



# TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

## IN CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT SITUATIONS

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## THE RESEARCH-ACTION ON TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT SITUATIONS

**T**rafficking in human beings in conflict and post-conflict situations is a subject on which little research has been conducted, and which is seldom addressed by the stakeholders tasked with supporting displaced people and/or refugees.

In the field, the reception or management of people fleeing conflicts, whether by international organisations, States or civil society, essentially boils down to providing humanitarian aid to meet basic needs: food and drink, medical care, shelter, and so on.

Emergency aid programmes, whether during the conflict phase or in support of exiled people, still do too little to address the exploitation or presence of vulnerable groups, such as children without a family guardian, unaccompanied women or persecuted minorities.

According to the Caritas organisations working in the field, because of the proliferation of conflicts around the world (Middle East, Ukraine, etc.), which mainly affect civilians and which result in an unprecedented number of displaced people and refugees, human trafficking and exploitation would appear to be increasingly in the forefront.

Failure to address these issues can result in the permanent entrenchment of this phenomenon in countries being rebuilt after a period of conflict.

The purpose of this research-action is to help identify more clearly the processes of exploitation resulting from conflict and post-conflict situations. It also aims to offer concrete recommendations at the local, national and international level, based on a series of experiments in various countries.

It allows all stakeholders in acts of trafficking in human beings to increase their knowledge and offers methods for intervention that best reflect the situations on the ground. It should therefore help ensure greater attention is paid to the specific vulnerabilities in both trafficking of children and adults, both during an initial emergency and in the long term.

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## 1 - TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEING IN CONFLICT AND POST-CONFLICT SITUATIONS: A REALITY WITH MANY FORMS



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### CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY

While some of the forms of human exploitation covered by this research are specific to countries directly involved in conflict – child soldiering and organ trafficking to treat wounded fighters – the remaining types of trafficking in human beings have many points in common in conflict and post-conflict periods. Recruitment methods, psychological control techniques and the forms of exploitation do not depend on particular geographic zones.

### EARLY AND FORCED MARRIAGE FOR THE PURPOSES OF EXPLOITATION

Our research showed that, in the countries in conflict, girls were abducted by various armed groups from their families, or near border areas, for the purposes of sexual slavery. However, in all of the countries studied, the methods of recruitment revolve around various types of arranged marriages. The girls and their families were apparently seldom aware of the risks. Whatever the religion involved, the dowry system

is regularly corrupted and turned into the purchase price of a human being. These marriages are used for one or other type of exploitation, or even for several types of exploitation at once. They turn into domestic exploitation, sexual exploitation, forced prostitution, temporary marriage or debt bondage, all of which can include being forced to commit offences.

### ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

This type of exploitation, and the many forms it takes, is found in all of the countries studied. The quasi-impossibility for refugees to enter the legal job market, because of limited rights or the absence of status, fosters large-scale economic exploitation. Although there is little chance of changing domestic legislations at this point, our research showed that economic exploitation can generate other forms of exploitation, such as drug running, sexual exploitation, debt bondage, etc. This leads us to advocate for the establishment of a distinction of type, not degree, between economic exploitation and undeclared work.

### USE OF CHILDREN

In countries with large numbers of refugees, child labour can be seen in every sector that requires unqualified labour: agriculture, street vendors, shoeshiners, construction, shop salespeople, etc. The report<sup>1</sup> on minor Iraqi refugees in Lebanon showed that these practices were far from common before the conflict. In the sample quoted, 92% of the children had not worked in Iraq and 59% had completed at least elementary schooling. This exploitation through work, which sometimes turns into sexual exploitation or forced crime and is dictated by the economic hardships experienced by refugee families, tends to become commonplace, even institutionalised. The example of refugee families living in informal tented settlements on private lands in the Bekaa Valley or Northern Lebanon, who have to send their children out to work in the field of the landlord in order to be able to pay for the piece of land used, is a worrying illustration of this. Humanitarian organisations tend to work through the *chawichs* and regularly assign them the task of distributing aid (food, blankets, etc.), thereby further bolstering their position in the camps.

### VULNERABLE MINORITIES

The post-conflict situations studied in this research show that past and present civil wars lead to certain minorities being permanently rejected, on ethnic or religious grounds, by all of the belligerents. In the post-conflict period, these groups' place in society continues to be threatened. These minorities find themselves marginalised and represent a pool of potential victims of trafficking in human beings over several generations. The exclusion from social institutions in their countries of origin condemns them to living in isolation and reinforces the clan mentality and crime. The example of Bosnia and Kosovo shows that, more than 15 years after the end of the conflicts, the lack of protection for these population groups in their home or host countries generates an internal structuring of so-called grey activities that can degenerate into crime and human trafficking. These phenomena do not appear to stop at the border and are also observed in neighbouring countries, such as Albania or Bulgaria.

### MIGRANT SMUGGLING AND TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

Many studies draw a type distinction between smuggling migrants and trafficking in human beings. This is based on the assumption that, once the migrant has paid the required sum and been smuggled into the country, the person is no longer tied to the smuggler. Our research tends to prove the opposite. Migrant smuggling can be a stepping stone to trafficking in human beings. Many people who cannot afford to pay the smuggler on the spot end up in a situation of debt bondage. Some families are obliged to marry their daughters to the first suitors who come along in order to recuperate the dowry money; others, especially in Western Europe, are caught up in economic exploitation or forced crime.

1. *An Insight into Child Labor among Iraqi Refugees in Lebanon*. CLMC, Beirut, 2012.

## DÉFINITIONS

### TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS

The Palermo Protocol (2000), which was ratified by 147 countries, provides the following definition of Trafficking in persons in its Article 3, entitled "Use of terms":

"For the purposes of this Protocol:

- (a) "Trafficking in persons" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;
- (b) The consent of a victim of trafficking in persons to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;
- (c) The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in persons" even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;
- (d) "Child" shall mean any person under eighteen years of age."

European Directive 2011/36/EU, which focuses more on the protection of victims, expands on this definition in its Paragraph 11:

"In order to tackle recent developments in the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings, this Directive adopts a broader concept of what should be considered trafficking in human beings than under Framework Decision 2002/629/JHA and therefore includes additional forms of exploitation. Within the context of this Directive, forced begging should be understood as a form of forced labour or services as defined in the 1930 ILO Convention No 29 concerning Forced or Compulsory Labour. Therefore, the exploitation of begging, including the use of a trafficked dependent person for begging, falls within the scope of the definition of trafficking in human beings only when all the elements of forced labour or services occur. In the light of the relevant case-law, the validity of any possible consent to perform such labour or services should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis. However, when a child is concerned, no possible consent should ever be considered valid. The expression 'exploitation of criminal activities' should be understood as the exploitation of a person to commit, inter alia, pick-pocketing, shop-lifting, drug trafficking and other similar activities which are subject to penalties and imply financial gain. The definition also covers trafficking in human beings for the purpose of the removal of organs, which constitutes a serious violation of human dignity and physical integrity, as well as, for instance, other behaviour such as illegal adoption or forced marriage (...)."

### DISPLACED PEOPLE, REFUGEES, ASYLUM-SEEKERS

People obliged to leave their place of residence because of conflict and/or persecution are considered **displaced** when they remain in their country and **refugees** when they leave their country.

The term "refugee" is defined by Article 1 A (2) of the 1951 Geneva Convention: "(...) the term "refugee" shall apply to any person who: (...) owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country".

The signatory countries (139 countries) base themselves on this convention to define the right to asylum in their national legislation. Depending on the States, people other than refugees in the sense of the Geneva Convention may be entitled to apply for asylum. Other legal grounds may be claimed, such as being persecuted for one's opinions or belonging to an ethnic, religious or sexual minority. In France, this type of application comes under so-called "subsidiary" asylum.

## 2 - PRESENTATION OF THE RESEARCH-ACTION

### RELEVANCE

According to the Caritas organisations working in the field, because of the proliferation of conflicts around the world (Middle East, Ukraine, etc.), which mainly affect civilians and which result in an unprecedented number of displaced people and refugees, human trafficking and exploitation would appear to be increasingly in the forefront. Failure to address these issues can result in the permanent entrenchment of this phenomenon in countries being rebuilt after a period of conflict. This research-action provides insights into trafficking in conflict and post-conflict situations to all stakeholders so that they can put forward the solutions best suited to the situations in the field.

### OBJECTIVES

- Understand trafficking in human beings in conflict and post-conflict situations: the forms it takes and how it is carried out;
- Help Caritas and its partners more effectively support refugees fleeing conflicts and who are at risk of or victims of trafficking, by producing new tools;
- Draw up a series of recommendations, based on local research and trials, to better address trafficking in human beings in aid programmes for conflict and post-conflict situations, and disseminate them to local, national, regional and international stakeholders.

### PARTICIPANTS AND METHODOLOGY

#### PARTICIPANTS

The plan to conduct a research-action was discussed among the Caritas organisations involved in the Euro-Mediterranean anti-trafficking in human beings project in Madrid in January 2014. Caritas organisations started working together on this issue following their meeting at the World Social Forum 2011 in Senegal. For three years, various Caritas organisations shared their experiences in raising awareness of trafficking in human beings, protecting at risk populations, supporting victims of all forms of trafficking and advocacy. At a meeting in Lebanon in May 2014, more targeted discussions were held on the objectives and methodology, and a document presenting the research-action on trafficking and conflict situations was produced. Based on this document the Caritas organisations in Albania, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, France, Lebanon, Turkey and Ukraine<sup>2</sup> decided to take part of this research. Other Caritas organisations can

now benefit from the first experiments carried out by the organisations actively involved today to combat this blight.

#### METHODOLOGY

The term "research-action" refers to a variety of approaches developed by the social sciences to boost social change. A panel of international researchers produced the following tentative definition<sup>3</sup>: "Research in which there is deliberate action to transform reality; research with a dual objective: transform reality and gain insights into these transformations."

In this work, the link between research and action, managed by the head of the Secours Catholique's "trafficking in human beings" unit, is made in the following steps:

Step 1: conduct research, in the participating countries, into the different types of trafficking in human beings in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Step 2: the participating Caritas organisations decide to develop tools through concrete experimentations on one or more of the types of trafficking identified.

Step 3: assess the impact of the tools used.

Step 4: disseminate the research-action and advocate recommendations to put into practice.

In Step 1, each Caritas organisation involved in the study appointed a research officer (sometimes the Caritas coordinator for efforts to stop trafficking in human beings, or some other person). The latter conducted documentary research and interviewed institutional stakeholders and stakeholders in the field. Whenever possible, the researchers gathered first-hand accounts from victims or people at risk, using two methods:

- semi-guided interviews;
- focus groups<sup>4</sup> conducted with refugees (from Syria and Iraq for example).

The research officers were supported by a researcher specialised in trafficking in human beings.

For Steps 2 and 3, four experiments were conducted by Caritas Albania, Caritas Armenia, Caritas Lebanon and Caritas Turkey. Each Caritas organisation developed an action aimed at one of the target

2. Because of the circumstances, Caritas Ukraine was only able to partially contribute to this research.

3. At a symposium held at the INRP (National Institute for Educational Research) in Paris.

4. This tool provides a comparison of different stakeholders' viewpoints that is more apt than individual interviews to bring out differences of assessment, internal reasoning, possible malfunctions, etc.

groups identified during the research phase as being particularly vulnerable to trafficking in human beings. Although any experiment is, by definition, limited in scope, several criteria had to be met in order to be eligible, based on the defined methodology:

- the action should be carried out in partnership with the public authorities as a guarantee of sustainability;
- the direct impact on the situation of victims or potential victims was a key evaluation criterion;
- finally, the experiment had to be designed so that, if the results were positive, it could give rise to larger-scale projects in the countries concerned or elsewhere.

This work is now being built on collaboration with universities (political science, international action, migration) in some countries researched.

With regard to Step 4, work carried out with Caritas Internationalis enabled the initial results of the study to be presented to the United Nations Assembly in Geneva, in June 2015. Since then, other discussions based on the study have taken place within the UN in Amman (November 2015) and Geneva (June 2016). The research-action was thus cited in the 2016 report by the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children, which was presented at the 32<sup>nd</sup> session of the UN Human Rights Council<sup>5</sup>. Caritas Lebanon also presented the research during the World Humanitarian Summit in Istanbul (May 2016).

At the regional and local level, advocacy work based on the conclusions of the research-action has been carried out by Caritas organisations and their partners, to ensure that the question of victims of trafficking in human beings is taken into consideration in both emergency assistance and reconstruction programmes. In France for example, the work carried out on trafficking and conflict situations provides the basis for collaboration with MIPROF – the inter-ministerial unit tasked with implementing the national action plan to combat trafficking – and the various ministries concerned, and CNCDH – the national consultative commission on human rights –, who acts as national rapporteur on trafficking as human beings. The issue is also being further studied with partners from the Collective “Together Against Trafficking in Human Beings”, which pools together 25 member associations working to combat trafficking.

#### SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH-ACTION: EXPLORING A LITTLE-KNOWN TOPIC

This research-action, which spans a period of two and a half years, consists of a qualitative analysis of the forms

and operation of trafficking in human beings among people who are displaced or refugees as a result of conflict and post-conflict situations.

The number of interviews of victims or people at risk per country was limited (maximum of approximately 30 per country). This makes it impossible to report on the quantitative scale of the phenomenon, and thus limits the possibility of providing an exhaustive listing of the various forms of trafficking that are being conducted in the respective countries. The study focuses on a qualitative approach in order to better identify and target trafficking.

Similarly, the financial and human resources allocated during the experimentation phase were limited. The impact evaluation therefore applies to a limited number of situations. Experiments that target a limited number of people may only be relevant to particular cases, which are not always representative of all situations.

Very little research has been done on trafficking in human beings, so documentary research had to be extended to include press articles, especially to corroborate certain information provided by the refugees but not necessarily recorded by studies.

The scope of action among the engaged Caritas organizations is geographically limited, so it was not always possible to report on specific regional features within the different countries.

The victims or people at risk who took part in the interviews and/or focus groups had been identified by the Caritas organisations or their partners, so the group polled was, de facto, not representative of all victims. A series of filters inherent to social work sometimes meant that certain categories of victims (women, people who spoke the language of the specific country where the study took place, etc.) were more likely to be selected to participate.

The techniques used to exploit and gain psychological control over people change according to the person's status, the practices of the stakeholders in the field, the arrival of new vulnerable populations, etc. The analysis presented here, therefore, corresponds to a partial snapshot of the various forms taken by trafficking in human beings at a given time.

5. <https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/G16/090/48/PDF/G1609048.pdf?OpenElement>

### 3 - CHANGES IN THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT ON THE REFUGEE ISSUE AND INCREASED VULNERABILITY OF PEOPLE



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#### CLOSURE OF EUROPE'S BORDERS AND INCREASED ROLE OF THIRD COUNTRIES IN RECEIVING AND TAKING CHARGE OF REFUGEES

According to research by Gérard Noirel<sup>6</sup>, beginning in the 1980s, Western countries introduced policies to curb the filing of asylum applications in their respective territories and to lower the acceptance rate. In 1980, the rate of acceptance of asylum applications in European Member States stood at 85%, whereas, in the 2000s, the proportion was completely reversed and reached an 85% rejection rate. Over the years, the status of refugee has thus become less protective. The future prospects it procures are increasingly uncertain. An analysis of the figures on the distribution of Syrian refugees between the Middle East and Europe confirms this trend.

In February 2016, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) estimated the number of Syrians living in neighbouring countries at more than 4.5 million (out of a population of 22 million), with a million having reached Europe. The majority of them are living in the following countries: 1,069,111 in Lebanon, 2,503,549 in Turkey, 635,324 in Jordan, 245,022 in Iraq and 117,658 in Egypt. Again

according to UNHCR, 13.5 million people have been displaced within Syria. These figures are actually an underestimate, since they only include people of Syrian nationality who are officially registered. If we take the case of Lebanon, registration with UNHCR has been increasingly difficult since early 2015 and many Syrians are therefore not registered. Moreover, there are other nationalities in both Europe and neighbouring countries, who have fled their countries because of conflict (Iraqis, Sudanese, etc.).

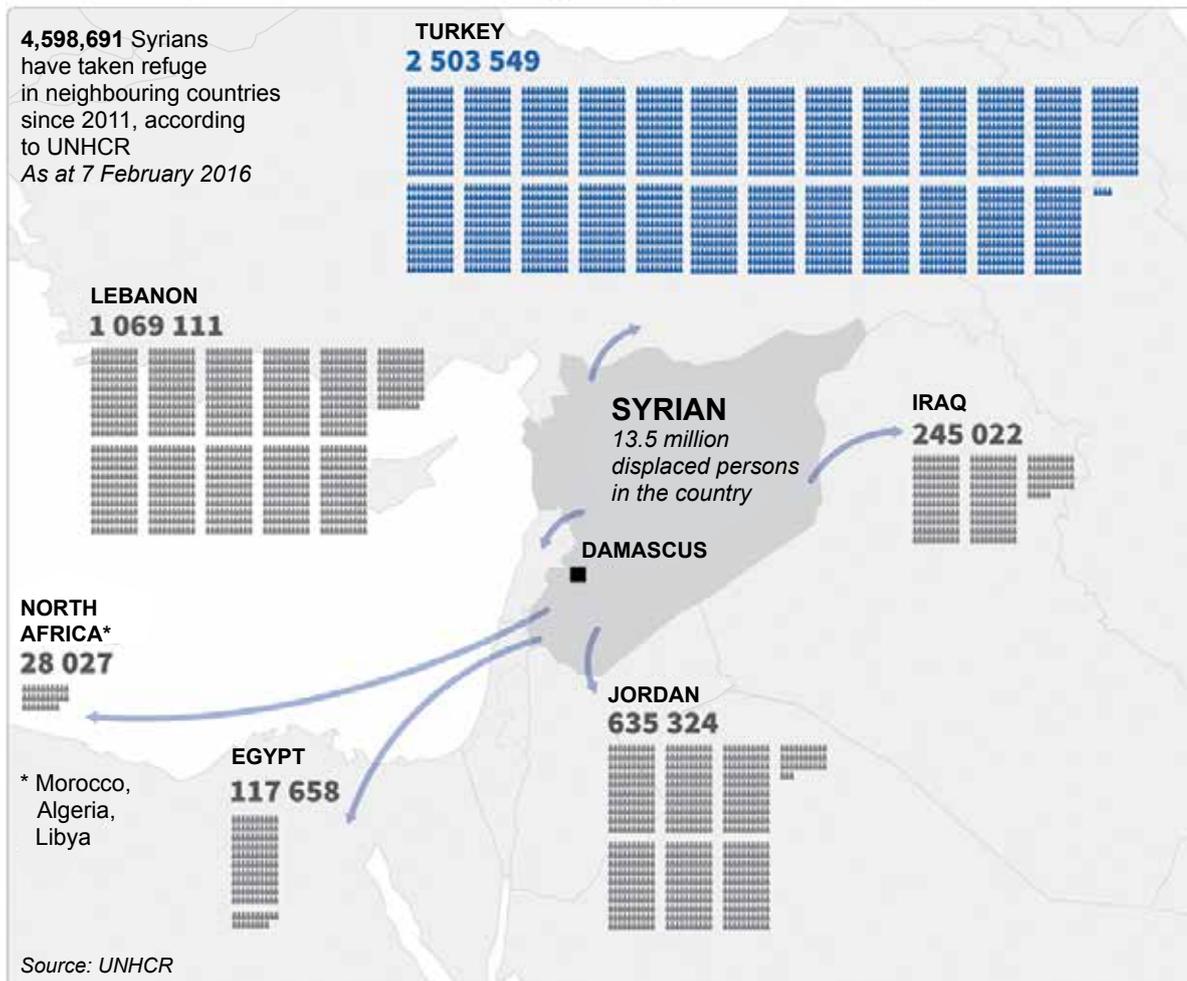
When we compare the figures, we can see that only 18% of Syrian refugees are in Europe, with a very uneven distribution between countries, with Germany, Greece and Sweden among those most affected. Since early 2016, the European Union has placed mounting pressure on the countries adjoining conflict zones to accept onto their soil the flow of people fleeing the fighting. Although the European Union has allocated substantial sums to these States, to international organisations and to NGOs, as a result of the ever-increasing number of refugees and domestic legislation in the host countries, actual protection of refugees remains limited. Among the countries currently hosting the largest number of refugees,

6. Gérard Noirel, *Réfugiés et sans-papiers, La République face au droit d'asile XIX<sup>e</sup> - XX<sup>e</sup> siècle*, Paris : Hachette / Pluriel, 1999.

Lebanon is not a signatory to the Geneva Convention and Turkey has placed a geographical restriction on the Geneva Convention, to the effect that it accepts only asylum seekers coming from Europe. To remedy the resulting lack of status among those seeking asylum, temporary hosting protocols have been signed with UNHCR. Even so, the status of refugees remains very limited in terms of protection. It varies with the refugee's nationality and on negotiations with the national authorities, which are pushing for a more and more restrictive status in order to protect their labour markets<sup>7</sup>. As a result, refugee status provides few prospects for the future (temporary status, ban on working, etc.). In addition, migration routes to Europe are closing. Until November 2015, there were no nationality criteria for people taking the

Balkans route. By the end of November, only Iraqis, Syrians and Afghans had the right to cross legally from Greece into Macedonia. Three months later, this authorisation was restricted to people from certain cities in the three countries. At the end of March, all the borders of the countries adjoining Greece were closed to all refugees. The agreement between Turkey and the European Union on sending refugees back to Turkish soil began to come into effect at the same time. This increasingly restrictive level of protection makes refugees even more vulnerable to trafficking in human beings. The closure of borders results in a resurgence of the network of human smugglers, which leads to indebtedness and therefore increases the risks of debt slavery.

## Over 2.5 million Syrian refugees in Turkey



7. For example, since 2015, Syrians in Lebanon have had to sign an undertaking not to work (signed before a notary) with the UNHCR certificate in order to renew their visas.



## 4 - IDENTIFICATION OF THE DIFFERENT SITUATIONS OF EXPLOITATION IN COUNTRIES IN CONFLICT, THIRD COUNTRIES AND COUNTRIES IN RECONSTRUCTION

### TRAFFICKING IN COUNTRIES IN CONFLICT

#### SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

In the focus groups, a number of women refugees from the city of Mosul said that Muslim girls and those girls who were members of religious minorities (Christians and Yazidis) had been kidnapped from their homes by the Islamic State or other armed militia. To stop them from escaping and returning to their family, they are raped in front of their parents, creating an indelible feeling of shame with regard to their family. After being abducted, they are made the sexual slaves of the fighters. Although it is hard to know the full extent of the phenomenon, similar facts have been reported in a number of press articles. The Huffington Post UK<sup>8</sup> reported on the rare story of a Yazidi girl who managed to escape, a few weeks after having been reduced to the role of sex slave. She described her ordeal and mentioned that 40 other girls were with her, the youngest of them aged 12.

In three interviews conducted by Caritas Turkey, Syrian women refugees in Istanbul between the ages of 17-24 stated that they had been raped during the conflict in Syria and that, due to fear of social exclusion, they could not let their families know. Among girls and women involved in prostitution, most of them had been victims of rape in Syria. In Turkey, four male and three female interviewees stated that prostitution is socially unacceptable in the Syrian culture, but girls or women have no other choices due to the economic situation of refugees.

#### ABDUCTION OF WOMEN FOR THE PURPOSES OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION ABROAD

Numerous observers in countries at war confirm that, apart from the cases of sexual slavery, women and teenagers are being abducted and then sold abroad, mainly for the purposes of forced prostitution. As early as 2003, Human Rights Watch (HRW) reported an increase in abductions of young women<sup>9</sup>. The same year, the NGO Organization of Women's Freedom in Iraq reported that 400 women had been kidnapped in the Kirkuk region<sup>10</sup>. There was evidence that 18 of them had been sold for sexual exploitation in nightclubs in Egypt<sup>11</sup>. More recently, the NGOs contacted for this research drew attention to possible sales of women,

primarily to buyers in the Gulf States. In Iraq and Syria, the risk of abduction is currently highest in the border areas. Numerous armed groups use these crossing points to raise finance by smuggling migrants and selling women.

#### FORCED / EARLY MARRIAGES TO OBTAIN PROTECTION AND/OR PROVIDE FOR THE FAMILY'S NEEDS

During the conduct of research for this study, reports were made of numerous cases of Syrian girls in Turkey being forced to marry and become the second or third wife. This also has been corroborated by articles in the press<sup>12</sup>. According to accounts by victims, the usual scenario is as follows: Turkish men, generally quite old, contact Syrian go-betweens to find Syrian wives aged between 13 and 25. Once the deal has been made, they go to areas on the Syrian border in the south of Turkey. The Syrian go-between then crosses the border with the wife and hands her over to the future husband in exchange for the sum of money negotiated beforehand. The payment is used to pay the bride's dowry to the girl's family in Syria and remunerate the go-between. Caritas investigations suggest that the main motivations of the men who contract for such brides are:

- the fact that the dowry amount is much smaller than what is paid for Turkish women;
- the opportunity for men over the age of 50 to have a young and docile wife.

From the many testimonies of victims collected by NGOs and journalists, it became possible to understand the recruitment procedure. The victims explained that they were obliged by their uncle or father to take a Turkish husband. If they agreed, it was to help their family financially through the dowry money paid to the family. According to their accounts, the amount was between \$150 and \$200. On arriving in Turkey, the victims found that the go-between (often a relative or neighbour of theirs) had deceived them about the husband's material circumstances and family status. In the majority of accounts, the latter had been described as a widower or childless, in comfortable financial circumstances. It was only when the new Syrian wife entered his home that she discovered that her husband had several wives and

8. [http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2014/09/08/yazidi-sex-slave-isis\\_n\\_5782714.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2014/09/08/yazidi-sex-slave-isis_n_5782714.html)

9. Human Rights Watch (2003) : *Climate of Fear*.

10. Over 400 Iraqi women kidnapped, raped in post-war chaos, *Jordan Times*, August 25, The Arab Regional Resource Center on Violence against Women. Aman News Center : [www.amanjordan.org](http://www.amanjordan.org)

11. Mlodoch, Karin : Lange Schatten der Vergangenheit, *ai-journal*, amnesty international, Heft 10, Oktober 2003, pp. 12-13.

12. [http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/suriyeli\\_kuma\\_ticareti\\_kira\\_veremiyorsan\\_kizini\\_ver-1172732](http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/suriyeli_kuma_ticareti_kira_veremiyorsan_kizini_ver-1172732)

**FOCUS ON**
**ABOUT FORCED/EARLY MARRIAGE AND TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

According to the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking, forced marriage, as distinct from arranged marriage, may occur as:

- 1) a method of recruitment for trafficking – for example, by the promise of dating or marriage abroad leading to sexual exploitation;
- 2) the result of trafficking, in other words, being trafficked for the purposes of marriage, usually accomplished via the threat of force, fraud, or coercion. The Supplementary Convention on the Abolition of Slavery also refers to servile marriage, in which a woman might be promised and/or given in marriage without her consent.

"Child marriage can be said to be slavery, primarily if the following elements are present: firstly, if the child has not genuinely given their free and informed consent to enter the marriage; secondly, if the child is subjected to control and a sense of "ownership" in the marriage itself, particularly through abuse and threats, and is exploited by being forced to undertake domestic chores within the marital home or labour outside it, and/or engage in non-consensual sexual relations; and thirdly, if the child cannot realistically leave or end the marriage, leading potentially to a lifetime of slavery"<sup>13</sup>.

In 2013 the first United Nations Human Rights Council resolution against child, early, and forced marriages was adopted; the resolution recognizes child, early, and forced marriage as involving violations of human rights which "prevents individuals from living their lives free from all forms of violence and that has adverse consequences on the enjoyment of human rights, such as the right to education, [and] the right to the highest attainable standard of health including sexual and reproductive health, and also states that "the elimination of child, early and forced marriage should be considered in the discussion of the post-2015 development agenda"<sup>14</sup>.

13. Extract from the website "girls not brides" <http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/when-does-child-marriage-become-slavery/>

14. <http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/states-adopt-first-ever-resolution-on-child-marriage-at-human-rights-council/>

15. See the US Department of State's 2014 *Trafficking in Persons Report*, which reports that children in Syria, in particular, are being abducted for use as child soldiers.

16. During the war between Afghanistan and the USSR, minorities, i.e. people seen as ethnically non-Russian, were sent to the front before the others.

17. *Foreign Fighters, an Updated Assessment of the Flow of Foreign Fighters into Syria and Iraq*, Soufran group, New York, December 2015

dependent children. The housing conditions were much poorer than had been announced. The girls who told their story explained that they had been held in a situation of domestic and/or sexual exploitation. They had also been abused by the other wives, who resented their arrival.

### ENLISTMENT OF CHILDREN IN ARMED MILITIA OR FOR "JIHAD"

Information from Caritas Ukraine indicates that children are being used to build barricades against the regular army. Some of them are enlisted in separatist militia. Similarly, in the focus groups conducted in Lebanon, women refugees reported that boys were regularly kidnapped and then enlisted in armed militia. This information has been corroborated by the US Department of State's report on Syria<sup>15</sup>, which refers to boys being forcibly recruited into armed militia. When Caritas Armenia interviewed Armenian refugees from Syria, the latter said they were particularly exposed to child soldiering because of their religion. According to them, boys from religious minorities or considered non-Sunni were targeted more than others. While this information is plausible because it reflects strategies that are common practice during conflicts<sup>16</sup>,

we should nevertheless remain cautious. The number of testimonies collected to this day is not sufficient to determine whether the faith-based criterion increases the risk of forced enlistment, and if so, in what way.

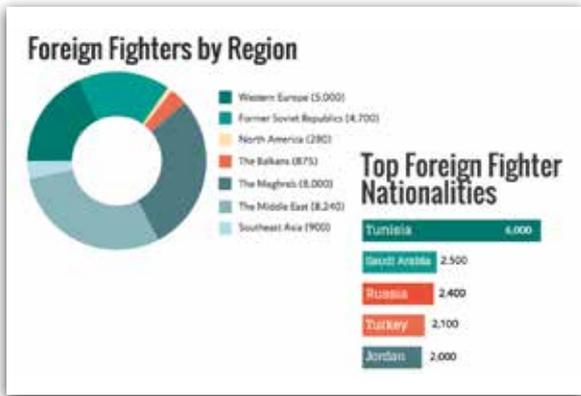
The enlistment of foreign fighters by armed militias and terrorist groups (Al Nostra, Islamic State, etc.) on the pretext of Jihad seems to us to be a similar phenomenon to trafficking in human beings and affects a large number of countries.

The girls enlisted are mainly used for reproductive purposes. They are married to fighters who are allocated to them once they arrive. According to information from the French Intelligence and Internal Security Service (DGSI) in 2015, girls represented 35% of recruits from France.

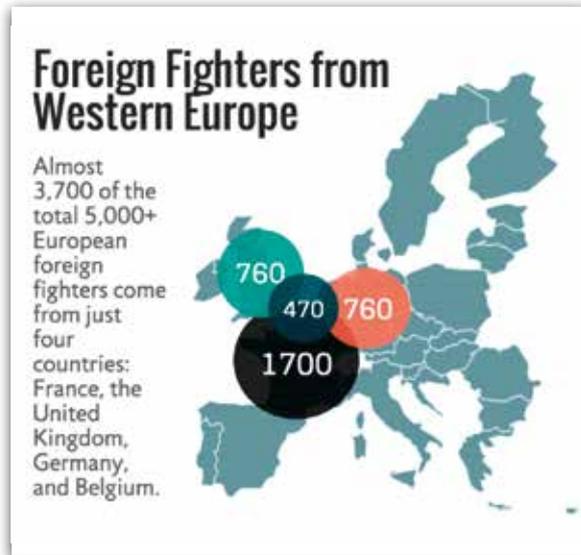
As regards adolescents and young men recruited to be enlisted by warlords in Iraq, Syria or Libya, the estimates calculated by the various Western intelligence services agree on a figure of 60,000 fighters, with half of them coming from abroad. According to the study<sup>17</sup> carried out by the Soufran group, the foreign fighters present in Iraq and Syria

come from 86 countries. The most significant contingents are from the Middle East, the Maghreb and then Western Europe.

Finally, with regard to Western Europe, the main contingents come from four countries: France, the United Kingdom, Germany and Belgium.

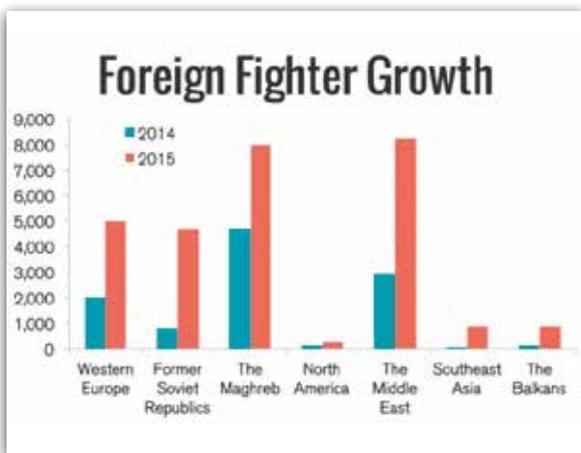


Source: Soufran group



Source: Soufran group

Similarly, according to the same study, recruitment doubled between 2014 and 2015. Recruitment techniques combine gaining a hold over individuals and financial motivation.



Source: Soufran group

**TRAFFICKING IN ORGANS**

In the focus groups, the Syrian and Iraqi refugees were adamant in stating that trafficking in organs was indeed observed. Although, to our knowledge, there have been few reports or articles on this information, the testimonies collected were relatively precise. Several women reported that people underwent operations in hospitals for the removal of a kidney without their knowledge. Others in the group reported that, on the road to Lebanon, there had been attempts to threaten them into donating their organs. If such trafficking probably existed before the conflict, it seems to have intensified. The most detailed testimonies reported situations of wounded fighters in Syria, who, for security reasons, sought treatment in Turkey in the border town of Kilis, but later were found dead with organs missing. Several articles<sup>18</sup> seem to corroborate this situation. UNHCR's report on trafficking in Syria (published in November 2014) also confirmed this point. Several cases of trafficking in organs among Syrian refugees in Lebanon were described, which suggests that the trade is growing fast. During our interviews in Tripoli (Lebanon), a Sunni Syrian family explained that they had contacted the local sheikh to seek help, and in return were asked to donate a kidney. The increase in trafficking is thought to be explained by the financial difficulties faced by refugees in dealing with ever-higher costs of living, along with the ban on refugees working. Hiring a tent in Tripoli, for example, costs between \$100

18. *Organ smuggling: Turkish hospitals Traffic Injured Syrian Citizen Organs* by Centre for Research Globalization 02/2014 <http://www.globalresearch.ca/organ-smuggling-turkish-hospitals-traffic-injured-syrian-citizens-organs/5367869> and "L'EI, J.Foley et le trafic d'organes" In *Le monde* blog 12/12/2014.

19. Anything related to personal status is ruled by the person's religion. There are 18 officially recognized religious groups in Lebanon.

20. Following complaints by a number of associations, including Caritas Lebanon, the page was blocked by Facebook. <http://www.dailystar.com.lb/News/Lebanon-News/2014/May-22/257377-facebook-page-promoting-syrian-refugee-brides-blocked.ashx#axzz3DN2fGlgY>

21. <http://levant.tv/blog-posts/syrian-crisis-temporary-marriages-and-sexual-exploitation-by-sara-yasmin-anwar/>

22. [http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/suriyeli\\_kuma\\_ticaret\\_i\\_kira\\_veremiyorsan\\_kizini\\_ver-1172732](http://www.radikal.com.tr/turkiye/suriyeli_kuma_ticaret_i_kira_veremiyorsan_kizini_ver-1172732)

23. "One family reported that there was an office in Tripoli that helped facilitate the marriages of Syrian girls and women to foreign men. Although they had never seen the office, it was said that after arriving in Lebanon, a foreign man would come to this office where he would be presented with several Syrian girls and women from which he could choose a bride. Once he had made his choice and the arrangements were made, he would travel back to his home country with his bride".

and \$200 a month. Even for families viewed as the most vulnerable, financial assistance from UNHCR is limited to a maximum period of six months.

This is reminiscent of another recent organ trafficking scandal: in 2013, one of nine suspected of illegal organ trafficking at the Medicus clinic (a private Kosovo/Turkish Clinic) in Kosovo pleaded guilty to all charges of having committed such crimes during the previous years. The clinic was founded in 1999 by a European philanthropist who helped during the war in Kosovo. Officials say that it secretly evolved into a centre for illegal organ trafficking. An investigation into the practices of the clinic began in 2008, and the centre was closed. Thirty illegal transplants are said to have taken place at the site, with donors falsely promised up to 15,000 euros for their kidneys. The donors were often left in frail condition and without any payment.

## TRAFFICKING IN A NEIGHBOURING COUNTRY OR A THIRD COUNTRY WELCOMING EXILED PEOPLE

### MARRIAGES TO OBTAIN PROTECTION

The various stakeholders interviewed for our research in Lebanon spoke of the risks associated with the growing practice of marrying Syrian refugee girls to Lebanese or foreign adults. These practices are legal under the domestic legislation. Girls as young as 12 are allowed to marry. Depending on the many family codes in force<sup>19</sup> (15 in all), in some communities, the marriageable age can even be lowered to 9. In rural Syria, early marriage was a common practice before the conflict, but it was part of a tradition that gave the wife a certain number of guarantees and protections. Among refugee families in Lebanon, Jordan, Egypt and Turkey, such marriages have been perverted. They are losing their symbolic value as a uniting of two families and are becoming a means for the parents to find a safe haven for their daughter and/or obtain money.

Several testimonies in the focus groups recounted similar stories. The women we interviewed all said that they knew parents who were trying to marry their 13 or 14-year-old daughters in an attempt to give them a better future. Others talked more about the economic criterion, saying they knew families trying to find wealthy husbands for their daughters. These strategies are not without risk for the health of the young brides. If they become pregnant at an early age, their anatomy is not yet sufficiently developed and their health is jeopardised.

### "TEMPORARY" MARRIAGES AMONG GIRL REFUGEES

These marriages could be a front for sexual exploitation, encouraged by go-betweens who take advantage of the families' vulnerability to urge them to marry their daughters without being too inquisitive about the husband. There is a real market in these marriages, as witnessed by the creation of a Facebook page entitled Syrian refugees for marriage<sup>20</sup>.

These marriages are in fact known as temporary marriages. To avoid sexual relations outside marriage, Muslims are allowed to take a wife for a very short period (sometimes 24 hours). After a matter of days or weeks, the girls are repudiated by their husband. Depending on the families, they can be taken back by their parents, or rejected because of the shame associated with their status as repudiated wives. If they were taken to live abroad when they married, especially in the Gulf States, the fact of being abandoned condemns them, in effect, to prostitution in the new country so that they could earn a living<sup>21</sup>.

Research has shown that the dowry paid to the family is one of the reasons that parents try to marry their daughter on arrival in Lebanon. Poor families or those that left everything behind in their hurry to leave went into debt to be able to cross the border. Often they have no / few alternative but to marry their daughters to escape from the usurers.

The economic hardships experienced by refugee families in Lebanon or Turkey (especially outside the camps) because of the cost of living and rent<sup>22</sup> have made practices akin to child prostitution commonplace. The Lebanese association ABAAD<sup>23</sup> mentioned the existence of an office in Northern Lebanon (Tripoli), where men come from throughout the region to choose a bride<sup>24</sup>. Similar phenomena have been reported in Jordan, in the vicinity of the Zaatari camp, said to be a market for temporary brides<sup>25</sup>. These underage girls, under the pretext of repeated temporary marriages, are forced to prostitute themselves to help their family.

### FORCED PROSTITUTION

In 2013, the Lebanese anti-trafficking department identified 27 victims of trafficking in human beings for the year. In May 2014, 22 cases already had been identified. The majority of cases involved Syrian girls sold in Syria by relatives. Col. Asmar, Head of the Internal Security Force's Vice Squad, stated in an interview that there were several scenarios:

- Syrian men send their wives to Lebanon with a



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promise of decent work. But once in Lebanon, the women are forced to work in bars or forced into prostitution by Lebanese and / or Syrians;

- Poor Syrian families wanting to marry their daughter decide to use a Lebanese go-between, who then takes the girl to Lebanon. Once there, he sells the girl or forces her into prostitution.

To obtain a better understanding of the recruitment procedure, the question was raised during a focus group. The participants emphasised that the family is seldom aware of fate that awaits their daughter. If the family married her to a foreigner, it was in an attempt to give her a better future. They said the majority of recruiters relied on deceit.

A report<sup>26</sup> released by Harvard University in January 2014 states that the police had broken up a prostitution ring on the outskirts of the refugee camps set up in the Bekaa Valley (Lebanon). At certain times of the day, Syrian girls approached Lebanese men, asking them if they needed anything. This type of practice seems to be relatively common around the camps. There are also phone numbers in circulation for obtaining paid sexual relations, making the activity more difficult

to detect. According to the NGOs questioned, some of these girls are underage.

Although it is difficult to determine the role of the family or husband in these situations of forced prostitution, the number of cases recorded by the Lebanese Vice Squad seems far short of the actual numbers. The main reason for this seems to be that few cases are reported by the local stakeholders (NGOs included).

In Turkey, many alleged incidents of trafficking for sexual exploitation in prostitution involving Syrian refugees have been reported in the Turkish media<sup>27</sup> (T24, 2014; Milliyet, 2014) as well as international media. Many of the interviewees in the Tarlabası region of Istanbul also reported such cases. One household mentioned that it has been three weeks since they last heard from their 17 year-old daughter. She had been working in a textile factory, and they believe she was trafficked and taken to another city. However, the family's efforts to find out the whereabouts of their daughter gave no result. The family was afraid to contact the authorities due to the fact that they were not registered in Turkey and because the father was working illegally.

24. Information reported in *Running out of Time*, Harvard FXB Center, January 2014, USA.

25. "Marriages of shame. Child marriages among Syrian refugees have turned into a lucrative business" in *Now*, Ana Maria Luca, 15/11/2013.

26. *Running out of Time*, Harvard FXB Center, January 2014, USA.

27. (2014) 'Suriyelilerle evlilik ticarete donustu', Milliyet Daily newspaper, 26 January 2014. Available at: <http://www.milliyet.com.tr/suriyelilerle-evlilik-ticarete/gundem/default.htm>



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### "SURVIVAL SEX"

In Lebanon, Armenia, Turkey and France, several cases of people forced to have sexual relations for economic reasons were recorded during our research. One of the people (an Armenian woman refugee from Syria), interviewed for our research in Armenia, said that she had been the victim of sexual harassment by her boss. Her refusal to accept his advances had, she thought, led to her dismissal and the non-payment of the remuneration due to her. She explained that this type of advances on the part of employers was frequent.

Similarly, the only one comprehensive report about the sexual exploitation of non-camp Syrian refugee women and girls in Turkey (Mazlumder, 2014) emphasizes that the social and cultural discrimination faced by Syrian refugee women makes it difficult for them to raise their voices and denounce sexual harassment and exploitation.

The Harvard report relates several stories by Syrian women in the Bekaa Valley in Lebanon who, in order to obtain a tent in a camp or additional food vouchers, had sexual relations with the camp manager, NGO employees, etc.

Although it is impossible to calculate the number of victims of these various forms of sexual exploitation from the research, UNHCR<sup>28</sup> has estimated that 10%

of Syrian women refugees have suffered sexual or physical violence, which represents more than 100,000 people. The problems of early marriage, forced marriage and forced prostitution existed in Syria before the conflict, but the vulnerable situation in which women refugees presently find themselves have resulted in an unprecedented increase in sexual exploitation, which, through the various forms of marriage described here, have turned into a fully-fledged industry.

### THE SITUATION OF CHILDREN

Our research into exploited children identified various background profiles:

- children or teenagers who are helping their refugee family settle in the country;
- children tasked by their family to go abroad and regularly send back money;
- children or teenagers who have lost their parents and are consequently living in the street.

Whatever forms of exploitation the children are subjected to, this variety of backgrounds seemed to be present: begging, selling small objects, construction work, waiting at table, sewing, etc. Even with this overview of activities in which the children are engaged, it remains difficult to determine the vulnerability of the children or the danger to which they are exposed as a result of the activities in which

28. 2013 Syria Regional Response Plan, United Nations, 2013.

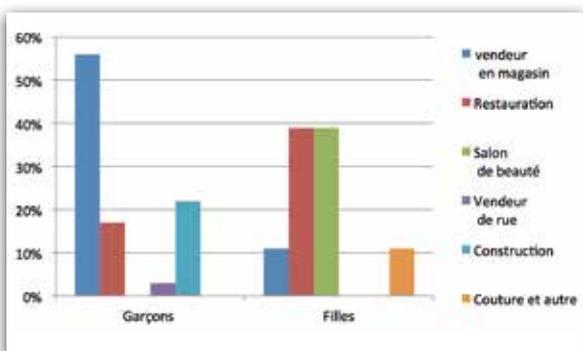
they are engaged. However, this background profile remains a determining factor in terms of social support.

### Children tasked with helping their family

In 2012, Caritas Lebanon Migrant Center conducted a study<sup>29</sup> on 1,957 Iraqi refugee children settled in Lebanon. All of them were living with their families. Those forced to work represented between 4.8% and 8.9% of the sample group. With the arrival of new families and the worsening economic situation, the proportion probably has increased.

The children identified in the study who were forced to work ranged in age between 11 and 17 years: 92% of them had not worked in Iraq; 59% had completed at least an elementary school education. There is not necessarily any correlation, therefore, between the social level in the original country and the fact that the children have to work. The determinant is to be found elsewhere: it is thought to stem from the parents' inability to work in Lebanon. According to the study, in 44% of the cases, the children explained that their parents were unable to work because of a chronic illness or a disability.

Both boys and girls are engaged in child labour. Whatever their work, the younger the children are, the less they are paid. The breakdown by activity is as follows:



Source p.39 *An Insight into Child Labor among Iraqi Refugees in Lebanon*. CLMC, Beirut, 2012.

These situations of economic exploitation of children result in:

- health problems for 54% of the boys in the sample and 46% of the girls;
- the risks of missing school: a third of the children had had to drop out of school.

Concerning this last point, apart from the phenomenon of exploitation, the influx of refugees

is making the situation increasingly critical. For the 2014-2015 school year, the Lebanese Ministries of Education and of Higher Education can enrol only 75,000 refugee children (only in the morning). The number of children who will attend classes in the afternoon has not yet been notified by the ministries. However, UNHCR estimates the number of school-aged refugee children at 425,000.

Fieldwork in Turkey in the Tarlabaşı neighbourhood and its surroundings (Istanbul) showed that child labour constitutes the most common form of trafficking of Syrian children. Most of the children work either in textile factories or sell food on the streets. The interviews showed that it is mostly the younger children who work while the older one goes to school. In most cases, the child is the breadwinner either because the father is wounded, or because there is no adult male member in the household, or because the adults cannot find work. Some children interviewed indicated that, at the end of the work day, their money is stolen from them on their way home, and some stated that they are beaten up by the older youth in the neighbourhood. For Kurdish children, it becomes easier to ward off such attacks through establishing patronage relations with the older local Kurdish youth in the neighbourhood. Some children have stated that they work in workshops established by Syrians. In such cases, child labour exploitation is also very common, with the children not being able to get their salaries or working for very low wages.

Lastly, child labour situations sometimes mask other forms of exploitation. A number of journalists' investigations<sup>30</sup> have gathered testimonies from children who complained of mistreatment and sexual abuse by their employers.

Through fieldwork in Turkey 3, other households indicated that they have witnessed sexual exploitation of Syrian children in parks and other public places around Tarlabaşı. Those families were not willing to provide information about the traffickers or about what the children or the families were offered in return. However, local witnesses also confirmed the phenomena of sexual exploitation of Syrian children in Tarlabaşı.

### Street children

Only a very small amount of information is available concerning refugee children who work in the streets of large cities throughout the region. However the nature of their activities makes them more exposed

29. *An insight into Child Labor among Iraqi refugees in Lebanon*. CLMC, Beyrouth, 2012.

30. "Exploitation et abus, le difficile quotidien des enfants syriens réfugiés au Liban", in *Le monde* dated 24/09/2013



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to abuse and a higher degree of exploitation. A report produced by the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) on behalf of humanitarian agencies working on the Syrian refugee in Lebanon in May 2015 provides some accurate data on this phenomenon. The report is based on information provided by UNHCR and partner agencies.

"The exact number of street children in Lebanon is difficult to gauge. But a February 2015 survey by the International Labour Organisation, UNICEF and Save the Children (SCI) under the patronage of the Minister of Labour indicates there are at least 1,500 children, nearly three-quarters of them Syrian, begging or working as street vendors. Most street children are boys and half are under 12 years of age. Some are as young as two. Most live with their impoverished parents or relatives who have had to make the heart-breaking decision to send their children into the streets so the family can eat, pay rent or afford other basic essentials. The study indicates that children are concentrated in the busy neighbourhoods of Beirut and its suburbs (e.g. Corniche el Mazraa, Gemmayzeh). Some are transported daily from the northern city of Tripoli to the streets of Beirut

and back. Street and working children often work excessive hours to earn the necessary income to support their families. Of the 77 children interviewed by International Relief Committee in January and February, 28% reported working over 11 hours a day and 14 percent reported working a seven day week. They sell gum, tissue paper and flowers or work shining shoes and begging. Their income depends on the type of work they do. Shoe shiners, for example, earn around \$23 a day on average. Beggars earn between \$8-25 a day, and gum sellers between \$10-20 a day. Children working at night and younger children usually earn more. Many street children assisted by International Relief Committee explained that their income is mainly used by their parents to cover the rent. Street and working children are among the most vulnerable children and are at high risk of violence in the streets. They are at high risk of sexual exploitation and harassment by passers-by as well as by other children and adults with whom they compete. They are also at risk of neglect by their parents and live in constant fear of being arrested by the police, and of being fined or detained."<sup>31</sup>

During the mission in Lebanon, we were able to

31. "Lebanon inter-agency update Street Children", UNHCR, May 2015, Beirut.

see that these minors have very limited protection. When children are assaulted in the street, the police take them to one of the few children's homes. The staff shortages and under-funding in these establishments (which are mainly financed by private foundations) mean that the majority of children, once placed, decide to run away.

### Agricultural child labour

During missions to Lebanon with partners from the various countries, we were taken to visit some refugee camps. On the road leading there, trucks were transporting children to work in the fields for approximately \$4 per day. This first-hand information is corroborated by a number of reports<sup>32</sup>, which state that many children are used in the Bekaa Valley to collect and bag potatoes and to prepare the fields by picking up rocks. In the Tripoli area (Northern Lebanon), children work in market gardens and orchards. They are regularly abused by the landowners, who beat them if the yields are low.

During interviews of refugees living in two camps in the Bekaa Valley, the families living in tents told us that they had to pay for their tent space. To pay their rent, electricity and day-to-day expenses, they had to work and/or send their children out to work.

To gain a better understanding of this quasi-institutionalised exploitation, we need to look more closely at the operation and appearance throughout

Lebanon of these informal settlements, where the majority of the refugees are massed.

### Risk of teenage enlistment

The camps located on the Syrian border sometimes are used as a support base by combatants who have installed their families there. Similar situations exist in Iraqi Kurdistan. Some wounded combatants stay there several weeks to recover. To have combatants and families living in close quarters increases the risk of teenagers being recruited by armed groups. Although little research has been done into this particular aspect, the enlistment of children, including refugees, is part of the strategy of the majority of militia, as a recent Human Rights Watch report<sup>33</sup> points out.

### BELONGING TO A MINORITY REJECTED BY ALL BELLIGERENTS

Recent conflicts have taken on the features of civil wars. They oppose people living in the same country, on ethnic or faith-based grounds. Some minorities that had a place in society in the past are particularly at risk in the present situation. Overnight, they can find themselves hunted by some or all of the belligerents and forced to leave everything behind them to avoid becoming victims of genocide. A sudden, rushed departure and tensions with the rest of the population, some of whom are refugees, make them particularly vulnerable to exploitation wherever they go.

32. In particular *Running out of Time*. Harvard FXB Center, January 2014, USA.

33. "Maybe We Live and Maybe We Die" *Recruitment and Use of Children by Armed Groups in Syria*, June 2014, New York.

34. The name meant lieutenant in the Ottoman army.

35. Since summer 2014 the number fell and the decline is expected to continue as the government announced that the borders would be closed for Refugees <http://www.lorientlejour.com/article/892156/le-liban-sur-le-point-de-fermes-frontieres-aux-nouveaux-refugies-syriens.html>

## INFO BOX

### CHAWICH AND LEBANESE LANDOWNER

A *chawich*<sup>34</sup> is a person of Syrian origin who was sometimes present in Lebanon before the Syrian crisis. He exercises a form of moral authority over the inhabitants of his village. He is also the person that deals with people outside the camp, UNHCR staff, NGOs, Lebanese employers, etc. Due to the influx of Syrian refugees and increasing rent prices, the refugees started renting pieces of land from Lebanese landowners in the Bekaa Valley to set up the tents that are cheaper than renting an apartment. In the beginning of the crisis, it cost around \$200 to rent a piece of land on the field. Because of the steady influx of which the peak (June 2014)<sup>35</sup> was 2,500 new refugees a day, according to UNHCR, the prices have gone up. It costs a refugee family between \$660 and \$1,000 a year – between \$60 and \$80 a month to hire a tent. The camps we visited had around 80 tents. A tax of \$10 a month is levied for electricity, etc. In one of the camps visited, the families, mostly made up of women and children, told us that the monthly expenses for living in the camp amounted to between \$100 and \$150. To cover these expenses, they had no choice but to work and/or send their children out to work.

Since 2015, Syrian refugees registered by UNHCR have had to make an undertaking before a notary not to work any longer, in order to have their visa renewed. Again, based on our interviews on building sites or in the fields, only the men are checked and can be placed in a detention centre if they work illegally. As a result, women and children have become the main contributors to household budgets. To find an employer, they approach the *chawich*, who negotiates their pay directly with the landowner or Lebanese employers. The wages of the people and children are then paid directly to the *chawich*, who deducts the amounts due for living in the camp.



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### Iraqi christians and yazidis

In early August 2014, when the Islamic State seized control of Mosul and Qaraqosh, approximately 200,000 Christians and Yazidis were forced to flee their homes (sometimes overnight), leaving behind all of their belongings. At first, they had no choice but to take refuge in Iraqi Kurdistan. Because of the very high cost of living and the risk of young people being forcibly enlisted in the Peshmerga (Kurdish fighters), Iraqi Kurdistan is seen as a transit zone by refugees hoping to leave as soon as possible, mainly for Turkey. According to the interviews, Turkey was seen as accessible (an ID card was all that was necessary to enter the country), more stable than its neighbours, and with a lower cost of living. Once there, however, the sums asked for rent can lead to forms of economic exploitation. Some men are obliged to work for their landowner for no pay in order to pay off their debts. Because these migrants have arrived only very recently, our research was unable to identify other forms of exploitation. Careful watch should be kept on the situation, however, because the lack of an established Christian or Yazidi community in Turkey for the majority of these families, and the prejudice against these minorities (and especially the Yazidis), make them potentially very vulnerable.

### The dom people

The Dom people, who live in many Middle Eastern countries, have a similar ethnic origin to that of the Roma in the Balkans. They do not have a specific religion, and most use a language, Domari, that is spoken only by their group. The majority populations hold many stereotypes about Doms and identify them as working in commerce or marginal activities, such as music, dance, begging, selling flowers, etc.

The increasing visibility of adults and children begging in Istanbul is frequently reported. The Caritas Turkey field observations show that such begging by children usually involves the entire family, or a group of children. This issue is also widely covered by the local media. It is estimated that there are approximately 10,000 Syrians begging and homeless in Turkey (Yeni Şafak, 2014). While some of them later accepted voluntarily to go to the camps, some have refused, according to the statements of the governor of Istanbul (Reuters, 2014; Yeni Şafak, 2014). Some upper class Syrian business owners and politicians in Turkey have requested Turkish authorities to remove the Syrian beggars and place them in camps since they cause "bad reputation" for Syrians. Also, many Syrians state that the beggars are mostly "gypsies" and they used

to work as beggars back in Syria as well. Most of the newspaper articles on the subject limit their focus to the 'how many beggars are caught by the police' aspect of the phenomenon while the vulnerability of beggars to exploitation is largely absent in the literature.

From the first signs of the Syrian conflict, in March 2011, Dom families in Syria took refuge in Lebanon or Turkey, generally avoiding the refugee camps. In Istanbul, for example, Doms became very visible, even if they are not so many, because they engaged in family and child begging. At present, too little research has been undertaken concerning the exploitation of Dom refugees for us to be able to draw any conclusions. A 2010 report<sup>36</sup> produced by Terre des hommes on the situation of Dom children in Lebanon highlighted various situations of exploitation, due mainly to the poverty of certain families. Many boys were not going to school and either begged or worked in the street every day in order to help their families.

The girls seemed to face a particularly high risk of sexual exploitation: their reputation as dancers meant they were readily hired in bars and restaurants to entertain the clients. The report documents several cases of sexual exploitation of underage Dom girls.

## ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION

### Vulnerability due to administrative barriers to obtaining legal employment

There is a risk of economic exploitation in all of the countries in which refugees settle. The main cause lies in the fact that these people cannot obtain a work permit in their new country. If we take the case of Lebanon, there is a bilateral agreement with Syria that allows nationals of both countries to work legally for six months. From 2015 onwards, once the six months are up, Syrians are required to renew their residence permit every six months, at a cost of \$200, and make an undertaking before a notary that they will not work. For people who are not registered with UNHCR, they need a sponsor (kafil) who is viewed as the person's guardian and is not subject to employment law. According to ILO (International Labour Organization) statistics<sup>37</sup>, 390 new work permits were issued and 571 renewed in 2011. If we compare these statistics with the number of refugees (estimated at 1,500,000 in total by UNHCR, including non-registered refugees),

we can see that the vast majority of refugees are unable to work legally. In Turkey, the Balkans and Western Europe, refugees are not allowed to work. These barriers to employment establish a regulatory framework conducive to economic exploitation in the overwhelming majority of refugee host countries.

In Turkey, most of the interviewees mentioned cases of labour exploitation since they did not receive any or part of their salary from their employers. However, they did not report this to the official authorities since they work informally/unofficially even though the legal system in Turkey grants them the right to report such incidents despite the fact that they were working illegally. Such cases also show the fact that the lack of work permits and lack of legal aid render Syrians more vulnerable to exploitation and trafficking. It is stated that for the textile sector, the hourly wage for refugees is around US\$0.42 per hour, whereas the hourly rate for a Turkish employee in the same industry is US\$5.48 (Today's Zaman, 2014).

### Blackmail and attempted recruitment for other forms of exploitation

In Armenia, despite the possibilities for Armenian refugees from Syria to obtain legal employment, our research provided insights into the risks of economic exploitation. Of the 31 people interviewed, 26 said they had been laid off after several months of work without having been paid. The interviews showed that the reasons for these dismissals mask attempts at sexual exploitation or recruitment to carry drugs. One young woman said she had been dismissed on the spot after having rejected her employer's advances. A kitchen hand had been approached by employees who proposed that he use drugs with them and become involved in selling drugs. When he refused, he was dismissed some time later.

There were also reports of bonded labour among debt-ridden Armenian refugees from Syria who were living in Armenia. In an interview, a refugee explained that, after a sudden steep increase in his rent, he was unable to pay. The landlord accordingly offered him a job in construction to pay off his debts. He was paid \$5 for 11 hours of work a day.

### Recruitment agencies

Syrian refugees of Armenian descent who fled to Armenia have great trouble coping with the cost of living there. The unemployment rate is constantly rising (officially 17.8% in the first quarter of 2014). Many decide to move instead to other countries such as Turkey or the Emirates, for linguistic reasons

36. *The Dom People and their Children in Lebanon*, Terre des hommes, 2010

37. *Assessment of the impact of Syrian refugees in Lebanon and their employment profiles*, ILO, 2011

(they all speak Arabic and sometimes Turkish) and for job opportunities. US Department of State information indicates that many women were then sexually exploited in Turkey and the Arab Emirates. Similarly, there were reports of labour exploitation in these countries. This information is difficult to confirm because, in the absence of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Armenia, there is no cooperation between their police or legal systems. Only an Armenian association that regularly cooperates with a Turkish association was able to confirm that women had been sexually exploited. The methods used to recruit these men and women involve advertisements for well-paid jobs, passed on by local agencies run by criminal groups. On arriving in Turkey or the Arab Emirates, the men are forced to work 12 hours a day for a pittance, while the women are taken to places used for prostitution.

#### **CONTINUING THE JOURNEY TO EUROPE AND DEBT**

Since the beginning of the Syrian crisis in March 2011, the Balkans have seen a steep increase in the number of migrants from the Middle East. For refugees and economic migrants from Africa, Asia and the Middle East, the Balkans has become a destination since 2008. That year, Serbia (on the European Union's outer border) received 51 applications for asylum. In 2011, the number had risen up to 3,000. Most of the Balkan countries are ill-prepared for this influx and lack the necessary infrastructure to receive these people. Likewise, very few associations are engaged in supporting migrants or accredited to work directly in the centres housing refugees. This largely accounts for the shortage of information on the situation of refugees in these countries and the lack of any reported cases of trafficking in human beings among the refugees. The research being conducted there tends to focus on Bulgarian situation (EU member from 2007). 21 refugees from Caritas centres and Red Cross centres were interviewed. 10 meetings were conducted with the main stakeholders.

#### **Risk of labor exploitation due to the administrative barriers**

In 2014, approximately 8,200 asylum seekers were on Bulgarian territory, half of whom were accommodated in seven centres. The other half of asylum seekers was accommodated in external addresses on their own account. Even to asylum seekers in state centres, the State provides only basic needs of shelter and hygiene materials but does not provide food. In this country, asylum

seekers have to live with 2 euros per person donated by the State.

In Bulgaria, the risk of labour exploitation is high: from the 21 interviews conducted for the research with refugees, 5 persons complained that they had to work in agriculture from morning to night in agriculture for low pay.

The asylum seekers have no right to be granted a work permit and may not be employed under an employment contract during the first year of the asylum application. After one year, they are allowed to register as unemployed with the Labour Office. But the procedure to obtain a work permit in Bulgaria has to be initiated by the employer who must submit to the Labour Directorate, through the Employment Agency, a list of legal documents including personal documents of the employee-asylum seeker, including information about his education, specialty, competence or professional qualifications, skills and experience. The foreigner's permit expires automatically at the end of the employment contract. Foreigners are only allowed to work for the period specified in the work permit. Due to the administrative barriers the asylum seekers have to work without contract which makes them more vulnerable to economic exploitation.

#### **Children and risk of trafficking**

Bulgaria, as a member of the EU, and because of its geographical location, plays an important role as a gateway for entry and transit of migrants looking for a better future in Europe. The vast majority of irregular migrants arriving in Bulgaria want to reach another European country. Trafficking routes to Bulgaria go predominantly through Turkey. The interviewees reported that they usually found smugglers in Istanbul, who got them to Bulgaria at the cost of approximately 400 Euros per person. Most of newly arrived asylum seekers are citizens of Syria. The number of families with children is significant, most of the families count more than 3 children each, and many of the women are pregnant. Two of the 5 families interviewed, reported having to use their children to help for the well-being of the family: to sell bags, working in shops, etc.

In parallel to this phenomenon, there is an increase of unaccompanied children: from 190 to more than 855 between 2013 and 2014 asking for asylum in Bulgaria. They are mostly from Afghanistan (70%) and Syria (23%). The 3 interviews conducted with the group members revealed that these children are coming from families (remaining in the home country) who paid to send one family member



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to travel abroad. Some of these children could be qualified as exploited, because they intend to support their families sending money back home. A significant number of unaccompanied children disappear before applying for asylum. In 2014, 10 % (85 children) disappeared after applying for asylum.

### Debt and risk of trafficking

Most migrants reached the Balkans by passing through Turkey and/or Greece. To date, there is too little information available about the living conditions in these countries and about the activities in which they had to engage in order to finance their passage to allow our accurate assessment of the risks inherent in trafficking. However, from a number of testimonies collected for our research, we know that the price for crossing from Turkey to Greece by boat is around \$1,000 per person. By analogy with the risks identified in Western Europe, migrant sexual exploitation (male and female) and the use of refugees as unskilled labourers by human smugglers should be taken into account. According to the authorities and the Albanian, Bosnian and Bulgarian associations interviewed for our research, the few cases recorded mainly concern economic exploitation and child begging. This seems to be an

incomplete view of the situation because, during the interviews, most of the migrants say they went into debt to finance their passage and will have to pay between \$1,000 and \$3,000 to enter the Schengen Area since the closure of the Balkans route in March 2016.

In France, according to our interviews with the Revivre association, which works with migrants in the street and provides legal services, relatively few refugees are arriving from the Middle East. There are two types of situation:

- family reunification: Syrians or Iraqis living in France have their family or relatives come to join them;
- group arrivals.

In the former situation, a few cases of exploitation have been observed between distant relatives. Most of the time, the people taken in must pay rent and work free of charge for their landlord. There was one case in which a woman and her daughter complained of pressure to provide sexual services.

For group arrivals, two groups of 200 people (probably Doms) arrived in Saint-Ouen in the Paris area in April 2014 and July 2014. Some of them

(97 people) wished to apply for asylum and were then divided among the CAFDA centres (which house asylum-seeking families) in France. Muslim associations took charge of the others. These organisations appeared to be a front for a network of human smugglers, which was supposed to transport these people into Germany. There was no material evidence of any forms of exploitation. According to the mediators, the families appeared to be relatively well-off and may have been in a position to pay the go-betweens to apply for asylum in Germany.

According to the study<sup>38</sup> by Trajectoires for UNICEF France, carried out in the camps in Grande-Synthe and Calais, although Syrian refugees seem to be relatively unaffected by exploitation because they have sufficient resources, Iraqi Kurds are significantly more exposed to trafficking in human beings. Minors are recruited by human smugglers to open lorries and monitor parking areas, while young girls are sexually exploited.

**Specific work with refugees, particularly unaccompanied minors, is needed in Western Europe because of the high risk of debt and the low amount of the assistance they receive, which is limited to humanitarian needs.**

## TRAFFICKING IN POST CONFLICT SITUATIONS

Post-conflict periods seem to foster a rapid increase in organised crime. There are several reasons for this:

- it often takes several years to reconstruct a institutions in a country. The lack of legal framework and functional institutions results in a relative impunity for the perpetrators of trafficking of all sorts, including trafficking in human beings;
- many former warlords who derived their income from arms trafficking, pillaging and other arbitrary taxes they collected, try to build a new business for themselves engaging in organised crime (trafficking in drugs, cigarettes and human beings) to offset the financial shortfalls resulting from the end of the war. Their influence on the structures of the State as a result of their former relations, and the money accumulated during the war and now used to corrupt key people, often give them a form of immunity for many years.

Alongside the weakness in State structures and the development of criminal structures, the upheavals in society create a number of factors that facilitate the recruitment of victims:

- the appearance of vulnerable population groups (unaccompanied women and orphaned children);
- the dissolution of the traditional value system (lack of trust between people, especially after ethnic or religious conflicts);
- the lack of economic opportunities as a result of the country's impoverishment.

### DEVELOPMENT OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AS A RESULT OF THE PRESENCE OF MILITARY AND INTERNATIONAL STAFF IN THE POST-CONFLICT PERIOD

To illustrate this aspect, we shall return to the case of the Balkans, and more specifically Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo, where the arrival of the "blue helmets" sparked an unprecedented increase in the trafficking of women. In 2002, at the conference on trafficking, slavery, and peacekeeping operations organised by the United Nations, in Turin, it was recognised that "The combination of the end of hostilities and the arrival of relatively rich peacekeeping operation personnel drove the hasty establishment of brothels and, in turn, founded the links between UNMIK personnel and trafficking syndicates. Within this observation lies the most significant challenge, then, to the peacekeeping operations in regards to trafficking - the fact that peacekeepers are often part of the problem".

To gain a better understanding of the phenomenon, a review of the past time line is necessary. On 30 May 1992, the UN Security Council decreed an embargo on Serbia that lasted until 1995. There was a proliferation of cross-border smuggling with Romania, Hungary, Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania to bypass the restrictions on petrol, cigarettes and all sorts of everyday products such as clothing, foodstuffs, cosmetics, etc. This illicit trade created networks of acquaintances at very diverse levels among Romanians, Serbs, Bosnians, Kosovars and Albanians, among others.

In 1992, the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina prompted the international community to intervene by sending in the "blue helmets". After the Dayton Peace Accords, this international force comprised nearly 60,000 men, who were gradually withdrawn over more than 10 years. This massive influx of soldiers with substantial purchasing power, along with the numerous employees of international organisations and NGOs, gave a real boost to trafficking in women and teenage girls. A few cases were reported from 1992 onwards, but before then, there had been extremely little prostitution in the region. The pattern

38. *Ni sain, Ni sauf*, A. Le Clève, E. Masson Diaz, O. Peyroux, Trajectoires / Unicef France, June 2016.



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of circulation of these victims was similar to that used for smuggled goods, passing through a wide variety of organisations. This ranged from groups of individuals who barely knew each other and exchanged girls from one side of the border to the other, to more structured organisations controlling the whole chain of operations, from the recruiter to the hotel owner, to corrupt customs officers, and local and international police. The teenage girls were recruited with false promises, duped by relatives, or seduced by their "pimps". They came from Romania, the Republic of Moldavia, Ukraine, Russia, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Albania.

In 2000, the UN identified 260 clubs in Bosnia-Herzegovina, while NGOs estimated that there were approximately 900 clubs and that the number of teenage girls and women ranged from four to 25 per establishment<sup>39</sup>. The HRW report<sup>40</sup> sheds light on complicity between the local and federal police and peacekeeping forces, such as the Stabilisation Force (SFOR). According to local NGOs, 50% of the clients were internationals, mainly SFOR soldiers, who accounted for at least 70% revenue coming into these establishments<sup>41</sup>. This quasi-official presence underscored powerlessness of the

international forces or the lack of will to combat the phenomenon. As the American journalist Victor Malarek<sup>42</sup> discovered, through his investigations, that the rare expatriates who tried to attack the business incurred their superiors' wrath and were rapidly sent home.

In 2000, after the NATO bombings of the Serbian forces, the arrival in Kosovo of 50,000 soldiers from the Kosovo Force (KFOR) resulted in a similar phenomenon. Brothels sprang up throughout the province. Despite the prevention messages issued by the international organisations, the virtual absence of any legal proceedings against soldiers in internationally-led forces made it impossible to curb the phenomenon. Consequently, given what happened in Bosnia, the boom in this trafficking was only to be expected. Fighting this phenomenon was not high up on the list of priorities of the international community, as Amnesty International noted with regret at the time<sup>43</sup>. The traffic is still going on today; police raids regularly discover girls from Moldavia, Ukraine and Kosovo being sexually exploited in nightclubs.

Because of the geographical locations of the

39. Limanowska, Barbara. *Trafficking in Human Beings in Southeastern Europe*. Belgrade: UNICEF, 2002

40. Human Rights Watch World Report, 2001.

41. "Sex Trafficking: The Impact of War, Militarism and Globalization in Eastern Europe" by Vesna Nikolic-Ristanovic, Ph.D., Faculty for Social Education and Rehabilitation, Belgrade University, Victimology Society of Serbia, Serbia and Montenegro

42. Victor Malarek, *The Natashas, The New Global Sex Trade*, Westwood Creative Artists Ltd, Toronto, 2003.

43. See Amnesty International's 2004 report entitled *Kosovo (Serbia and Montenegro): "So does it mean that we have the rights?" Protecting the human rights of women and girls trafficked for forced prostitution in Kosovo*, which states that the business generated by international organisations' civilian and military personnel represented 80% of these establishments' revenue. Taking legal action against these expatriates would therefore have dealt a serious blow to the profitability of this traffic.

Albanian-speaking networks, Kosovo soon became the hub of trafficking in women destined for Western Europe. Its brothels were used as stopovers for girls subsequently sent to Italy, England, Belgium, the Netherlands, Switzerland, Germany and France. After more than 15 years of wide-scale sexual exploitation, trafficking in human beings has established a constant structure in these countries. The networks have grown into international organisations, making the phenomenon difficult to combat, and thus it is still very much alive.

#### **FORGOTTEN POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNATIONAL NETWORKS FOR TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

The development of trafficking in human beings in the Balkans is the result of a series of geopolitical events and the passive complicity of the international community. After being virtually risk-free and very lucrative for nearly 10 years, the business has flourished. As European police forces slowly became aware of the problem and the international presence in the Balkans declined, the traffickers were forced to change tack. From 2005 onwards, the most powerful Serbian, Bosnian, Kosovar and Albanian networks turned from street prostitution to other types of trafficking considered to be more lucrative, namely drugs, cigarettes and arms. With regard to trafficking in human beings, the sexual exploitation of women was not abandoned, but the forms changed, with a preference for closed premises, especially in the Western European countries where prostitution had become tolerated or legal. Organisations - often families - started using children in Western Europe, forcing them to commit thefts for their benefit.

The Hamidovic clan, which is known in Italy, Spain, Austria, Belgium and France, is an example. In 2010, 17 people were arrested in several European countries, revealing a family organisation that used more than 100 children as pickpockets in the Paris metro. These minors, mostly girls, are recruited through marriages in Bosnian refugee camps in Italy, in the Bosnian regions of Zenica and Tuzla, or among families settled in France some time before the war. The organisation demands that the children bring in €300 every day. If such large numbers of children were able to be recruited, and are still being recruited, it is due to the deterioration in living conditions in general and the situation of Bosnian Roma more specifically in the post-conflict period. The 1995 Dayton Accords set up mechanisms that govern relations and the social safety net for the three main communities: Serbs, Croats and Bosniaks (Bosnian

Muslims). For want of specific provisions, minorities such as the Roma are, in practice, excluded from the social security system. Very few of them obtain legal employment and access to the healthcare system. Many children are not registered at birth. Their lack of civil status makes them particularly attractive for human trafficking networks, because there is no way for foreign authorities to establish their age or family ties, etc. Surprisingly enough, similar phenomena exist with ex-Yugoslavian refugees that have long been settled in Western Europe. In September 2011, nearly 20 years after the first refugees arrived, the Council of Europe, speaking through its Human Rights Commissioner Thomas Hammarberg, reminded the Commission that 15,000 ex-Yugoslavian Roma in Italy were still considered stateless and that no solution had yet been found to regularise their administrative status.

#### **DESTABILISATION OF NEIGHBOURING COUNTRIES AND EFFECT ON TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS**

During the ex-Yugoslavian conflict, some of the neighbouring countries, such as Albania were destabilised, even though there had been no fighting on their land, and are still suffering the effects today. In 1997, a widespread financial pyramid scam<sup>44</sup> ruined thousands of small investors. Two years later, because of the former Yugoslavia war, 400,000 refugees from Kosovo poured into Albania and Macedonia, again contributing there to cross-border trafficking and border porosity. This period of instability in Albania permanently weakened the foundations of the constitutional State. It contributed to the population's massive emigration (nearly one million people) and the marginalisation of families that had left their village in an attempt to settle in the city. These economic troubles initially prompted Albania and Roma families to emigrate to Greece.

#### **CHILDREN ON THE MOVE**

During the 1990s, thousands of children were working in the streets of Greece by begging or selling small items in the street. As a result, around 300 children were arrested between 1993 and 1999 in Athens for begging<sup>45</sup>. Most of these children were recruited directly from Rom and Egyptian families to be taken to Greece. The traffickers asked the parents to pay for the trip and, in exchange, promised they would receive regular money transfers. According to Albanian street social workers who were engaged in service at that time, very few received the money they had been led to expect, although many had gone into debt to cover the transportation costs.

44. This was a fraudulent financial scheme based on the Ponzi system. It works as follows: the high returns paid to fund shareholders are derived solely from the sums contributed by new entrants. When there are no longer sufficient new entrants, the fraud becomes apparent. The investors rush to sell their shares. The fund collapses, while a large part of the sum has already been siphoned off for the benefit of the scheme's initiators. Most of the shareholders lose the savings they invested.

45. "The trafficking of Albanian Children to Greece". Unicef and Terre des Hommes, 2003.



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46. "Investigation report for Kosovo". Save the Children and Terre des Hommes. 2011

47. UNICEF: Consultation with children on the implementation of the Child Rights Convention. October – November 2014.

48. There is a gap in the proper identification and referral of victims or potential victims of trafficking. This happens because law enforcement personal lack appropriate training on the identification of victims or potential victims of trafficking. This is why Caritas Albania in close collaboration with Caritas CRS and the Ministry of Interior will implement a two year project in strengthening the capacities of the Albanian Government on protection of victims of trafficking.

As the members of the Thessaloniki-based NGOs explain, once in Greece, these children had to clean windscreens, sell small items and, especially, beg. In the early 1990s, substantial sums were earned. In the early 2000s, when the families realised how much their children were earning for the traffickers, they decided to take control back. Some of them migrated to Greece and settled into a business model in which the bulk of the family income came from the children. Until 2005, because there no provision in the law concerning child labour, the Greek authorities were powerless to address these issues. Since the crisis in 2008, exploitation routes have changed, and Rom and Egyptian children are no longer the only ones concerned.

Kosovo, which Albanians can enter with just an ID card, has become a new site for begging. The Montenegro town of Ulcinj, where most of the population is Albanian, is also concerned by this more or less structured type of family exploitation. In both these countries, the language (Albanian), the currency (the euro) and the presence of emigrants returning regularly to spend their money in their home country has made this an increasingly lucrative activity for families. According to a street

observation report, at least 91 children coming from Albania were found begging in the streets of Kosovo<sup>46</sup>. Furthermore children are exploited for car maintenance and hard labour in the mines and shoe or clothes factories<sup>47</sup>.

If very few children are officially identified as victims, one of the reasons is that an ill-suited legal framework impedes any effort to fight family exploitation<sup>48</sup>. Indeed, as far as the phenomenon of internal trafficking is concerned, a study carried out by the association ARSIS Tirana shows that of 123 children identified as victims of exploitation in 2010, almost half were exploited by their family or immediate entourage for selling goods or begging. Around ten girls were victims of multiple forms of exploitation: both begging and sexual exploitation. Other situations mainly involved children working for or being hired out by their family. The recent development of tourism in Albania, particularly in the summer, has only magnified this phenomenon. The situation of street children is of increasing concern. During 2014, UNICEF undertook a study on the children on the streets. The study included counting the children in such situations during two periods in July and October 2014. During the first

count, it was reported that 2014 children were on the streets, and 2527 in October 2014<sup>49</sup>.

### EARLY MARRIAGES

Girls, especially those coming from poor families or Roma families are forced into marriage at an early age. The family gives these girls into marriage with the idea that they will go into a rich family and live in better conditions.

The same occurs with children from rural remote areas, where parents force their daughters to marry a rich emigrant somewhere in UK or Germany in order to provide economic support for the family.

Other cases reported from the field give evidence of an increased number of women and girls being married outside Albania, in Montenegro or Serbia and Macedonia. Most of the cases involve women who are forced into marriage with a foreign person, thus hoping for a better life, when in fact she is forced to work in the field or agriculture, take care of house chores and in most of the cases serve as a servant to the first wife. The traffickers pressure

the victims by saying they will kill their families, or harm them, in case the victims complain or run away.

### SALE OF CHILDREN

Trafficking in babies seems to be a new consequence of destabilisation of neighbouring countries following the war in Yugoslavia. The phenomenon appeared mostly in Bulgaria a few years ago. In 2013, according to Bulgarian authorities, 7 cases of trafficking of babies were recorded as having been prosecuted. Most often infants go to families in Greece. The price for a boy is around € 18,000 and a girl between 13-14,000 Euros. In all these cases children are Roma, and their biological mothers receive a fraction of the money. Sometimes, however they did not receive any money as reimbursement of their debts to moneylenders.

Documents for the sale of babies are drawn up by lawyers and notaries, and doctors often take part in the scheme. In most cases, traffickers of children are themselves parents and relatives. Children are 'exported' mainly to Western Europe.

## INFO BOX

### IN FRANCE, UNACCOMPANIED MINORS FROM COUNTRIES IN A CONFLICT SITUATION

When they arrive in France, unaccompanied minors from countries in a conflict or post-conflict situation are not sheltered from trafficking-related situations. While they may find refuge in camps, squats or cheap hotels, they are almost never monitored by the child protection authorities. The forms of exploitation they suffer vary widely. For children from post-conflict countries such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo or Albania, the most common form of exploitation is incitement to commit crimes<sup>50</sup>, which results in burglary, pickpocketing and more recently, using them in drug trafficking (surveillance and dealing).

As far as children coming from countries in a conflict situation are concerned, the study<sup>51</sup> by Trajectoires for UNICEF France shows that minors coming from Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, Sudan or Eritrea may be victims of sexual exploitation (male and female), used for theft or exploited by human smugglers to open lorries to let migrants in, monitor parking areas, etc. Once they have arrived at their final destination, they become victims of economic exploitation so that they can repay the cost of the journey borrowed from friends or family, with jobs in restaurants, barber shops, car washes, agriculture, etc. being among the most common. Others are forced to commit crimes, including theft, burglary and drug dealing. Finally, sexual exploitation and forced marriage persist among girls. In 2015, according to the Swedish national coordinator<sup>52</sup> for preventing trafficking in human beings, 129 forced marriages for purposes of exploitation were identified among Afghan and Syrian minors.

49. "National Study on the Children in Street Situation in Albania". UNICEF, 2014.

50. O. Peyroux, *Délinquants et victimes, la trajectoire des mineurs d'Europe de l'Est en France*, Non Lieu, Paris 2013

51. A. Le Clève, E. Masson Diaz and O. Peyroux, *Ni Sains, Ni Saufs*, Trajectoires, June 2016, Paris

52. Interview with the national coordinator, March 2016.

## 5 - NATIONAL-LEVEL RECOMMENDATIONS BASED ON EXPERIMENTS IN 4 COUNTRIES



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Having identified the mechanisms used in trafficking in human beings and the forms of exploitation that result from conflict and post-conflict situations, the idea is to put forward concrete suggestions for actions with a direct effect on people at risk or victims of trafficking in human beings in various countries.

In order to anchor thinking about the actions that should be taken in reality, four experiments were carried out in Albania, Armenia, Lebanon and Turkey. These ran for a period of six to eight months. Each of them was subject to an external evaluation. The main criteria the experiments had to meet were as follows:

- target an issue on which there was little or no intervention at the national level;
- search for a direct impact on the situation of victims or people at risk during the research phase;
- develop a partnership with the public authorities to guarantee the sustainability of the initiative and the involvement of local and/or national authorities;

- design the experiment so that, if the results proved positive, it could be transformed into a larger-scale project.

### IN LEBANON: TRAIN THE POLICE FORCE TO IDENTIFY SITUATIONS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS CONCERNING REFUGEE WOMEN AND CHILDREN

#### Context

Syrian and Iraqi children can be seen working in all sectors in Lebanon: in agriculture, the building trade, as shop assistants, street vendors, shoeshiners, beggars, etc. Several data sources show that this is a huge and growing phenomenon. According to official figures<sup>53</sup>, 89% of Syrian refugees in Lebanon were in debt in 2015. The average amount of borrowing was \$842. Levels of debt have increased by 14% in a year. This situation makes families increasingly vulnerable to exploitation, to

53. "Lebanon crisis response", Government of Lebanon and the United Nations, 15 December 2015.



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the extent that they are willing to submit to more on a daily basis to limit their debts. In Tripoli (in northern Lebanon), several young married women explained to the Caritas social worker that they could no longer pay their rent (\$250). In the end, they had accepted the owner's sexual advances so that they would still have somewhere to live.

After several years of a massive refugee presence in Lebanon, rents have reached record levels, whether people are living in a tent<sup>54</sup> or an apartment. At the same time as prices have increased, since 2015, official refugees, have had to make an undertaking before a notary not to work, in order to renew their visa. For those who have entered the country illegally, there is no access to legal employment. This measure, which was implemented at the request of the Lebanese government in an attempt to protect its labour market, has had the effect of increasing illegal working by women and children, with the risk of trafficking in human beings this entails. In fact, because women and children are not monitored in the workplace by the authorities, the risks of being arrested and sent to a detention centre are practically non-existent, unlike for the men, who can be detained for several weeks. As a result, an

increasing number of families are depending on women and children for their financial survival.

Another indicator that suggests that the number of children who are victims of exploitation is huge is the lack of school enrolment. In 2015, 220,000 refugee children<sup>55</sup> aged between six and 14 years were not in school. The main reasons cited, among others<sup>56</sup>, were child labour and early marriages. On this last point, during our interviews, parents justified early marriages (from the age of 12) not on traditional or religious grounds but to reduce the number of children depending on them. Here again, the risks of exploitation are significant, because the choice of a husband is increasingly dependent on his financial resources.

Although the phenomenon of child exploitation has reached unprecedented levels in Lebanon, no Syrian or Iraqi child was identified as a victim of trafficking in human beings in 2013, 2014 or 2015.

#### Proposed experiment

These findings prompted Caritas Lebanon to add a module to its training programme on different forms of trafficking, aimed specifically at the police forces

54. Depending on the region, refugees in Lebanese camps rent their tent from a "chawich" who acts as a go-between with the landowner, or directly from the landowner at a cost of between \$60 and \$200.

55. Ibid.

56. Our interviews in Tripoli highlighted that the reasons were the cost of transport, an inadequate level of English or French to follow the Lebanese curriculum, and children's mental health.

(the internal security and general security forces) on identifying victims among refugees, with a particular focus on children.

Since January 2016, this module has been included in training for police officers working in the internal security and general security forces (the police responsible for border control and immigration). It will be extended to include judges and staff working for the Ministry of Employment and Ministry of Social Affairs who are in contact with children working on the streets.

### Impact on victims

In early 2016, the number of children identified as victims of trafficking in human beings was 17. Although this is still a very low number, it points to a change of perception among police units. Until now, the few victims identified were only domestic workers originating from Asia and Africa, and women who were sexually exploited from Eastern Europe or Africa. No victim of Syrian or Iraqi nationality had been identified.

In April 2016, a police operation in two well-established brothels in Jounieh (a suburb of Beirut), revealed the presence of at least 75 Syrian women who had been reduced to a state of sexual slavery. This situation had probably been tolerated by the local authorities and the police<sup>57</sup> for several years. The arrest of traffickers and the treatment of the prostitutes, who were protected as victims, point to a shift in perceptions. This emerging awareness is partly down to the training provided by various NGOs such as Kafa, Caritas, etc., concerning victims of trafficking in human beings in general and victims among refugees in particular.

### Pertinence of the police partnership

Lebanon has a unit in charge of investigations into trafficking in human beings and identifying victims. Apart from this unit, the legislative vagueness in terms of trafficking in human beings and exploitation advocates in favour of training for the various services. Indeed, although Lebanon adopted a law against trafficking in human<sup>58</sup> beings in 2011, people involved in prostitution can still face criminal prosecution and be convicted based on a previous law, which is still in effect and prohibits working as a prostitute. In practice, the anti-trafficking law, which was adopted without a debate, so that the country was not classified in tier III<sup>59</sup> by the US State Department, remains relatively unknown among police officers. Because of the previous legislation, prostitutes are generally viewed as criminals rather than potential

victims of trafficking in human beings. Another peculiarity is the artist's visa, issued by the general security department, which allows foreign women to reside legally for a period of several months in order to work as artists or prostitutes! These women are not considered sex workers because they are not subject to employment legislation. They must have a sponsor (the Kafala system), who is authorised to keep their papers. In 2014, 3,400 artists' visas were granted<sup>60</sup>. For these reasons, purely in terms of sexual exploitation, training for the police services (internal security and general security forces) in detection and identification remains a priority.

### The link between identification and protection

As shown by the cases of 75 Syrian women who suffered sexual exploitation, improving the process of identification in Lebanon is central to better treatment for victims of trafficking in human beings. Indeed, once they were identified, the young women concerned were placed in safe houses throughout the country, managed by associations with extensive experience of protecting victims of trafficking. These facilities very quickly adapted to their new audience, while strengthening their teams in terms of medical and psychological monitoring. According to one of the managers we met, who is monitoring around 30 victims, they quickly adapted to their new environment and felt they belonged there, demonstrating the capacity of facilities of this kind for working with this audience.

As far as young boys are concerned, the main centre able to provide protection for them in Beirut is run by the NGO Home for Hope. Unlike the safe houses, whose addresses are kept confidential, this centre can be easily identified by the exploiters, whether they are criminal organisations or families. Because financial resources are very limited and the number of children monitored by each youth worker is too high, young people's willingness to seek protection is very fragile.

Outside Beirut, protection facilities for children are effectively non-existent. A few places were recently created in safe houses. In practice, this prevents the protection of boys who are exploited in agriculture, the building trade and so on, particularly in the Tripoli and Bekaa regions – where the number of refugees is estimated at over 900,000 people.

### National recommendations

- Support access to legal work for refugees in order to reduce the financial pressure on women and children.

57. The Druze leader Walid Joumblatt accused the police of complicity, which gave rise to an internal enquiry, the results of which were not known at the time of writing.

58. Act 164/2011.

59. Each year, the US State Department publishes the "Trafficking in Persons Report". Countries classified in tier III are deprived of financial support from the United States.

60. According to the Trafficking in Persons Report 2015, US State Department, Washington 2015.

- Push for the adoption of a civil law, defining a legal age for marriage in order to combat early marriages for the purpose of exploitation.
- Make legislation on people working as prostitutes consistent, and develop prevention programmes.
- Define a legal status as camp managers for the chawichs in order to limit abuses in relation to rental prices for tents and organising illegal working, particularly for women and children.
- Develop protection facilities throughout the country for children (boys and girls) who are victims of various forms of exploitation.
- Strengthen the law on the protection of children at risk of exploitation to ensure that they do not automatically return to the care of their parents once placed in situations where they play a role in their exploitation.
- Develop protective accommodation across the country to offer safe areas for different types of individuals (street children, victims of sexual exploitation, etc.)
- Develop training for all professionals who come into contact with children.

#### Recommendations to UNHCR in Lebanon

- Do not make the renewal of registration with UNHCR dependent on an undertaking not to work.
- Include the risks of exploitation in the various forms identified by the research, not only violence against women, in the vulnerability criteria that provide access to financial assistance for six months.

### IN ARMENIA: PREVENT THE ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION OF REFUGEES, ARMENIAN PEOPLE FROM SYRIA THROUGH SUPPORT FOR BUSINESS CREATION

#### Context

Following the 1915 genocide, some Armenians living in what is now Turkish territory (part of the Ottoman Empire at the time) were prompted to flee to Syria. The largest community settled in Aleppo. Before the war (2011), there were 80,000 Armenians living in Syria. Currently, there are thought to be no more than 15,000. From 2011 onwards (when the war began in Syria), many sought to travel to Europe, America or Australia and were sometimes helped by the Catholic church communities in the West, which were very concerned about the situation of Eastern Christians (particularly in Canada). For most of them, however, the primary destination was Lebanon. At the end of 2015, there were an estimated 20,000 Armenians from Syria in Lebanon. Official figures in Armenia (from the Armenian Ministry of the Diaspora) record



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17,000 refugees arriving since the start of the conflict, with 9,600 currently living on Armenian territory (figures from March 2016). Armenians in Syria first try to reach Lebanon to get to Armenia. But since 2015, people fleeing the war and trying to reach Lebanon have no longer been registered by UNHCR. It is therefore no longer possible for them to live there legally.

Armenians from Syria, like newly arrived refugees, are only authorised to use it as a transit point for catching a plane to another destination. The price of a ticket from Lebanon to Armenia is around \$600, which discourages many Syrian Armenians from leaving the country, particularly among the elderly.

The Armenians in Syria were a prosperous community, largely made up of shopkeepers and skilled craftsmen (particularly jewellers). On arrival in Armenia, they found themselves facing the difficulty of finding a job in order to cover their day-to-day expenses, such as rent, food, etc. Significant efforts have been made by the Armenian state, the church, NGOs and the population to welcome these people in better conditions (for example, obtaining Armenian nationality in a few months, free issue of a passport, free schooling, etc.). However, new arrivals still have to deal with the economic situation of a country where a third of the population lives below the poverty line. Moreover, Armenians are leaving their country in large numbers for economic reasons. In 2014, 40,000 people were recorded as leaving a country of fewer than three million inhabitants. Alongside

these difficulties, which affect all citizens, Syrian Armenians are handicapped linguistically, because they speak an Armenian dialect and do not know Russian. Nor do they have the personal networks that are needed in a country where nepotism is rife. These difficulties prevent them from accessing the legal labour market and makes them vulnerable to economic exploitation.

### Proposed experiment

The proposed experiment aims to provide support for creating independent economic activities in order to combat this kind of exploitation. In September 2015, several families of refugees were identified on the basis of vulnerability criteria by the SMED (national centre for the development of small and medium-sized enterprises), which is attached to the equivalent of the Armenian Chamber of Commerce. They were then given support until December 2015 to develop their project, design a business plan, etc. Among the families who showed an interest and had the aptitude for developing a business, two of the families in most difficulty were monitored by Caritas Armenia. The organisation helped them to purchase the equipment needed to make pastries. It monitored them from January to June 2016 to help them develop their business, through regular visits, providing equipment and training, taking part in trade shows, etc.

### Impact on victims and limitations

Although it is difficult to measure the impact of this experiment within the given time frame, it is part of a broader programme implemented by the SMED, which provides micro-loans to 170 Armenian families from Syria to help them to develop their own business (hairdressing, jewellery, running a restaurant, etc.). For these families, not being in a dependent relationship with an employer is a guarantee against economic exploitation. What's more, all the children are enrolled in school, so they are not being used to provide income for the family to the detriment of their education. The fact that they are being monitored by a state organisation also provides a level of protection: people have contacts they can rely on, who are in touch with the relevant authorities.

The main difficulty concerns the economic viability of these activities. The families we met explained that the market in Syria was buoyant. It transcended national boundaries and extended into Iraq, Lebanon, Jordan, etc. In Armenia however, it is very limited, demand is low and it is very difficult to get high-quality raw materials at low cost. For this reason, there is a risk that providing individual assistance



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to Armenian families in Syria to develop economic activities will only benefit a limited number. Some form of association between families could be envisaged, along with the development of sufficiently large industries to reduce the cost of raw materials and help develop export markets.

### A necessary partnership for integration in the medium term

Unlike other countries facing the arrival of refugees, Armenia has implemented an exceptional reception policy. Because Armenian Syrians are not viewed as refugees but compatriots, schools are free of charge, it is possible to obtain Armenian nationality in just a few months, access to health care is easier, and so on. Apart from easing the administrative formalities, the state, as this experiment shows, is conscious that without work, these families cannot cover their day-to-day expenses, especially in a context in which assistance from the diaspora, the churches and NGOs is drying up as the war goes on. Partnership with the state is essential to ensure that independent businesses comply as quickly as possible with the normative framework. Indeed, day-to-day survival is a reality for Armenians. This positive discriminations granting Armenians from Syria various benefits (such as below-market interest rates, the option to start a business without registering it, and so on) risks turning people against each other. Five months after starting their business, the two families who took part in the experiment had still not managed to register it due to the high cost of taxes, which makes their business vulnerable in the medium term.

## INFO BOX

## THE ARMENIAN REFUGEE FAMILIES FROM SYRIA

**Family D came from Aleppo and fled to Armenia in July 2015.** In Syria, their living conditions had grown steadily worse. They were living without water, electricity or gas. One member of their family was killed by rocket fire. A few months later, one of family D's brothers was captured by terrorists as he was attempting to leave Syria. Because of the bombing of Aleppo and their religion, the situation had become too dangerous. The family paid people to take them to Lebanon and then set off for Armenia. Family D managed to leave with their grandmother, the elder brother's family, brother T and sister A. Once they arrived in Armenia, T and his brother, who had trained as engineers, tried to find a job but were unsuccessful. T's brother worked for a company for several days but was not paid. They therefore decided to attend a training course run by the CMED and were selected for the project. In spite of this new prospect, all members of the family are showing psychological side-effects following four years of war, and are experiencing periods of depression. A long period of rehabilitation lies ahead.

**Family K fled Aleppo in 2014 for security reasons.** Before the war, the husband owned shops that sold spare parts for cars. The business was thriving and only the husband needed to work. During the war, their shops were looted. The family's eldest had studied in Armenia, which made it easier for them to settle. However, despite all their efforts, they had not managed to find work. All the savings they had managed to put aside soon had to be spent on rent, food, etc. The children tried to get to Europe and one son currently lives in Sweden. As for their daughter, she has married and is living in Lebanon. With no children at home and no work, the mother decided to start making pastries. She signed up for the course at the CMED and was supported by Caritas, which bought her kitchen equipment (mixer, oven, refrigerator, etc.) worth almost €1,000. Currently however, the income generated by selling cakes is not yet covering the monthly outgoings. They also sell flowers to supplement their income. The husband runs the street stall and his wife makes the pastries. Mrs K has taken part in several trade fairs organised by the Ministry for the Diaspora, UNHCR and the GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), etc., where she presented and sold her products. Her aim is to build up a customer base or work with catering firms. But unless they soon secure some direct customers or build up enough income to rent a shop, their business will be under threat, since selling in the street is prohibited in Armenia and punishable by a fine.

### Transposing the experiment in Armenia and to other countries

Depending on the economic context and the legal framework, this type of project could be adapted to other contexts, in Armenia and elsewhere. It contributes to strengthening families' financial autonomy and therefore reduces their vulnerability to trafficking in human beings. The support needed, on the other hand, may be more complex because of the language barrier and above all, people's administrative status.

### National recommendations

- Promote better coordination between the various organisations that provide micro-loans aimed at refugees.
- Identify new markets internally and internationally to increase outlets and the number of independent business owners.
- Facilitate registration procedures for micro-businesses.
- Develop integrated sectors combining Armenians from Syria with Armenians from Armenia to produce and sell products through credit facilities.

### IN TURKEY: PREVENT AND AVOIDING EARLY MARRIAGES AND CHILD LABOUR AMONG SYRIAN REFUGEES IN ISTANBUL

#### Context

In March 2016, according to the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs, the number of registered refugees exceeded 3.1 million people. Of these, over 2.5 million are Syrians, half of whom are children. According to UNHCR, just 10% of Syrian refugees in Turkey are living in camps with free access to basic services (education, health, food, administrative status, etc.) funded by Turkey. Support for the remaining 90% is very limited or even non-existent. NGOs and local communities tend to mitigate the most difficult situations but their resources are limited. The vast majority of families are facing day-to-day financial difficulties in covering their rent and paying for food and health care. Children in this situation are particularly exposed to exploitation by being sent out to work. For many families, the children's financial contribution has become a necessity. As in Lebanon, early marriages are mainly motivated by a need to

reduce the number of dependent children. According to UNHCR, 400,000 Syrian children are not in school.

Caritas Turkey and other associations have been supporting schools to address this situation. Access to education is the first step in preventing various forms of exploitation. That said, even among refugee children who have the chance to go to school, the risks of dropping out, early marriage and exploitation remain. In order to tackle this, the experiment focused on training teachers in identifying the children most at risk in several schools in Istanbul that have taken in Syrian children.

### Proposed experiment

In order to assess teachers' needs, they were sent an individual questionnaire to list the difficulties and problems observed among refugee pupils. The data were analysed and used to develop two-day training sessions attended by 61 teachers and leadership team members.

The points covered on the first day included:

- children's rights and Turkish legislation in relation to child protection;
- services Syrian children can be guided towards;
- dropping out of school and absenteeism;
- risk indicators for dropping out and exploitation;
- the reasons these situations arise (economic difficulties faced by families, the role of school among girls and boys, the various forms of child labour, etc.);
- introducing an identification and protection system based around the school.

The second day addressed the more specific points about exploitation resulting from early marriages:

- definition and typology of forms of sexual exploitation;
- indicators and symptoms of children suffering from exploitation or sexual abuse;
- intervention methods for preventing and combating different forms of sexual exploitation and early marriages;
- implementing an action plan to combat these risks.

Video footage and small-group discussions were used to illustrate the themes discussed. Participants were encouraged to come up with their own solutions.

### Impact on victims

Since this experiment was primarily focused on prevention, it is difficult to measure its impact. Following the training, the teachers were better at successfully identifying the causes of the difficulties

their pupils were facing and why they were absent from school. Many children are suffering symptoms of post-traumatic shock related to the war and they are very rarely monitored by psychologists. Because their families' incomes are so low, children feel a primary duty to work or "make money" to help out.

After they had been trained, the teachers explained that it was important to be close to the children in order to establish a relationship of trust. The children then begin to talk and their real situation becomes clearer. The teachers said they would like to be trained in communications tools adapted to their work with children in order to create a positive listening environment. Another request they made was about working with the family, which they viewed as essential. This would avoid the children feeling caught up in a conflict of loyalties and they were keen to have training in this area.

### Partnership with all social actors

Although training for teachers is not enough in itself to combat the risks of exploitation, the experiment shows that prevention and detection cannot only be left to NGOs or child welfare services. Increasing the number of partnerships by training professionals who are in daily contact with children (teachers, health professionals, humanitarian NGOs, etc.) would help to quantitatively improve prevention and identify situations.

### National recommendations:

- Support school enrolment for all children, not just those in the camps, in particular by providing free transport for pupils and offering foundation classes to address the issue of the language barrier.
- Make courses on these topics available to all teachers working with refugees by providing communications tools aimed at children and families.
- Raise awareness among the general public and all professionals potentially in contact with refugee children (schools, hospitals, the police, etc.) about different forms of exploitation and trafficking in human beings, which are too often viewed as street activities that do not require any form of protection.

## IN ALBANIA: STRENGTHEN THE ABILITY TO IDENTIFY VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS AMONG REFUGEES AND IMPROVE THEIR TREATMENT

### Context

Since the Syrian crisis and the opening of the Balkans route in the summer of 2015, Greece, Bulgaria,

Macedonia and Serbia have found themselves facing an influx of refugees, mainly from Syria and Afghanistan. Until November 2015, there were no criteria based on nationality and people simply passed through these countries, which were organised to receive them. At the end of November 2015, the European Union limited access to this route to people of Syrian, Afghan and Iraqi nationality. Three months later, on the Greek border, only the inhabitants of certain cities in these three countries were allowed to pass through. Finally, at the end of March, the border between Greece and Macedonia was closed, along with the borders between Macedonia and Serbia, Serbia and Croatia, etc. In all the Balkan states, the consequence of this series of restrictions was the reappearance of human smugglers. Because of its geographical location, Albania for its part feared a massive arrival of refugees, whose aim would be to get to Italy via the Albanian coast. The government's response was mainly focused on security, with a strengthening of border controls on the borders with Greece and Macedonia to limit arrivals and send people quickly back to Greece, with no real assessment of their situation or their vulnerability to trafficking in human beings.

#### **Proposed experiment**

Caritas Albania proposed training the main people likely to be in contact with refugees, in order to improve the identification of people who were at risk or victims of trafficking in human beings. Seven training sessions were organised in the Dürres, Shkoder, LezheKukes and Puke regions. Training was delivered to 205 people from local institutions, social services, the employment department, judges, head teachers, dispensaries, the local police and the border police.

The aims of the training were to:

- build capacity among local authorities for identifying and protecting victims of trafficking in human beings;
- implement local coordination for dealing with victims of trafficking in human beings;
- strengthen partnerships between different organisations and services at the local level;
- improve key actors' understanding of the various forms of exploitation, how people gain a hold over others, and relevant national and international legislation.

The training consisted in theoretical knowledge as well as presenting practical tools, interview techniques, etc.

#### **Impact on victims**

Following the training, seven people were identified, three of whom were victims of sexual exploitation. Two received medium-term treatment (six months). Work with Caritas Lebanon was then instigated to sort out their administrative status and ensure better access to treatment. Although the impact is limited, this experiment shows the necessity of training professionals in recognising new phenomena with victims who do not speak the language, whose administrative situation is complicated, and so on.

#### **Strengthening partnerships and taking positive steps**

In order to improve the identification process, Caritas Albania has established a partnership with the border police, so that a psychologist supported by interpreters can interview refugees arrested by the border guards at the main entry points.

Furthermore, the evaluation of the experiment showed the necessity of taking a proactive approach to refugees who live in secret. Mobile teams will therefore be formed to go out and find them, assess their needs and identify situations of exploitation.

#### **National recommendations**

- Develop similar training, particularly for social workers and medical personnel.
- Increase capacity for receiving people who have been victims of trafficking in human beings, both adults and children.
- Make it easier to receive foreign victims from an administrative standpoint and allocate funds to help strengthen teams (cultural mediators, interpreters and psychologists).
- Establish street teams to improve identification.

## 6 - GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

These recommendations are aimed at national governments, the UN, European Union and international donors. They are based on the results of research, experimentation, the various initiatives implemented in countries and interviews with refugees.

EXPLOITATION OF CHILDREN	
<b>PREVENTION</b>	<p>Cooperation with government and international organisations so that all children have access to schooling, which means providing free transport, introducing foundation classes and coordinating monitoring of families, particularly those who do not live in the camps (around 80% of refugee families).</p> <p>Awareness campaign in vulnerable communities on school drop-out and the risks of trafficking in human beings.</p> <p>Training for various actors in schools and camps on identifying high-risk situations, communicating with children and working with families.</p> <p>Implementation of economic development programmes to improve families' financial situation.</p>
<b>IDENTIFICATION</b>	<p>Street work and identification by forming mobile teams with the linguistic skills needed.</p> <p>Creation of multidisciplinary teams (police, social workers and psychologists) to evaluate situations notified by various actors in the field to identify victims more effectively.</p> <p>Training for various child protection services in trafficking in human beings.</p>
<b>PROTECTION</b>	<p>Capacity building for providing protection for children from all countries.</p> <p>Team training and recruitment of interpreters to help establish relationships with minors.</p> <p>Strengthen teams by hiring psychologists specialising in post-traumatic syndromes.</p> <p>Development of safe houses, for boys as well as girls and women.</p>
<b>LAW ENFORCEMENT /ADVOCACY</b>	<p>Facilitated access to refugee status for all families.</p> <p>Lower restrictions on access to the labour market for refugees, given that the consequences are to increase child labour, early marriages, sexual exploitation and incitement to commit crimes to mitigate the lack of family income.</p> <p>Simplification of family reunification procedures for unaccompanied minors when one member of the family is settled in an EU country (as provided for in the Dublin III agreements).</p> <p>Adoption of a civil law on early marriages (where this is not already the case) that applies to all religious communities, based on a legal age that does not endanger young girls' health.</p>
<b>PUBLIC AWARENESS</b>	<p>Raise awareness among the local population about different forms of exploitation, mainly because of the ban on their parents working.</p>

<b>SEXUAL EXPLOITATION</b>	
<b>PREVENTION</b>	<p>Distinction to be made in the UNHCR's vulnerability criteria between criteria relating to gender-based violence and those relating to sexual exploitation.</p> <p>Training to be provide to all stakeholders working with refugees (in camps and outside camps) on the types of recruitment (early marriage, debt, etc.) and indicators of the risk of sexual exploitation.</p> <p>Implementation of economic development programmes to improve families' financial situations.</p>
<b>IDENTIFICATION</b>	<p>Street work and identification through creation of mobile teams with required linguistic knowledge whose job is to visit places of prostitution (on the edges of camps, in zones of street prostitution, outside brothels, etc.)</p> <p>Creation of multidisciplinary teams (police, social workers, psychologists, doctors, etc.) to evaluate situations flagged up by the various stakeholders on the ground in order to better identify victims.</p> <p>Training for different police services, medical staff and schools regarding issues of sexual exploitation.</p>
<b>PROTECTION</b>	<p>Development of safe houses including for boys and young men.</p> <p>Strengthening teams by employing psychologists specialised in post-traumatic stress disorders.</p> <p>Increasing capacity of centres for reintegration of victims of sexual exploitation.</p> <p>Easier access to a status giving permission to reside and the right to work.</p>
<b>LAW ENFORCEMENT /ADVOCACY</b>	<p>Easier access to international protection for victims.</p> <p>Support for relocation of victims to countries welcoming of refugees.</p> <p>Relaxation of rules impeding access to the job market for refugees.</p> <p>Implementation of a civil (non-religious) law where applicable, for the adoption of a legal age for marriage.</p> <p>Suppression of penalties for those working in prostitution.</p> <p>Revision of artist visas.</p>
<b>PUBLIC AWARENESS</b>	<p>Increase local population's awareness of sexual exploitation and the identification of situations of trafficking.</p>

<b>ECONOMIC EXPLOITATION</b>	
<b>PREVENTION</b>	<p>Raise refugees' awareness of their rights.</p> <p>Free legal consultancy.</p> <p>Micro-finance projects to support new business start-ups.</p> <p>Creation of "ethical" employers networks.</p> <p>Vocational training courses.</p>
<b>IDENTIFICATION</b>	<p>Training for labour inspectors and police officers in this form of exploitation.</p> <p>Development of mobile teams in places where bosses come to recruit illegal workers.</p> <p>Free phone line linked to a legal advice centre, in conjunction with the labour inspectorate.</p>
<b>PROTECTION</b>	<p>Free legal representation before the courts.</p> <p>Vocational training courses close to where vulnerable populations live.</p> <p>Financial assistance.</p> <p>Psychological follow-up.</p>
<b>LAW ENFORCEMENT /ADVOCACY</b>	<p>Strengthening of the legal framework by simplifying the mechanism for lodging complaints against employers.</p> <p>Stricter legislation concerning the criminal responsibility of sponsors (kafil) in the kafala system.</p> <p>Ensure that economic exploitation is viewed as related to trafficking in human beings and not to illegal labour.</p>
<b>PUBLIC AWARENESS</b>	<p>Raise awareness about this form of exploitation among the general public and employers.</p>

<b>VULNERABLE MINORITIES</b>	
<b>PREVENTION</b>	<p>Fight against racism, hate speech and radicalisation: workshops, discussion groups and psychological support on how people gain a hold over others.</p>
<b>IDENTIFICATION</b>	<p>List of minorities excluded from the labour market, access to health and/or access to identification.</p> <p>Identification of segregation areas</p>
<b>PROTECTION</b>	<p>Support access to schooling by encouraging vulnerable minorities to mix with pupils from the majority community.</p> <p>Simpler access to vocational training.</p> <p>Development of economic projects aimed at minorities.</p>
<b>LAW ENFORCEMENT /ADVOCACY</b>	<p>Depending on the states concerned, elimination of administrative practices that systematically exclude minorities from the social system (Roma people in Bosnia and Western Europe, Palestinians from Syria in Lebanon, Doms and Yazidis in Turkey, etc.)</p> <p>Prosecution of the various forms of discrimination in the criminal courts.</p>
<b>PUBLIC AWARENESS</b>	<p>Workshops, information campaigns on minority rights and the reality of their condition.</p>

TRANSVERSAL TOPIC	ORGAN TRAFFICKING
<b>PREVENTION</b>	Prevention campaign in hospitals (posters) explaining the risks of organ trafficking. Distribution of flyers at border crossing points explaining the risks of organ trafficking.
<b>IDENTIFICATION</b>	Introduction of specialist police units to monitor hospitals and clinics at risk of being used by networks of organ traffickers.
<b>PROTECTION</b>	Free legal assistance. Free medical assistance.
<b>LAW ENFORCEMENT /ADVOCACY</b>	Cooperation with governments and institutions for better protection of victims by granting them very vulnerable status according to the UNHCR definition and the right to seek asylum.  Prosecution of clients and medical staff participating in surgical operations in relation to organ trafficking.
<b>PUBLIC AWARENESS</b>	Public campaigns in hospitals, clinics and dispensaries on the risks of organ trafficking.

#### AT LOCAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVEL

The analysis of local contexts by country shows that forms and methods of exploitation vary from one region to another. Within the Bekaa Valley (Lebanon), exploitation of women and children in agriculture is very significant, but this is not the case in Beirut or, necessarily, in Tripoli. The same observations apply to Turkey, Ukraine, etc. This observation raises the question of aid coordination and distribution at a territorial level. It suggests that international donors and associations need to do more to assess the needs of each area and design specific programmes for them in order to improve aid effectiveness. This runs counter to a globalising approach that uses vague terms, such as programmes to combat "gender-based violence", which combine sexual exploitation, domestic violence, sexual abuse of children, and so on.

At the national level, the state structures responsible for social welfare, health or child protection should not be ignored but supported by international donors. The examples of Bosnia-Herzegovina and Kosovo serve as a useful reminder. In spite of the huge sums invested for almost 10 years, the health, education, training and child protection systems are currently failing. Simply funding NGOs for short-term projects (most programmes last no more than three years) prevents any kind of continuity and does not help to modernise local institutions in the countries concerned. Because the NGOs pay better salaries,

young graduates are not interested in working for state institutions. When the funding stops, most of them, despite the skills and experience they have developed, prefer to move into the commercial sector or go abroad. As a result, when the main international funding bodies withdraw from a country, whole regions can find themselves with no real resources for social services or education and an ageing workforce. This abandonment of local institutions contributes to phenomena such as communities turning in on themselves and trafficking in human beings. Girls dropping out of school, if they have been schooled at all, and the increase in early marriages (around the age of 12) that we see in some Roma groups in the Balkans are a sad illustration.

Finally, at the international level, this research action shows that the process of providing aid to populations during crisis or conflict situations needs to be re-examined. Although emergency aid is certainly necessary, it must not be the only form of intervention or account for the majority of resources in the first few years. On the contrary, like any action, humanitarian interventions can have negative effects, including an increase in trafficking in human beings. Denying these phenomena, as happened during the Balkans for almost 10 years, means denying the rights of people who are their victims to be protected: this research-action is there to serve as a reminder.





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