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**THE REPUBLIC OF UGANDA**

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# JAN – DEC 2017 REPORT

# ON

# TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS

# IN UGANDA

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# 1.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

## 1.1 Definition of Trafficking in Persons:

Trafficking in persons (TiP) simply refers to a number of deliberate acts that involve mobilization, transfer, receipt and harbouring of person(s); through improper means of deception, fraud or force; for purposes of exploitation such as sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, use in illegal activities, harmful child labour, use of children in armed conflicts, human sacrifice, etc. Trafficking in persons takes place through three major stages of recruitment, transfer and destination under a chain of inter-linked agents.

The persons who are mobilized through the above mentioned improper means and chain are referred to as ***Victims*** or ***Survivors*** of trafficking in persons; while all those involved in the chain of mobilization, transfer, receipt and harboring of the victims are the culprits of the crime. Trafficking in persons causes negative psychological, physical, social and economical effects to the victims. In some instances it leads to loss of lives.

The acts of mobilization, transfer, receipt and harbouring of victims of trafficking within the national boundaries are referred to as **Internal trafficking in persons.** On the other hand, acts involving victims of trafficking across the national boundaries are referred to as **Transnational trafficking in persons.**

## 1.2 The Legal and Policy Framework Dynamics:

Uganda has a special domestic law that guides the handling of the crime, TiP is criminalized under a specific law called the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons (PTIP) Act, 2009 that guides the management of the criminal investigations, protection of the victims of the crime, preventive strategies against the crime and partnership among the stakeholders, at the national and transnational levels. However, given the dynamics of the crime in the Country, some incidents related to trafficking in persons have been handled also under the Regulations for Labour recruitment and export of Migrant Workers and the Penal Code Act. .

As a way of operationalization of the PTIP Act, a multi-sectoral coordinated operational system has been adapted in the management of the crime. It involves mainly 13 Government Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) whose traditional mandates has a contribution to make against the crime, plus Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) which have running projects related to TiP. The Country also receives support from some International Agencies and friendly Embassies in Uganda. The Ministry of Internal Affairs Headquarters plays the coordination role.

## 1.3 Interventions Against Trafficking in Persons in Uganda:

In this report, the several Counter human trafficking interventions carried out during the year under review shall be discussed. It should be noted that all the interventions were guided by the National Action Plan for Prevention of Trafficking in Persons and based on four basic strategic objectives mentioned below:-

i. Enhanced measures for prevention of the crime,
ii. Strengthen the capacity for protection of victims,
iii. Increased vigilance to prosecute offenders
iv. Improved partnership amongst stakeholders

## 2.0 THE GENERAL CRIME SITUATION FOR 2017

### 2.1 Uganda was a Source, Transit and Destination Country for Victims of TiP

Just like during the previous years, Uganda was a source for most of the registered internal and transnational victims. It was also a destination for all the internal victims and a few transnational victims from Rwanda, Somalia and Eritrea. On the other hand, it was a transit country for some few transnational victims.

Both children and adults were targeted as victims. More adult victims were registered among the transnational trafficking incidents while more children were registered among the Internal trafficking incidents. Out of a total of 249 transnational adult victims registered during the year under review, 197 were females. On the other hand, all the 106 internal victims registered were children; 87 of them were from Napak district. Both Ugandan nationals and foreigners were registered as victims; majority of them were Ugandans. Uganda was a destination for 6 registered victims from Rwanda(3) and Somalia(3). One Somali refugee from Nakivale Refugee Settlement was also registered as a victim of internal trafficking for sexual exploitation.

#### 2.1.1Registered Number of Victims of Trafficking per gender category

| **Internal Trafficking Victims** | | | | | | **Transnational Trafficking Victims** | | | | | **Grand Total** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Female Adults | Male adults | Female Child'n | Male Child'n | Sub Total | | Female Adults | Male Adults | Female Child'n | Male Child'n | Sub Total | |
| Nil | Nil | 93 | 13 | 106 | | 197 | 9 | 15 | 28 | 249 | 355 |

### 2.2 The Number of Registered Incidents and Victims Slightly Increased during 2017

The year under review was characterized by persistent incidences of trafficking in persons. There was increased number of incidents and victims registered compared to the previous year. I.e. A total of 177 reports were registered in 2017; involving a total number of 335 victims / survivors; as compared to a total number of 125 reports registered in 2016 involving a total number of 283.

The increase in the number of the registered incidents was as a result of increased vigilance by the Police and stakeholder Agencies which led to interception of many child victims from Napak district and quick follow up of reports of illegal labour recruitment which contributed to majority of the transnational trafficking.

#### 2.2.1 Registered Number of Incidents of Trafficking in persons for 2017 as Compared to 2016

| **Year** | **Total Incidents Registered** | **Internal trafficking Incidents** | | **Transnational trafficking Incidents** | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | Incidents involving adult victims | Incidents involving child victims | Incidents involving adult victims | Incidents involving child victims |
| 2017 | 177 | Nil | 43 | 123 | 11 |
| 2016 | 125 | 3 | 29 | 84 | 9 |

### 2.3 **Most of the Registered Victims Suffered from Labour and Sexual Exploitation**

Majority of the registered victims of both internal and transnational trafficking were subjected to labour exploitation, followed by sexual exploitation among adult transnational victims and child sacrifice among the internal trafficking victims. Other forms of exploitation included use of children in armed conflicts, harmful child labour and illicit adoptions. Among the child sexual exploitation were some incidents of child marriages.

#### 2.3.1 **Breakdown of Forms of Exploitation for the Registered Victims for 2017**

| **Internal Trafficking Victims** | | | | | **Transnational Trafficking victims** | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Child Labour** | **Sexual Exploi-tation** | **Child sacrifice** | **Unclear** | | **Adult Labour Exploi-tation Alone** | **Adult Sexual Exploi-tation Alone** | **Adult Sexual &Labour Exploi-tation at the same time** | **Use of children in Armed conflicts** | **Child Labour Exploi-tation** | **Unclear** |
| **77** | 2 | 10 | 17 | | **134** | 38 | 4 | 16 | 5 | 52 |

### 2.4 Deception and Fraud Most commonly used Means of Recruitment

The most common means used to recruit the registered victims of trafficking were deceptive and fraudulent promises for jobs abroad and to provide support for children from some vulnerable homes. Some fraud incidents included forgery of travel documents.

### 2.5 Illegal Recruitment was the Major Promoter of Transnational Trafficking in Persons

Acts of illegal recruitment contributed most to the incidents of transnational trafficking in persons. Out of the 134 transnational criminal complaints registered in the year, more than 125 of them were perpetuated by illegal recruiters.

There were challenges associated with proper implementation of the Regulations and Guidelines for Labour Export and regulating the general labour migration from Uganda, even after signing some Bilateral Labour Agreements with Saudi Arabia and Jordan. Even Countries with Bilateral Labour Agreements with Uganda kept on issuing employment Visas outside the agreed upon arrangements and many criminal Ugandans exploited the confusion to illegally recruit and export many desperate Ugandans without taking due considerations.

### 2.6 Middle East Countries, Major Destination Countries for Registered Transnational Victims

Middle East Countries were the major destination countries for the registered victims of trafficking and intercepted potential victims. Details are illustrated in the table below:-

#### 2.6.1 Table showing Registered Nos of Transnational Victims per Destination Country

| Oman | Kenya | Thailand | DRC | UAE | Qatar | Saudi Arabia | Uganda | USA | Turkey | Jordan | India | Libya | Un-clear |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 69 | 35 | 31 | 17 | 13 | 9 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 64 |

- Most of the registered incidents from the Middle East were related to house maid jobs, where by Ugandans were being forced to overwork, without extra pay and yet they were being provided with insufficient food and medical care; they were also not allowed to terminate service before being forced to pay large sums of money as compensations to their former employers. Some of them were sexually abused by their male employers or family relatives.
- Oman was the destination Country for most of the transnational victims of trafficking, mostly for labour and sexual exploitation.
- During the year under review, over 10 victims came back from Oman while mentally sick and with open signs of physical torture and mistreatment. There was unconfirmed information that such Ugandan migrant workers who came back from Oman with mental problems were injected with some drugs which makes them became dull and unable to complain about their mistreatment and nonpayment of salaries to them.
- The destination Countries for some of the transnational victims who were intercepted within Uganda before departure could not easily be identified.

### 2.7 Districts with high Activities related Internal and Transnational Trafficking in Persons as Sources, Transit or Destinations

| **Internal Trafficking Incidents** | **Transnational Trafficking Incidents** |
|---|---|
| **General Internal Child Trafficking**:- Napak, Kampala, Wakiso, Tororo, Iganga, Busia, *Bukomansimbi*, Mukono,<br><br>**Child Sacrifice Incidents:-** Kiryandongo, Mukono, Mayuge, Nakasongola, Kyankwanzi, Gulu, Kiboga, Luwero, Buikwe | **Adult Transnational Trafficking Incidents:-** Kampala Metroploitan Area, Wakiso, Mukono, Luwero, Gomba, Mbarara, Mayuge, Jinja, Tororo, Busia, Mbale, Rukungiri, Bugiri, Kayunga; Buisa, Tororo, Nyamisindwa, Mbale<br><br>**Transnational Child Trafficking Incidents:-** Mukono, Wakiso, Mayuge, Busia, Tororo, Gomba, Kayunga |

### 2.8 Common Routes Used for Trafficking Activities

| **Internal Trafficking Incidents** | **Transnational Trafficking Incidents** |
|---|---|
| • Karamoja Sub-region to Teso sub region – Mbale – Busia / Malaba – Iganga – Jinja – Kampala for child labour and sexual exploitation<br>• Rural areas in Busoga Sub region and Central Uganda to urban centers within and outside the sub regions for disguised offer of child support for free education and care<br>• From the refugee Camps in Western and South Western Uganda to some surrounding districts and beyond for labour and sexual exploitation | • Kampala, Mukono, Wakiso, Jinja, Iganga and Mbale to several foreign countries for labour and sexual exploitation via Nairobi through the Eastern border of Uganda and Entebbe Airport.<br>• Busoga sub-region to DRC rebel camps via Buikwe, Mukono, Kampala and Kasese for use of children in armed conflict<br>• Rwanda, Burundi and DRC to Uganda through the South Western Uganda border to parts of Western and Central sub regions of Uganda for labour and sexual exploitation<br>• Eritrea and Somalia to Uganda through Kenya for labour and sexual exploitation |

## 2.9 General Observations on the Trend of the Crime of Trafficking in Persons for 2017

### 2.9.1 Poverty and Unemployment are the Major Contributing factors to human trafficking in Uganda

The existing high levels of youth unemployment and poverty in some homes has been contributing to the high vulnerability of many Ugandans who easily become easy preys to the deceptions and fraud of the trafficking and smuggling agents.

### 2.9.2 Challenge to Identify a Real Victim of Trafficking

The enforcement agencies have found a big challenge to identify the real victims before they leave the country because most of the trafficked persons are coached to tell lies. They even accept to be taken across the Uganda borders through "panya routes' because of the desperation caused by the high levels of vulnerabilities referred to above.

### 2.9.3 Challenge of Porous Borders and Existence of Cross border trafficking agents

Given the porous nature of the Ugandan borders, it has not been easy to effectively stop illegal crossings across borders. The presence of coordinating cross border trafficking agents on either sides adds another complication to the challenge.

### 2.9.4 Belief in Witchcraft and Absence of a National Policy on Traditional Healing has contributed to the persistent Incidents of Child Sacrifice

Belief in witchcraft and lack of clear national guidelines for operations of the traditional healers has contributed to the incidents of child sacrifice.

### 2.9.5 Existence of Other Un-registered Forms of Trafficking

The concept of trafficking in persons has not yet fully been well appreciated. There has been a tendency to concentrate on the transnational trafficking because it has been amplified by the media including social media houses. However, there other forms of trafficking which are taking place in Uganda which require attention before the situation may blow out of proportion. Apart from the registered incidents, there were other incidents seen and noticed which are not yet properly documented by the relevant authorities in the Country. They include:-

- Various forms of child labour, through domestic/garden/casual employment; some of which are dangerous to the normal development of children
- Various forms of child sexual abuse, including, child prostitution and child marriages
- Use of children for street begging and other forms of hazardous jobs
- Unconfirmed reports of trafficking activities among the refugee communities, mainly for sexual and labour exploitation.
- Many unresolved incidents of missing persons

## 3.0 RESPONSES AND COUNTER MEASURES TAKEN AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS DURING THE 2017 CALENDER YEAR

The relevant Government stakeholders, backed up by some concerned Civil Society Organizations carried out responses and counter measures against the crime, depending on their respective mandates and in a collaborated manner, coordinated by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. Among the key responses and counter measures carried out were:-

- Continued awareness sensitization of the public and sharing of relevant information on safe migration and identification of victims of trafficking.
- Enhanced training and capacity support of stakeholder action agencies on effective application of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act in order to enhance their respective capacities to be able to prevent the crime; identify and protect the victims and prosecute the perpetuators of the crime more effectively
- Deliberate multi agency coordinated operations against illegal recruitment agents as a way of prevention of the crime.
- Increased interceptions of actual and potential victims at the exit/entry points as another measure to protect victims and prevent the crime.
- Further improvement of the legal and policy frameworks by concluding the development of the Regulations for the PTIP Act and carrying out negotiations for establishment of Bilateral Labour Agreements with more targeted foreign countries.
- Keenness by members of the public to report incidents of suspected illegal recruitment and human trafficking as a result of continued awareness of the trend of the crime.
- Timely follow up of registered reports of suspected incidents of trafficking in persons by the more conscious Police Officers.
- Better organized and coordinated ways of rescuing victims from abroad and providing them with the required temporary assistance.

All the above mentioned key responses and actions were carried out under the guidance of four key objectives, commonly referred to as 4Ps, i.e. Prevention of the crime; Prosecution of offenders' Provision of protection and assistance to victims and Partnership amongst stakeholders

### 3.1 Preventive Measures

During the year under review, there were generally enhanced preventive actions against the crime through a number of deliberate measures including the following:-

#### 3.1.1 Interceptions of Potential Victims of Trafficking

Given the experience of the previous years where by many Ugandan youths were trafficked to foreign countries through disguised travels across the exit/entry points, an administrative action was adapted to intercept suspected potential victims of trafficking to prevent them from becoming victims of human trafficking. Some of the potential victims usually travel out of the Country on Visitation or Tourist Visas and are coached by the trafficking agents to lie to the Airport and border authorities that they are genuine visitors or tourists. When they reach the Countries of destination, they are forced to take up any jobs, including forced prostitution or any unfavourable jobs, where they are abused and exploited.

During the year of 2017, a total of 353 intending travelers, who were suspected to be potential victims of trafficking, were intercepted at the various exit/entry points. Among them, only 12 were male adults while the majority of them totaling 341 were females. Compared to 2016 statistics, a total of 238 were intercepted; of whom 7 were male and 231 were females.

3.1.1.i **Statistics of Intercepted Potential Victims of Trafficking**

| Year | Female Victims | Male Victims | Grand Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| **2017** | 341 | 12 | 353 |
| **2016** | 231 | 7 | 238 |

### 3.1.2 Public Sensitization on safe migration for jobs abroad

- There was intensified public awareness campaign to guide the public on safe migration through use of licenced recruitment companies. This was done through several ways including radio and TV Talk Shows plus print media and distribution of Information, Educational and Communication materials. The public was guided on where the information on updated lists of licenced companies can be got from, including District Police Headquarters, District Internal Security Offices; and at the Headquarters of the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

  In addition to distributing the updated lists of the Licenced Recruitment Companies, the Ministry of Gender, Labour and Social Development and that of Internal Affairs published updated lists of the Licenced Recruitment Companies on their respective Ministry's Websites.

- In addition to the general media sensitization, some sensitization meetings on how to identify human trafficking activities for the necessary referrals to the relevant enforcement agencies were organized by the Ministry of Internal Affairs in collaboration with other partners with some groups of in areas that were identified as recruitment areas, transit or destination points for victims of trafficking, i.e. Busia border, Tororo-Malaba border, Rwakaka border; Entebbe Airport, Kisoro, Kabale, & Gomba, Napak,. Among the people sensitized were:- Civic and Local Council leaders, area Security, Probation Officers, Labour Officers, Police & Immigration Officers, border taxi & special hire drivers, Kampala / Moroto Route bus operators, Bodabodas, hotel/lodge operators and crime preventers.
- As a result of the enhanced sensitization, there was a increase in the number of members of the public seeking for guidance on migration to foreign countries for jobs.

### 3.1.3 Crack down on Illegal Labour Recruitment Agencies

Basing on the analysis that over 90% of the registered victims had been trafficked by unlicenced labour recruitment individuals and Companies, a deliberate crackdown on such agents was declared. It was used as one of the ways of preventing the crime of trafficking in persons. Over 80 illegal recruitment individuals and Companies were investigated during the year under review. The offices for all those investigated were closed and some of the Directors and Individuals were prosecuted for illegal recruitment and promotion of trafficking.

### 3.1.4 Public Sensitization on Child protection against Trafficking in Children

As a way of enhancing protection of children against trafficking in persons, the Police Child Protection Officers, District Probation Officers and Community Development Officers plus senior officials from the Ministries of Gender, Labour & Social Development and Ministry of Education always included a close on prevention of child trafficking during their *routine* public sensitization against child abuse. This sensitization contributed to the fewer incidents of child trafficking registered.

### 3.1.5 Mobilization of the Licenced Recruitment Agencies to Streamline their Operations as a way of Minimizing Illegal Recruitment

In order to prevent trafficking in persons through disorganized labour export and migration, the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development, in collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Police, Immigration, Civil Aviation Authority and Security Agencies enhanced the regulation, guidance and monitoring of the Licenced Recruitment Companies, through regular consultation meetings and sharing of information related to labour export business.

As a result of the consultations and continued analysis of the loopholes that had been promoting trafficking in persons through the Airport, a joint clearance desk was created at Entebbe Airport for Ugandan migrant workers intending to travel abroad for jobs. The Ministry also introduced a digitalized Integrated Information System for Labour Recruitment Issues to enhance timely and transparent service delivery. By the end of the year, the number of Licenced Recruitment Companies had risen to 81

### 3.1.6 Engagement of more foreign Countries to Sign Joint Bi-lateral Labour Agreements

As a way of streamlining the rights and protection of Ugandans who go to the Middle East for work, the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development in collaboration with Ministry of Foreign Affairs continued to engage more Middle East Countries for Bi-Lateral Labour Agreements. By the end of the year, negotiations with Qatar had been completed pending a signing ceremony. This shall be the third Country in region following signing of similar agreements with Saudi Arabia and Jordan in 2016.

### 3.1.7 Other Preventive Measures Applied

i) Demand for clearance by the Ministry of Education and sports in collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs for travel of school children to foreign countries, especially during school days, before permission for their exit is granted by the Immigration.
ii) Demand for clearance letters by the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development for Ugandan migrant workers who get foreign jobs through their individual initiatives before they are allowed to exit by Immigration.
iii) Condition for elaborate clearance by the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development, in collaboration with Ministry of Internal Affairs, before children are granted exit permission by the Immigration.

## 3.2 Prosecution Function

### 3.2 Increased Vigilance led to Increased Number of Registered Incidents and Cases Investigated, Taken to Court and Convicted by End of the Year

As a result of increased awareness on how to identify and protect a victim of trafficking; and the heightened crackdown on illegal recruitment agencies, there was increased number of the registered incidents/reports of trafficking. Following a series of capacity building trainings to the Police and prosecutors, there was equally an increase in the number of human trafficking cases which were investigated, taken to court and those with convictions as per the statistical summary information in the table below:-

#### 3.2.1 **Comparison Table of Management of the Registered Cases of TIP for 2016 and 2017; by end of the respective years**

| **Year** | **Internal Trafficking Cases** | | | | | | **Transnational Trafficking Cases** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Total Registered | Taken to Court by end of the year | % of Cases taken to court by end of the year | Cases with Conviction by end of the year | % of Cases taken to court with Convictions | | Total Registered | Taken to Court by end of the year | % of Cases taken to court by end of the year | Cases with Convictions by end of the year | % of Cases taken to court with Convictions |
| 2017 | 43 | 16 | 37% | 13 | 81% | | 134 | 29 | 22% | 4 | 14% |
| 2016 | 29 | 14 | 23% | 6 | 42% | | 102 | 11 | 11% | 2 | 18% |

- The percentage of the registered Cases which were taken to court and those which had convictions by end of the year was higher in 2017 as compared to 2016, as seen in the table above
- More transnational Cases were taken to Court by end of the year in 2017 as compared to 2016. The number would have been higher if the Office of the DPP had not gone on industrial action towards the end of the year.
- Napak Police had the largest number cases taken to court and convicted among the internal trafficking Cases; While Busia Police recorded the highest number of prosecuted Cases and those with convictions among the transnational Cases.
- The improvement in the investigation and prosecution functions is due to enhanced efforts to develop the relevant skills in investigation and prosecution of TIP Cases and increased sense of concern about the crime by the key stakeholder agencies.
- It is also attributed to the improved budget of the Coordination Office for supporting investigations and temporary victim assistance.
- Some Civil Society Organizations also supported investigations and prosecutions of some of the human trafficking cases through several ways, i.e.
    - Willow International and RAHAB(U) provided safe temporary shelter for some victims until their Cases were disposed of from Courts.
    - Samaritan Purse provided some legal and financial support to facilitate field investigations and prosecution of some cases
    - FIDA(U) provided some legal support in respect of some Cases
    - Kyampisi Child Ministries provided some technical and financial support for field investigations and court prosecutions for some cases

### 3.2.2 **Classification of the Registered Cases of Trafficking for 2017**

Most of the Internal trafficking cases were of Aggravated trafficking involving children followed by cases of child sacrifice. On the other hand, most of the transnational trafficking cases were related to adult labour exploitation followed by sexual exploitation. The table below illustrates the numbers of cases registered for each category of specific offence:-

3.2.2(i) **Table Showing the Nos. of Registered Cases per category of Offence**

| **Internal Trafficking Cases** | | | | **Transnational trafficking Cases** | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Aggravated trafficking ( For Child labour & sexual exploitation) | Child Sacrifice | Not classi-fied | | Adult Labour Exploi-tation alone | Adult Sexual Exploi-tation alone | Both Adult Sexual & Labour Exploi-tation at once | Harmful Child labour | Use of Child in Armed Conflict | Promotion of TIP through Illicit child adoption | Not classi-fied |
| 23 | 10 | 10 | | 107 | 6 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 1 | 11 |

- 16 Cases of aggravated child trafficking for labour and sexual exploitation among the Internal trafficking Cases were registered in Napak District; While Busia, Kampala CPS, MoIA CID, Aviation Police and Old Kampala registered high numbers of Cases involving adult labour exploitation.
- 10 of the transnational trafficking Cases for labour exploitation involved aiding victims to utter false documents, including Passports with forged information and forged Visas for purposes of facilitating the victims to exit Uganda.

## 3.3 Victim Protection and Assistance Services

### 3.3.1 Multi-Stakeholders Coordinated Systems were Used to Rescue and Provide Protection & Assistance to Victims of Trafficking

- Despite the continued lack of a clear national Policy and Referral Mechanism on protection and provision of assistance to victims of trafficking, the concerned parties continued to apply the existing adhoc Coordinated system to rescue, protect and assist victims of the crime. The public and partners have been encouraged to report through the Coordination Office from where cases are referred to the Police Stations with the right jurisdiction.

- For transnational trafficking incidents, once the reports are registered by the Police, the suspect(s) are traced to assist with facilitation of rescue of the victims in collaboration with the relatives of the victims, especially where financial payments are required. Meanwhile, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and INTERPOL Kampala facilitates the official communication between Uganda Government and that of the Country where a Ugandan victim could have been trafficked. As for foreign victims rescued in Uganda, the concerned Embassies of their nationality are contacted to support with the temporary care, where necessary, and facilitate the repatriation of the victims back to their respective Countries.

- In the meantime, a needs assessment for the rescued victims is carried out instantly by the Police or any concerned stakeholders and some of them are referred to the Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) for temporary care and eventual re-integration. The most common services offered to the victims by the CSOs include temporary shelter, feeding, medical care, psychosocial counseling, clothing, skills development, startup capital, family tracing, re-integration and after reintegration monitoring.

- Once in a while, the International Organization (IOM) and some Non Government Organizations based in Uganda and some other foreign Countries assisted with the return of some victims from abroad. Among the NGOs which provided assistance to rescue and return some victims of trafficking from abroad were:- *Engage Now Africa, based in USA*; *Abolishing Injustice in the 21st Century, based in Thailand*; *Make the Child Smile, Wakiso*; *Willow International Ltd, Kampala; Kyampisi Christian Ministries, Mukono*;

- On the other hand, there are some local NGOs which participated in the identification and provision of assistance to some victims of internal trafficking. They included: *Dwelling places*, which mostly deals with Karamojong children; *Uganda Youth Development Link*, which deals mostly with children victims of child abuse; *RAHAB(U)*, which assists child victims of sexual and labour abuse; *Platform for Labour Action*, which offers legal aid to people with issues related to labour exploitation, including domestic child labour.

- During the year under review, the Ministry of Gender, Labour & Social Development, in collaboration with the Uganda Association of Recruitment Agencies contracted a Ugandan official to be attached at the Uganda Embassy in Saudi Arabia to boost the process of locating Ugandan migrant workers in the Middle East who get challenges of mistreatment.

- The Ministry of Internal Affairs coordinates the entire process of victim rescue and assistance. The above mentioned multi stakeholder coordinated system has enabled many victims benefit from the available assistance services and has helped to promote the needed cooperation between the victims and the criminal justice system which has contributed to the increased number of successful investigations and prosecutions.

- By the end of the year most of the registered victims of trafficking had been rescued and assisted as per the table below:-

3.3.1(i) **Table Showing the Number of Registered Victims Rescued by the End of the Year**

| **Internal Trafficking Victims** | | | | | **Transnational Trafficking Victims** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total Registered | Total Rescued/ intercepted while alive | Total bodies Recovered after ritual murder | Still Missing | | Total Registered | Total Rescued/ intercepted while alive | Total still stranded abroad | Total dead bodies recovered from abroad |
| 106 | 93 | 10 | 3 | | 249 | 148 | 90 | 1 |

- ❖ 87 of the rescued/intercepted internal trafficking victims were Karamojong children who were being brought to other areas of Country for labour and sexual exploitation; while majority of the rescued/ intercepted transnational victims were rescued from Oman.
- ❖ More than 10 of the victims rescued from Oman came back while suffering from open mental sickness and physical signs of assault and torture.
- ❖ Among the CSOs which offered assistance to victims of trafficking during the year under review are: Willows International Ltd, RAHAB (U), Kyampisi Child Care Ministries, Uganda Youth Development Link, Dwelling Places

## 3.4 Stakeholders Partnership Activities

During the year under review, there were a number of cross cutting counter human trafficking responses and activities that were involved several stakeholders and partners at the same time. They included the following:-

### 3.4.1 Quarterly Task Force Consultation Meetings

Four consultation meetings for the multi-sectoral stakeholder Task Force Committee were held during the year under review. During the meetings, existing crime trends and interventions were discussed and recommendations made for the best way forward. By the end of the year among the salient recommendations made included the need to fight illegal recruitment, enhance public guidance on safe migration, training on application of the Prevention Trafficking in Persons Act alongside the Regulations of the Act, develop regional mechanisms to protect victims and prosecute cross border trafficking agents and to develop a formal National Referral Mechanisms on TIP issues. The above mentioned are part of the agenda for the new year of 2018.

### 3.4.2 Strengthening of the Policy and Legal Frameworks related to Trafficking in Persons

- ❖ With the financial support from the UNDP, the Coordination Office for Prevention of Trafficking in Persons hired consultancy services and organized stakeholder consultation meetings to conclude the process of drafting the Regulations for the PTIP Act. By end of the year, a final Zero Draft of the Regulations were undergoing final editing by the Ministry's Legal team pending submission to the Ministry of Justice and Constitutional Affairs for final drafting.

- ❖ It is hoped that the Regulations shall help to guide the proper handling of human trafficking issues in the Country, including the establishment of the formal structure of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Office, management of human trafficking Cases and provision of protection and assistance to victims of trafficking.

- ❖ During the year under review, FIDA(U) facilitated stakeholder meetings, involving Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Internal Affairs to discuss the way forward for the ratification of the **Palermo Protocol** by the Uganda Government. By the end of the year, the Palermo Protocol had been placed on the priority list of protocols that need fast tracking by the Government.

### 3.4.3 Capacity Building Trainings;

- ❖ Training was one of the key activities that were carried out in order to develop the capacity of the key stakeholders to effectively manage the crime of trafficking in persons and mitigate its effects.
- ❖ Police was one of the targeted key stakeholders. Trafficking in persons was one of the subjects that was discussed during the several in service trainings for Police officers of various ranks in the two main Police training Institutions at Kabalye and Bwebajja.
- ❖ There were a number of specific trainings that were carried out to enhance the knowledge and skills of the Police and other stakeholder agencies, with the direct involvement of the Ministry of Internal Affairs as per the summary information in the team below:-

3.4.2(i) **Table Showing the Categories of Trainings Carried out under Direct Participation of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, as the Coordinating, and or Facilitating Agency**

| **Date of Training , Place and Training Theme** | **Lead Facilitating Agency** | **No of Participants** | **Categories of Stakeholders Agencies Involved in the Training** |
|---|---|---|---|
| May 2017; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia<br><br>"Investigation of Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling" | Expert France | 3 | MoIA(1), Police(1), Immigration(1) |
| 08/09/2017<br>Katonga Region (Mpigi)<br><br>"Understanding TIP and effective Application of the PTIP Act" | Ministry of Internal Affairs | 32 | Police(30), Probation Officer(1), ODPP(1) |
| September 2017; Nairobi, Kenya<br><br>"Training of Trainers in TIP Investigation Techniques" | Expert France | 2 | Police(1) and ODPP(1) |
| 24 -26 Oct 2017<br>Kabale<br><br>"Understanding TIP and effective Application of the PTIP Act" | Samaritan Purse | 51 | Police(30), Border Intelligence Officers(8), Immigration (2), ODPP(1), Judiciary(1), Local Administration Officials(9) |
| 14 – 16 Nov 2017<br>Kisoro<br><br>"Understanding TIP and effective Application of the PTIP Act" | Samaritan Purse | 61 | Police(28), Border Intelligence Officers(15), Immigration(1), ODPP(1), Judiciary(1), Local Administration Officials(4), Media(4) |
| 12/12/2017; Wamala Region (Mityana)<br><br>"Understanding TIP and effective Application of the PTIP Act" | Ministry of Internal Affairs | 40 | Police(33), ODPP(2), ISO(2), Probation & Social Welfare Officers(3) |

- ❖ Other trainings monitored by the Ministry of Internal Affairs included:-
    - o Two training Workshops on management of human trafficking cases in Kampala for Judicial Officers and Prosecutors, respectively by the USA based Human Trafficking Institute
    - o A Training of 25 stakeholders from Police, Probation Officers and CSOs in Kampala on understanding the crime of TIP and effective application of the PTIP Act by FIDA(U)

### 3.4.4 Advocacy Meetings for Regional Strategy to Trafficking in Persons

- ❖ FIDA(U) also organized 2 high-level breakfast meetings to discuss the need for a regional strategy on issues of trafficking in persons in order for the East African Countries to be able to have harmonized and coordinated ways to identify and protect victims of trafficking within the respective countries and support cross border investigations and rescues more effectively.

- ❖ Apart from the FIDA(U) efforts, several concerned authorities in Uganda including the Uganda Police, the East African Police Chiefs Organization (EAPCO, the Ministry for East African Affairs, IGAD Country Focal Officer and the East African Legislative Assembly have voiced their concern for a regional approach to the crime.

- ❖ By the end of the year the debate over the subject matter was still going on. It was however noted that there is increasing informal cooperation between the East African Countries on identification of victims of the crime travelling through either of the regional Countries.

### 3.4.5 Development of an Integrated Training Manual for Trafficking in Persons, Terrorism and Small Arms trafficking

With the financial support of the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) Kampala Office, the Head of the Police Training Planning Unit was facilitated to develop a comprehensive training manual for the above mentioned three subject matters. Stakeholder consultation meetings were held and the final document is expected to be ready for printing any time.

### 3.4.6 Benchmark Studies Carried out or Monitored

- ❖ During the month of December 2017, I participated in a regional expert group meeting on smuggling of migrants which was organized by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in collaboration with the Regional INTERPOL Office. The meeting took place in Mombasa. During the course of the meeting it was observed that migrant smuggling was happening in the East African region and that it was one of the factors promoting trafficking in persons; yet none of the regional countries has a specific legislation to address the same. It was recommended that steps be taken by the member states to ratify and domesticate the UN Protocol on migrant smuggling. A concept note for implementation of the recommendation has been developed for the required consultation.

- ❖ As stated earlier on, two senior officers from the Criminal Investigations Directorate and Office of the Director of Public Prosecutions participated in a regional training workshop for trainers of Cases of trafficking in Persons which took place in Nairobi in September 2017, facilitated by an International Organization called Expert France. The two Officers are expected to adapt the training module developed with the one in Uganda for better results.

### 3.4.7 Re-Establishment of the Coalition of Civil Society Organizations Against Trafficking in Persons

During the year under review, the known Civil Society Organizations with running projects on trafficking in persons have been mobilized under the leadership of Willow International to re-establish a loose coalition between them. The motive of the coalition is to enable the CSOs harmonize their programs in terms of geographical coverage and nature of the support to ensure effective benefits of their interventions.

### 3.4.8 Other Activities

i) Participation in a regional trans-border Operation code named "Operation Usalama" during which two transnational victims were rescued.
ii) Awareness Walks on how to prevent trafficking in persons generally and specifically in Karamoja sub region by RAHAB(U) and Dwelling Places, respectively.
iii) Awareness Radio and TV Talk Shows by Samaritan Purse, Willow International and Platform for Labour Action in collaboration with the Ministry of Internal Affairs.
iv) Printing and Dissemination of IEC Materials by the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Partners
v) Sensitization Meetings by Dwelling Places and Samaritan Purse for the some members of the Karamoja community by Dwelling Places and communities in Gomba district, Malaba, Busia, Kabale and Kisoro by the Samaritan Purse.
vi) Carrying out field research and and community engagements on how to prevent trafficking in persons in Arua and Rakai districts by RAHAB(U).

## 4.0 KEY CHALLENGES OF THE YEAR 2017

### 4.1 Persistent Strong Push and Pull Factors Makes Prevention of the Crime Difficult

The persistent poverty and unemployment remained the key push factors for trafficking in persons; while the advertized existence of non skilled jobs in the Middle East was the major pull factor which promoted the crime. The two factors are a big challenge to the prevention of the crime because many youths are desperate to try their luck where they think they can earn a better living.

### 4.2 Insufficient Information on Safe Migration

Many Ugandans want to be guided on where and how they can secure safe jobs and not simply to be stopped from going abroad. Many of the intercepted potential victims usually find other illegal ways of going abroad soon after receiving their Passports back because they do not see any other helpful ways of surviving.

There is need for dissemination of more researched information on safe migration.

### 4.3 Existence of Coordinated criminal Rackets in the East African Region

It has become a common practice that some Ugandan trafficking agents have developed links with other fellow criminal agents in the neighbouring countries, especially in Kenya, through whom Ugandan victims are being trafficked to some foreign Countries, especially the Middle East, India and Thailand. There are no clear coordinated investigations against these cross – border trafficking agents.

### 4.4 Slow pace of Securing Bilateral Labour Agreements with the key Targeted Foreign Countries in the Middle East in Face of Desperate Ugandan Job Seekers and Available job Markets in those Countries

The issue of securing bilateral labour agreements with the Middle East Countries has been a welcome development. The slow pace at which the exercise is being realized has been used as leeway for criminals to traffic the desperate Ugandan youths.

### 4.5 Insufficient Investigations for Transnational Trafficking Cases due to Limited Funds to Facilitate Evidence Gathering from Abroad

Despite the improved performance in investigations, the Police investigators have not been able to be facilitated to carry out investigations in the foreign Countries where most of the victims are abused and exploited to collaborate the allegations made. This has contributed to the low quality of the prosecutions where by courts have been awarding little punishments for the convicted suspects and discharging others.

### 4.6 Lack of a Formal Agreed Upon National Referral Mechanism Backed up with the Required Budgets for Issues related to Trafficking in Persons

Although there are generally good relationships between the key stakeholders and partners, this relationship is not backed up with proper legal mandate. This state of affairs has limited the quality of service delivery due to lack of proper formal guidelines and budgets.

### 4.7 The Existing Shelters by the CSOs are Inadequate

The existing Shelters operated by the Civil Society Organization cannot provide sufficient assistance to the victims. They are few in number and sometimes are forced to provide temporary shelters for the victims for very limited period and hand them over before they have fully recovered from the bad effects of the trafficking activities. Some rescued child victims who had been used in armed conflict in DRC were hurriedly handed back to their relatives before preparing those to whom they were being entrusted.

### 4.8 Training in Handling Issues of Trafficking in Persons is still Limited given the geographical distribution of the Crime and the Rate of Transfer of Police Officers

The crime of trafficking in persons has been taking place in many parts of the country, hence the need for further training to be carried out among the key stakeholders, especially the Police Officers and Prosecutors whose rate of transfer is a bit high.

### 4.9 Lack of formal Protocols or Agreements for Regional Cooperation on Issues of Trafficking is a challenge to the protection of victims and Effective Investigations

Although there is increasing recognition of the need for operational cooperation amongst the enforcement agencies in the East African region to identify and protect victims of trafficking, there is need for elaborate compelling formal protocols or Standard Operating Procedures to strengthen the cooperation. The formal cooperation understanding shall provide the needed guidelines on how rescued or intercepted victims can be provided with the temporary care in the country of rescue or interception and how they can be facilitated to return to their respective countries of origin in an orderly manner. The procedure for joint follow up investigations, where necessary, shall also be provided in the regional Cooperation agreement.

## 5.0 TARGETED WAY FORWARD FOR 2018

As the way forward for 2018, the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in collaboration with the stakeholders and partners intends to carry out the following activities:-

5.1 Review of the National Action Plan for prevention of trafficking in persons which expires in December 2018

**5.2** Develop a Legal Instrument on an appropriate formal National Referral Mechanism on issues of trafficking in persons both at the National and transnational levels.

**5.3** Carry out extensive sensitization and Training on the Implementation of the various aspects of the Prevention of Trafficking in Persons Act alongside the newly developed Regulations of the Act.

5.4 Continue with the public Sensitization on Prevention of Trafficking in Persons through all possible ways, including meetings, media talk shows and adverts, display of Informational educational and communication materials; and social media adverts and alerts, etc

5.5 Continue to strengthen the national coordination systems in the Country through regular consultation meetings

5.6 Mobilize the Key Government Stakeholders to Initiate and Strengthen the required responses and counter measures against the Crime

5.7 Mobilize the interested Non Governmental Organizations to Support the Various Government Efforts against the Crime in a coordinated and orderly manner.

5.8 Continue with Advocacy for formal Regional Cooperation Against the Crime

5.9 Continue mobilizing for continued support for Investigations, Prosecutions and Victim Support

## 6.0 **COUNTER HUMAN TRAFFICKING ACTIVITIES IN PICTURES**

*TV and Radio Awareness Talk Show on Radio Veritus and Step TV in Soroti & Mbale*




*Group Photo of Officers from Wamala Region After a Training Session on application of the PITP Act 2009*



*The National Task Force Committee during one of the Quarterly Consultation Meetings*



*Sensitization Workshop on how to prevent human trafficking through Entebbe Airport*



*Home visit by the Coordinator to one of the Returnee Victims from Oman*



## 7.0 HIGHLIGHTS OF SOME OF THE REGISTERED INCIDENTS OF THE YEAR 2017

**i.** During the course of the year, over five(5) victims came back from Oman while suffering from depression, one was pregnant and a few others had physical marks of torture.

**ii.** In Kanoni, Gomba district, three Rwandese young girls (aged 15 – 16 years) were rescued after having been brought into Uganda by some agents and 'sold' to Ugandan men as 'child wives' at a cost of 200,000 – 300,000-) each. The girls were subjected to mistreatment, including physical assaults by the sexual exploiters just after a few months. During investigations of suspected 'domestic violence', it was discovered that the girls were victims of trafficking. Two Criminal Cases were registered and later taken to court.

**iii.** In Napak district, more Karamojong children were intercepted before leaving Karamojong sub region, compared to last year. All the intercepted children were easily re-integrated with their families. `

**iv.** In Tororo district, a child of two and half years was rescued from Eldoret Kenya, after it had been stolen from a neighbour in Malaba and handed over to a suspect's Kenyan boyfriend living in Eldoret. The Ugandan female suspect was convicted and sentenced to five years imprisonment at her own plea of guilt.

**v.** One 14 years girl was rescued in Masafu, Busia district after having been recruited as a house maid and later forced to become a child wife of a brother of her female boss. Her former boss was prosecuted with aggravated trafficking.

**vi.** One 16 years orphaned girl from Wakiso district was intercepted at Jomo Kenyatta Airport on her way to Oman using a Passport with a forged date of birth, depicting her as a 19 year old child yet she was 16. Her guardian had conspired with other people to alter the dates in the Passport. She was removed her from school two weeks before she could sit for PLE so that she may go out to raise school fees for the uncle's children.

**vii.** Eight cases of child sacrifice were registered during the course of the year.

**viii.** During the year under review, five children victims who had been taken to DRC to be used in the armed conflict by the terrorist group of Jamil Mukulu, and had been rescued by the UN forces, were brought back to Uganda and re-integrated with their relatives, with the support of UNICEF.

**ix.** A media report was received on 31st December 2017concerning rescue of 30 Ugandan ladies who had been facing sexual exploitation (forced/conditional prostitution) in Thailand. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been requested to get the official report from Thailand so that arrangements are made to rescue the victims back to Uganda.

## 8.0 STATISTICAL DATA ON NUMBERS OF REGISTERED CASES AND VICTIMS PER DISTRICT OF REGISTRATION

| District of Registration | Number of Reports Registered | | Number of Victims/ Survivors Involved | | | | Number of Cases taken to Court | Number of Cases with conviction | Number of Suspects taken to Court | Number of Suspects Convicted |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Internal | Trans-national | Internal Trafficking | | Transnational Trafficking | | | | | |
| | | | Adult | Young | Adult | Young | | | | |
| Coord. Office | - | 2 | - | - | 35 | - | - | - | - | - |
| MoIA CID | - | 13 | - | - | 14 | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| CID Hdqtr | 1 | 8 | - | 1 | 21 | 2 | - | - | - | - |
| SID Kireka | - | 5 | - | - | 7 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Busia | 3 | 35 | - | 3 | 43 | 7 | 16 | 3 | 18 | 4 |
| Napak | 26 | - | - | 87 | - | - | 17 | 9 | 19 | 17 |
| Wakiso | 1 | 6 | - | 3 | 5 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - |
| Avipol, Ebbe | - | 12 | - | - | 32 | - | 3 | - | 3 | - |
| Jinja | - | 2 | - | - | 2 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Tororo | 1 | 4 | - | 1 | 8 | - | 2 | - | - | - |
| Bukomansimbi | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Rwakaka | - | 1 | - | - | 6 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Kampala | - | 41 | - | - | 46 | | 6 | 1 | 9 | 3 |
| Iganga | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Luwero | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| Mbale | - | 2 | - | - | 3 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Gomba | - | 2 | - | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | - | 4 | |
| Kiryandongo | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Nagalama | 1 | i | - | 1 | - | 11 | - | - | - | - |
| Mayuge | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Nakasongola | 1 | - | - | 1 | 1 | - | - | - | - | - |
| Kyankwanzi | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - |
| Gulu | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Kiboga | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Buikwe | 1 | - | - | 1 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Kayunga | - | 2 | - | - | | 1 | 1 | - | 2 | - |
| **Total** | **43** | **134** | **-** | **106** | **225** | **24** | **50** | **13** | **52** | **24** |