

Research for Human Trafficking

Casey Walker

2011



**Human Trafficking is Modern Day Slavery. Help abolish slavery worldwide. Learn More. Bring Awareness. Join the Fight.**

*This publication is a compilation of research on slavery and human trafficking gathered over the last few years. For research focused specifically on Thailand, download [The Case in Thailand](#).*

## Definition of Slavery

Slavery is the complete control of one person by another for economic exploitation. It occurs when people are held against their will by force or threat of violence, and are paid nothing.

Source: 1

## Basics of Slavery

### Working Conditions

- Isolation from the public and from other victims
- High risk for work-related injuries
- High risk for sexually transmitted diseases
- Little or no medical attention
- Malnourishment
- Physically demanding work
- Under constant watch or supervision
- Physical and psychological abuse and/or trauma
- Threats of physical harm or deportation
- Long hours & little or no compensation

Source: 2

### Feelings of Victims

- Feelings of shame
- Fear of others, including potential helpers
- Fear of reprisal from traffickers
- May not speak English
- May have difficulty trusting potential helpers
- Not present or even perceive themselves as victims

Source: 2

## Slavery Today

Modern day slavery is drastic transformation from the chattel slavery we know from the past. Ownership has taken on a whole new meaning as slaves today are cheap and regularly replaced, whereas they used to be a large investment and used as long as possible. Researcher Kevin Bales identifies three main factors that explain the low cost and expendability of slaves as:

1. Population explosion: population growth has surpassed job availability so that millions are left displaced and vulnerable to enslavement.
2. Economic globalization/modernized agriculture: this has left farmers worldwide unable to compete with the current market.
3. Greed, violence, corruption: these factors not only break and prevent citizens and governments from bringing change, but render the enactment of progressive laws ineffective.

The following charts the major differences between old and new slavery

**Old Slavery**

Legal ownership asserted  
High purchase cost  
Low profits  
Shortage of potential slaves  
Long-term relationship  
Slaves maintained  
Ethnic differences important

**New Slavery**

Legal ownership avoided  
Very low purchase cost  
Very high profits  
Surplus of potential slaves  
Short-term relationship  
Slaves are disposable  
Ethnic differences not important

---

Source: 1 (page 15)

## Definition of Human Trafficking

Trafficking in humans refers to all acts related to the recruitment, transport, sale, or purchase of individuals through force, fraud or other coercive means for the purpose of economic exploitation.

Source: 5

## Forms of trafficking

### Labor Trafficking

Domestic servitude  
Janitorial services  
Agricultural labor  
Food service industry  
Sweatshop labor  
Begging

### Sex Trafficking

Street work  
Dancers  
Brothels  
Pornography  
Massage parlors  
Mailorder brides

---

Source: 2

## The Basics of Trafficking

1. Usually operates through a network of smaller specialized industries that require little capital, and help avoid prosecution. Specialties include:
  - Recruitment
  - Transportation
  - Advertisement
  - Retail
2. Every country is susceptible to trafficking
  - Origin countries – poorer, rural countries
  - Transport countries – a stop on the journey
  - Destination countries - western countries, people that can afford to buy

## Common Questions

1. How Are People Trafficked?
  - Deception – promised a good job
  - Fraud
  - Coercion
  - Debt bondage
2. Who is being trafficked?
  - Women
  - Children
  - Individuals suffering from impoverishment

### 3. Why are victims trafficked?

- Lucrative industry
- Slaves are cheap because of high number of vulnerable people
- Little enforcement against it

Source: 4

## Economics behind Slavery and Trafficking

The enslavement of humans generates high profits. Human trafficking is a 32 billion dollar industry, and slavery contributes roughly 13 billion to the global economy every year directly (through agriculture, prostitution, etc.) and an inestimable amount indirectly (eg. sugar used for chocolate, charcoal used for steel).

With such a vast abundance of people due to the population explosion, and little job availability, the number of people vulnerable to enslavement increases. By the simple law of supply and demand, it's known that as the number of these vulnerable people goes up, the cost to enslave them goes down. Bottom line: slaves are now cheap, and expendable.

Source: 1 and 2

## Supply Factors

- Poverty
- Political instability/armed conflict
- Real or perceived opportunity for a better life
- Absence of social safety net
- Absence of employment opportunities
- Status of/violence against women & children

Source: 2

## Demand Factors

- Demand for sex work
- Demand for prostitution and other aspects of the sex industry is high throughout the world.
- Demand for cheap labor
- Corporations seek to produce their product at the lowest possible cost.
- Potential profits are very high
- Trafficked persons can be bought and sold many times.

Source: 2

## Statistics

- There are an estimated 12-27 million slaves worldwide today
- Half of modern day slaves are children
- 600,000-800,000 people are trafficked across international borders each year
- 80% of people trafficked are women and girls for sexual exploitation

## Laws

“Today slavery is illegal everywhere, and there is no more *legal* ownership of human beings. When people buy slaves today they don’t ask for a receipt or ownership papers, but they do gain *control*—and they use violence to maintain that control” (Disposable People).

Researchers worldwide agree that while laws can play a powerful role in the abolishment of slavery, far too often government corruption renders them useless. It is not uncommon for a woman who has escaped from a brothel and gone to the police to be either jailed or re-sold by an officer. Nevertheless, the battle must continue, and prominent organizations such as the UN have made progressive steps. In 2000, the United Nations passed the Trafficking Victims Protection Act which made human trafficking a federal crime, provided protection access to federal benefits for victims, and demanded action from government departments. Numerous laws regarding enslavement and trafficking have been passed in other countries as well, and there have been dramatic improvements in countries that used to boast some of the highest numbers of enslavement.

## Solutions

While the problem of slavery and trafficking appears overwhelming, there are many ways to effectively combat it. From the research we have compiled it appears solutions boil down to the following:

1. The passing and enforcement of laws which prevent and protect vulnerable persons and victims, while punishing slave owners and traffickers.
2. Education: this a wide umbrella that covers the general education of children and adults, education on awareness of trafficking and how to avoid it, business education to help grow local economies, and education of self-sustaining practices such as agriculture or raising livestock for ex-slaves.
3. Public pressure: this includes the work of journalists, news reporters, lawyers, citizens organizing movements, and consumers choosing to support fair trade companies. Every voice counts.

Researchers widely agree that freeing slaves can often be the easiest part, while helping them transition into a self-sustaining lifestyle can be difficult. In the Carnegie Mellon Global Solutions report, the best after-care assistance for ex-slaves comes in the form of:

- Food
- Lodging
- Physical & mental healthcare

- Legal assistance
- ESL classes
- Work training

### **What We Do About It**

Global Breakthrough does a combination of these prevention and rehabilitation strategies. By opening business institutes to help grow the local economy, we aim to open up job availability. Through vocational training, housing, counseling, and job placement services we look to prepare girls to transition from their work on the streets to jobs they love.

## Learn More

### BOOKS TO READ ON HUMAN TRAFFICKING

1. Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery, Siddharth Kara
2. Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy, Kevin Bales
3. Half the Sky, Nicholas Kristof and Sheryl Wudunn
4. The Road of Lost Innocence: The true story of a Cambodian Heroine, Somali Mam

### ADDITIONAL WEBSITES TO CHECK OUT

1. [http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/about/fact\\_human.html](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/trafficking/about/fact_human.html)
2. [www.protectionproject.org](http://www.protectionproject.org)
3. [www.endhumantrafficking.org](http://www.endhumantrafficking.org)
4. <http://www.freedomcenter.org/slavery-today>
5. <http://www.polarisproject.org/>

## Works Cited

1. Bales, Kevin. *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy*. Berkeley, CA: University of California, 1999. Print.
2. *Slavery Education & Anti-Slavery Advocacy | The Project to End Human Trafficking*. Web. 03 Mar. 2011. <<http://www.endhumantrafficking.org/>>.
3. Batstone, David. "Slavery Today: Human Trafficking :: National Underground Railroad Freedom Center." *National Underground Railroad Freedom Center - Cincinnati, Ohio*. Web. 03 Mar. 2011. <<http://www.freedomcenter.org/slavery-today/>>.
4. "Human Trafficking." *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia*. Web. 03 Mar. 2011. <[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human\\_trafficking](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Human_trafficking)>.
5. UN Protocol on Trafficking, 2000