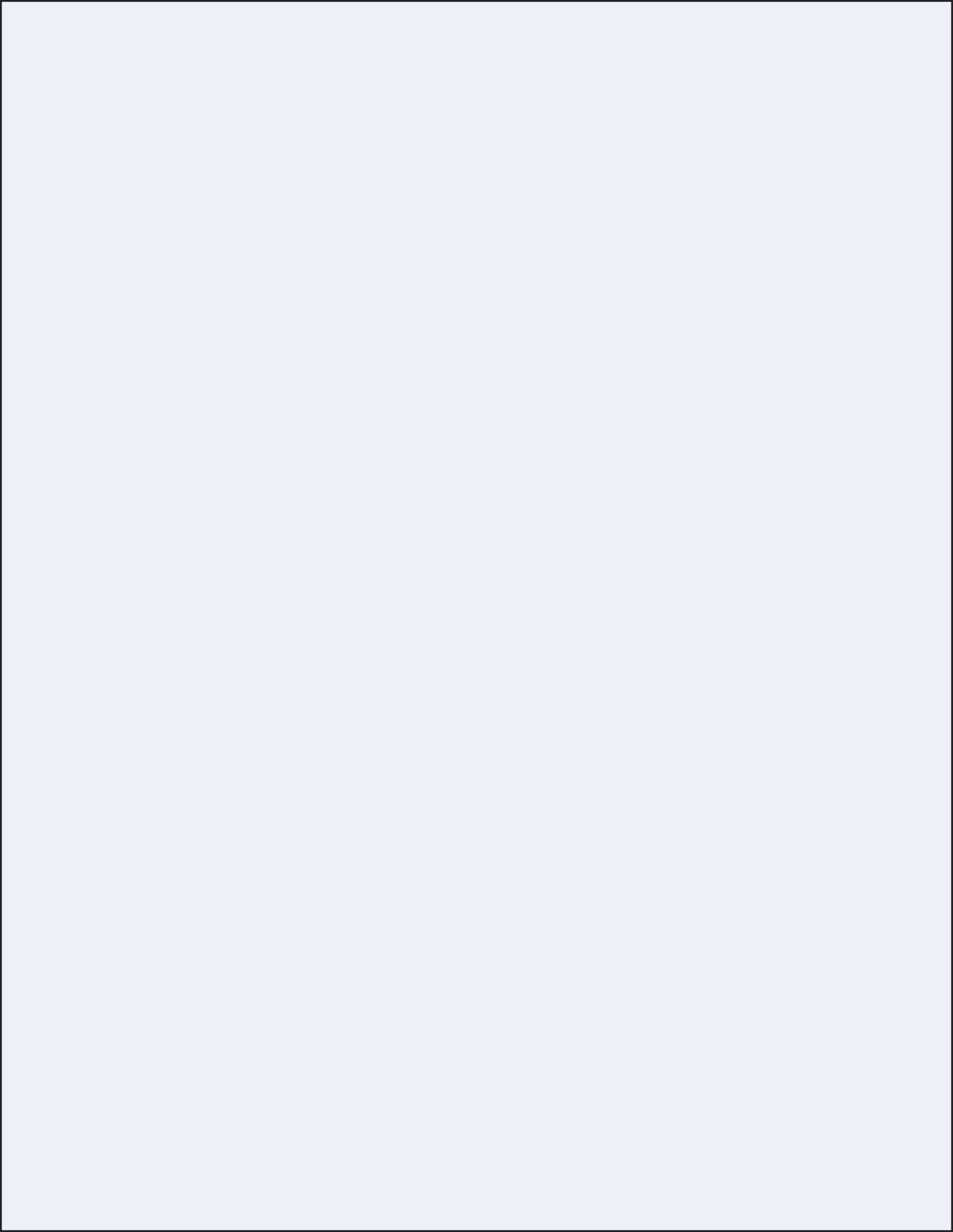
That human trafficking exists in the 21st century cannot be tolerated. The past eight years of intense anti-trafficking activity by the U.S. government have provided valuable experiences and lessons upon which to build in the future — but the war is far from over. It will take a worldwide, long-term concerted effort to overcome the abuse and exploitation of humans. Continued U.S. government leadership and support of key anti-trafficking initiatives will play a significant role, but real gains will only be achieved by working collaboratively with partners on all levels. Such an effort would serve not only to address trafficking in persons, but the myriad of intertwined issues that accompany it, including the spread of HIV/AIDS.

USAID Anti-Trafficking



Assistance 2001-2007





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