

Human Trafficking

The Issue

Human trafficking is a process that ends in some sort of forced labor – be it sexual or other economic exploitation – by means of confiscating personal identity documents, threatening denunciation of irregular migrants to the authorities in the host country, deceiving trafficked persons about the type of work they will undertake, and withholding of wages over extended periods. Once a person is acquired, a prevalent way of keeping them in bondage is debt bondage, often associated with more “traditional” forms of forced labor. Debts incurred by the victim during the trafficking process -- for transportation, forged documents, smuggling through borders, etc -- as well as at the destination accumulate to such a proportion that the victim will never be able to pay them off through the meager income earned, effectively bonding them to work for the trafficker or employer for an indeterminate period of time. The ILO estimates that at least 12.3 million people are victims and private agents exploit 9.8 million – with more than 2.4 million as a result of human trafficking. Around 43 percent of all trafficked victims are trapped in sexual exploitation, while around one third are exploited in agriculture, private households and sweatshops. Furthermore, four out of every five cases of all forced labor involve exploitation by private agents. The lengthier the supply chain, the more vulnerable the industry is to human trafficking. For instance, most governments have abolished the state monopoly on recruitment during the 1990s and now allow private agencies to act as recruiters and labor contractors, which lead to little or no monitoring of recruitment activities and methods. While this has contributed to greater efficiency in job placement and more flexibility in the labor market, it has also made it more difficult to regulate employment relationships under labor law. A recent International Labour Organization study shows that there’s been a global shortage of 40,000 labor inspectors, especially in highly industrialized nations. Unfortunately, this lack of regulation will remain prevalent so long as consumers are demanding lower prices for services and goods; the global competition will continue to eliminate the incentive to improve labor standards. Especially in case of services that aren’t regulated much anyway because they’re not considered “productive work” – such services include domestic and sexual services. Therefore, in your position paper, please answer the questions of:

- What incentives can be given to employers to encourage them to limit trafficking?
- What can be done to improve conditions and safeguards in such an informal economy?
- How can consumer behavior be taken into account?

Trafficking Hot Spots

Human trafficking is more prevalent in areas like Russia and former Soviet nations due to the economic hardships that followed the collapse of the Soviet Union. Wealth gaps are still fairly large, even in developed countries like Russia, where the richest 20% control about half of the country’s GDP, and the richest 40% of the population controls about 70% of the GDP. It is not uncommon for women to earn 60% or less than men in Eastern European economies - many look for ways to escape and fall right into the hands of criminal organizations that promise opportunities for education, work and a richer lifestyle. In many cases, they are sold into prostitution, enslaved and kept in a nation where they often do not know the official language and remain in captivity for long periods of time. It is estimated that 200,000-500,000 women are trafficked from Russia, former Soviet Republics and Balkan states annually. While kidnapers, con artists and criminal organizations in Eastern Europe, generally sell women, Southeast Asian trafficking is a bit different. Though some of the same methods are used, it’s also a strategy to

gain possession of them from willing parents who are lured by the large salaries that stand to be gained by selling their children. Many children are sold to organizations that force the children to beg on the streets, and surrender their wages to masters. Others work as underage prostitutes. A working figure comes out at around 200,000-300,000 victims in and around Japan, Thailand and the Philippines.

Progress

In 2000, the United Nations adopted the Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime, also known as the Palermo Convention. There were two protocols adopted, one being the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, also known as the Trafficking Protocol. By

October 2009, this protocol had been signed by 117 countries. The UNODC is in charge of implementing this protocol. For more information, the entire text can be found here:

<http://www2.ohchr.org/English/law/protocoltraffic.htm>

The other protocol adopted was the Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants By Land, Sea, and Air. By 2006, it had been signed by 112 states, and ratified by 104. The aim of this protocol is to protect migrant workers from being smuggled by organized crime groups. The full text can be found here for further reference:

http://www.uncjin.org/Documents/Conventions/dcatoc/final_documents_2/convention_smug_eng.pdf

Questions to Consider

- How can labor recruitment practices be modified as to not reduce market efficiency while preserving the rights of migrant/contract workers?
- What is “justice” for victims of trafficking, and how can we achieve it?
- Does your country face issues with human trafficking, and how has your country tried to combat it?
- How can companies with lengthy supply chains prevent forced labor and regulate all levels of their production?
- Is reducing consumer demand an effective strategy and if so, how would it be implemented?

Europe	
Albania	Up to 90 percent of the girls in rural areas don't go to school for fear of being abducted and sold into sexual servitude.
Bosnia and Herzegovina	A quarter of the women working in nightclubs claim they were forced into prostitution. The U.N. police task force is suspected of covering up its involvement in the sex trade.
Moldova	Up to 80 percent of the women trafficked as prostitutes in Western Europe may be Moldovans.
Ukraine	Up to 400,000 Ukrainian women have been trafficked for sexual exploitation in the past decade, Ukraine says. Ukrainian sex slaves can fetch up to \$25,000 in Israel.
Africa	
Ivory Coast	A girl can allegedly be bought as a slave in Abidjan for about \$7; a shipment of 10 children from Mali for work on the cocoa plantations costs about \$420.
Mauritania	Light-skinned Arab Berbers today are thought to exploit hundreds of thousands of black African slaves. Slave raids in the 13th century began systemic slavery in Mauritania.
Sudan	Muslim tribesmen from northern Sudan still stage slave raids on non-Muslim Dinka peoples in the south, taking thousands of women and children.
Asia	
Bangladesh	An estimated 25,000 women and children are trafficked annually from Bangladesh.
India	Parents have sold an estimated 15 million children into bonded labor in return for meager loans from moneylenders.
Myanmar	The ruling military junta coerces minorities into forced labor in factories that benefit the regime and foreign corporations.
Nepal	A major source of women trafficked into Indian brothels; in addition, an estimated 75,000 people are trapped as bonded laborers in Nepal.
Pakistan	Millions of Pakistanis, often members of religious minorities, are forced to work as brick makers or in the fields of feudal landowners.
Thailand	Children sold by their parents make up a significant percentage of prostitutes in Thailand, which is a prime destination for pedophile sex tourists.
United Arab Emirates	Many women trafficked from the former Soviet Union end up in the UAE.

The Rights of Indigenous People: ECOSOC

With the age of exploration and competition for new lands as shown at conferences like the Berlin Conference, beginning in the 14th century, the rights of the indigenous people of each respective conquered land began to be compromised. As these European powers made their way into foreign territory, it was largely accepted to infringe upon the native peoples' liberties, and often times, even take advantage of their disadvantage in technology and education. However, by the end of WWII, the atrocities that indigenous people faced were acknowledged and condemned by the world, and organizations such as the United Nations. The UN began supporting decolonization and self-determination in order to let the indigenous population form a self-sustaining and independent government and economy.

In this current day, there are 300 million indigenous people representing almost 5,000 different cultures. Unfortunately, the rich and unique cultures are being suffocated by both the oppression imposed upon them by foreign rulers, and by the lack of preservation efforts due to modernization and globalization. According to the UN Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), 50% of the world's 6000 languages are in danger of dying out and about 10 languages disappear every year. In response, the UN Human Rights Council adopted the U.N. Draft Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in 2006 after over 20 years of drafting and careful consideration. Overall, the draft acknowledges the basic human rights and fundamental freedoms of indigenous people. However, this declaration emphasizes the right to maintain and strengthen the institutions, cultures and traditions of the indigenous people, allowing the indigenous people to be heard against discrimination, racism, oppression, marginalization, and exploitation.

Despite the efforts of the UN to maintain the rights of indigenous people with the Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, there has been opposition from powerful countries for fear of a politically explosive response from the indigenous peoples. Some governments believe that giving the indigenous peoples a separate set of rights specific to the indigenous population would create a second category of citizens, dividing people and creating tension between groups. Such countries, including the United States, Australia, and New Zealand have expressed their opposition to the declaration in the *Inter Press Service* (IPS) notes with a joint statement that "No government can accept the notion of creating different classes of citizens". Although these nations voted against the declaration, 143 nations voted in favor of it. Other efforts from the UN to further establish the rights of the indigenous people include the UN Working Group on Indigenous Populations, the first and only UN body involved exclusively with matters concerning the human rights aspect of Indigenous Peoples, and the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues, the first and only international body in the UN that has indigenous persons as members and serves as an advisory board, in 2000 established by ECOSOC. Concerns in addressing the rights of indigenous people are the effects of self-determination and determining intellectual property rights and exploitation of natural resources, along with compensation, without upsetting the

current political and social balance in the world. Although figuring out these nuances is difficult, a high priority of the organization is the preservation of cultural traditions and languages of the indigenous peoples.

Treaties are used to enforce the rights of the indigenous people, since a declaration does not have any legal power to enforce compliance, but relies purely on the moral weight it carries. In some countries, international treaties take precedence over national law; in others, a specific law may be required to give an international treaty although ratified or acceded to, the force of a national law. Practically all states that have ratified or acceded to an international treaty must issue decrees, amend existing laws or introduce new legislation in order for the treaty to be fully effective on the national territory.

In many countries, indigenous peoples rank the highest under underdevelopment indicators as the proportion of people in jail, the illiteracy rate, unemployment rate, etc, and also face discrimination in schools and are exploited in the workplace. Due to the imperialism from the past, those in power of many countries do not represent the indigenous people politically, sometimes preventing the indigenous from practicing their own customs and traditions for that of the ruling government. In some cases, governments have even enforced policies of forced assimilation in efforts to eradicate indigenous peoples, cultures and traditions.

Provocative Questions:

How would self-determination affect the political, social, and economic aspects of certain countries, and how would that affect yours?

Consider the shifts in power from one indigenous population to another over time and the effects of governing from different indigenous populations.

Websites for Reference:

<http://intelligent-internet.info/law/ipr2.html>

Sources:

<http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/studyguides/indigenous.html>

<http://www.unausa.org/Document.Doc?id=894>

<http://www.un.org/rights/50/people.htm>

<http://www.globalissues.org/article/693/rights-of-indigenous-people#UNDeclarationonRightsofIndigenousPeoples>

<http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/declaration.html>



Quantitative Easing Background Guide

Quantitative easing is a financial method by which countries will print off excess amounts of currency typically to pay off debts, both domestic and international, with units of currency that are “cheaper” because the value of an individual unit of currency decreases when a large amount of currency is in circulation, both internationally and domestically.

In 2010, the G20 summit was pitched as a chance for leaders of the countries that account for 85 percent of the world’s output to prevent a currency row escalating into a rush to protectionism that could place the global economy in danger.

But there is little sign of consensus.

“We’re attached to avoiding excessive volatility. It’s very counterproductive for global growth and global stability,” European Central Bank President Jean-Claude Trichet But the quantitative easing from US Federal also has some global implications. The Bank of England and Bank of Japan are very likely to follow suit, but the European Central Bank is presently not in any mood to do so. Despite this, monetary policy in developed countries will be eased substantially, and it may pose major issues for prime emerging economies, which are in no need of monetary easing at this point of time. There are economists who argue printing money always spurs inflation. Others say the sophisticated purchase and re-sale of government bonds can be managed in a way that prevents inflation.

The global economy is in such bad shape that it needs a massive injection of money.

In May of 2011, Standard & Poor’s Ratings service recently lowered its outlook on Italy’s A-plus sovereign-credit rating from stable to negative, citing potential political gridlock that could derail the government’s plan to balance its budget by 2014. Italy’s public debt stood near 120% of gross domestic product at the end of last year.

In the late 1980s, Japan experienced an economic crisis very similar to the one currently facing the U.S., and was reluctant to print money in order to contain the crisis. As a result, critics argue, the country spent most of the 1990s mired in an economic downturn.

Nobel Prize-winning economist Paul Krugman “Gaining some traction--in effect, having some inflationary effect--is what the policy is all about.”

Others worry that external factors might drive the price of commodities--such as oil, steel or food--higher. Such a development, critics say, coupled with an excess money supply, may cause inflation to rise beyond the government’s ability to control it Critics note that when a government "creates" money, it is in fact selling debt to other countries.

As of June 30, 2010, the top 10 countries in terms of foreign debt are all highly developed nations. The order is as follows: The United States, United Kingdom, Germany, France, The Netherlands, Japan, Ireland, Norway, Italy, and Spain.

In order to save these economies, and the global economy by extension, there must be an international policy developed to control the amount of international currency in circulation.

Please keep in mind that targeting a specific country’s economic policy will likely infringe upon natural sovereignty since quantitative easing is often applied to domestic monetary policy.

So why bother with quantitative easing in the first place?

Printing money will lead to inflation, which, in the short term, proponents say, will cause lending, and consumer spending to increase. While supporters acknowledge that there is a danger that inflation could eventually spiral out of control, they assert that the alternatives are worse.

Since few would argue for increased inflation, or expectations of such, as an end in itself, the claim was that increases in inflation expectations would drive households to consume more, which would in turn causes businesses to hire more, bringing down the unemployment rate.

The hope that it would increase consumption and hence employment was just that: hope. Given the disconnect we’ve seen between consumption and unemployment over the past 18 months, the third link in that chain is also a weak one.

If quantitative easing were as effective as its proponents claim, not only would developed nations be able to alleviate their external debt, but also developing countries would benefit from improved economic conditions as well as the outflow of currency.

Questions to Consider:

- 1) Why would falling prices be so devastating (deflation)? What about rising prices (inflation)?**
- 2) How can it be a bad thing for a unit of currency to increase in value?**
- 3) Does quantitative easing have the potential to be more advantageous to a certain country over others?**

Resources:

http://www.2facts.com/icof_story.aspx?PIN=i1400270&term=quantitative+easing#i1400270_2

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/business/2010/nov/03/quantitative-easing-question-and-answer>

<http://business.timesonline.co.uk/tol/business/economics/article5850466.ece>

<http://www.businesstoday-eg.com/markets/united-states/the-impact-of-more-quantitative-easing-on-global-markets.html>

<http://real-agenda.com/2010/11/08/g20-nations-slam-quantitative-easing/>

<http://www.cato-at-liberty.org/do-inflation-expectations-drive-consumption/>