

Sex Trafficking



Key Facts

- 3.8 million adults were victims of forced sexual exploitation and 1 million children were victims of commercial sexual exploitation in 2016. (Global Estimates of Modern Slavery, a collaboration between Walk Free, ILO, IOM)
- The vast majority of victims of sexual exploitation (99%) are women and girls. (Global Estimates of Modern Slavery)
- Commercial sexual exploitation makes up \$99 billion of the estimated \$150 billion of annual profits from forced labor activities each year. (ILO)

The Challenge

Millions of people are victims of sex trafficking, a form of modern-day slavery in which someone deceives and sexually exploits another person for a profit. Sex trafficking includes exploitation in establishments (brothels), private networks (homes) and on the internet (online sexual exploitation). The impact of the pandemic on those most vulnerable to sexual exploitation has been catastrophic.¹ Reports of domestic violence have increased, with women and children fleeing their homes. Those who flee become especially vulnerable to the deceptions of traffickers who promise new jobs and better lives, but only deliver further exploitation and abuse.

The Opportunity

The good news is that it is possible to combat these crimes successfully. There are proven models that effectively deter trafficking and slavery by rescuing victims, bringing perpetrators to justice, restoring survivors, and reducing the prevalence of violence.

For example, in the mid-2000s, children in major cities in the Philippines were often identified as victims in establishment-based sex trafficking cases. After four years of IJM partnership with local law enforcement in metro Cebu, the Philippines, independent evaluators found a stunning 72% decrease in the availability of children for commercial sexual exploitation (2006–2010).²

What the U.S. Government is doing:

The State Department's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (TIP Office) leads the U.S. government's global engagement on human trafficking. In FY21, \$66M³ was appropriated for TIP Office grants by Congress, preceded by a mark of \$45M in the two previous two fiscal years (FY19⁴ and FY20⁵). These grants are irreplaceable as the U.S. Government's primary foreign assistance to combat trafficking. IJM requests **\$66M** in the FY22 Congressional appropriations bill to support grants to combat modern-day slavery. Within TIP grant funding, IJM requests Congress appropriate funds at or above the level of **\$25M** to the State Department's Program to End Modern Slavery (PEMS).

¹ <https://ourworld.unu.edu/en/the-impact-of-covid-19-on-modern-slavery>

² <https://www.ijm.org/documents/studies/Cebu-Project-Lantern-Impact-Assessment.pdf>

³ <https://docs.house.gov/billssthisweek/20201221/BILLS-116RCP68-JES-DIVISION-K.pdf>, pg. 44

⁴ <https://docs.house.gov/billssthisweek/20190211/116hrpt9-JointExplanatoryStatement-u1.pdf>, p. 31

⁵ <https://www.congress.gov/116/bills/hr/1865/BILLS-116hr1865enr.pdf>, p. 390