

Human Trafficking: The Involvement of Criminal Organizations and Prevention Measures

More than twice as many people are in bondage in the world today as were taken in chains during the entire 350 years of the African Slave Trade.

The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that the "...minimum number of persons in forced labor at a given time as a result of trafficking is 2.45 million".

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The Study of Criminal Organizations

- Criminal collaboration
- Criminal roles
- Criminal activities
- THB as a business model

Criminal Collaboration

- **Soloist:** one-man/one woman business;
- **Isolated criminal group:** 2 – 5 members; responsible for entire trafficking process from recruitment to exploitation
- **Criminal networks:** 6 or more members; “In this undifferentiated criminal infrastructure; members are associated via one or more intermediaries; clear clusters based on geographic closeness, family links, friendships, commercial chains and interrelated activities”.

Criminal Collaboration in the Netherlands

- From 2000 – 2003, investigations show that
 - 69% suspects arrested form part of a network and virtually all (97%) are involved in cross-border THB
 - 19% suspects arrested form part of an isolated group
 - 12% are solo operators (the majority – 66% of which are involved in domestic THB)

Division of Labor in Large Trafficking Units

- Larger, more sophisticated trafficking units can be described as **horizontal designs** divided into several sub-units that specialize in a particular part or sequence of the operation.
- **Sub-units** may provide various services—recruitment, provision of false identity papers or passports, transportation, safe houses, and entry into destination country.
- The **exploiting unit and re-escort unit** (for the purpose of rotation to other destinations) provide 'services' to networks dealing with trafficked persons.
- The **management unit** maintains a vertical structure and has knowledge of and controls the other sub-units. All other sub-units are organized horizontally and have very limited knowledge of the other sub-units

Roles of Individuals within Trafficking Units (1)

- **Investors:** those who put forward funding for the operation, and oversee the entire operation. These people are unlikely to be known by the everyday employees of the operation, as they are sheltered by an organizational pyramid structure that protects their anonymity;
- **Recruiters:** seek out potential migrants and secure their financial commitment. These people may be members of the culture and the community from which migrants are drawn;
- **Transporters:** assist the migrants in leaving their country of origin, either by land, sea or air;

Roles of Individuals within Trafficking Units (2)

- ***Corrupt public officials or protectors***: may assist in obtaining travel documents, or accept bribes to enable migrants to enter/exit illegally;
- ***Informers***: gather information on matters such as border surveillance, immigration and transit procedures, asylum systems, law enforcement activities;
- ***Guides and crew members***: are responsible for moving illegal migrants from one transit point to the other or helping the migrants to enter the destination country;

Roles of Individuals within Trafficking Units (3)

- ***Enforcers***: are primarily responsible for policing staff and migrants, and for maintaining order;
- ***Debt-collectors***: are in the destination country to collect fees;
- ***Money-launderers***: launder the proceeds of crime, disguising their origin through a series of transactions or investing them in legitimate businesses;
- ***Supporting personnel and specialists***: may include local people at transit points who might provide accommodation and other assistance.
- ***Gatekeeper***: responsible for checking the legitimacy of an organization wishing to do business with the gang selling women.

THB as a Business Model

| Business Model & Crime Group | Victims | Modus Operandi | Violence | Human Rights Violations | Profit |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|
| Natural Resource Model: Post-Soviet Organized Crime | Women recruited and trafficked for prostitution | Women are recruited in source country and then sold off to intermediaries | Violence occurs | Very significant violations of human rights | Short- term |
| Trade and Development Model: Chinese & Chinese-Thai Traffickers | Smuggling and trafficking of men for labor exploitation and to a lesser extent trafficking women for prostitution | Structured business integrated from start to finish | Violence is known to occur when debts have not been paid | Less significant violations of human rights | Maximum, long term profit |
| Supermarket Model: U.S. – Mexican Trade | Smuggling of both men and women; trafficking of women for forced prostitution | Move large numbers of persons while keeping costs low | Not characteristic of this group; although human rights violations are reported | Significant violations of human rights | Maximizes profit |
| Violent Entrepreneur Model: Balkan Crime Groups | Women trafficked for prostitution | Serve as middlemen for crime groups from Eastern Europe; control women from base in Balkans through exploitation in brothels in Western Europe | High level of violence used against victims | Very significant violations of human rights; reliance on violence at all stages of operation makes it the most significant violator of human rights | Opportunistic and highly profitable |
| Traditional Slavery with Modern Technology: Nigeria & West Africa | Trafficking of young women and girls for prostitution to destinations in Western Europe; regional trafficking of children for labor exploitation | Use of contracts and voodoo practices to bind victims to traffickers and force compliance | Willing to use physical violence against victims | Significant violations of human rights | Multi-faceted crime groups; trade in women and girls generates significant profits |

Criminal Activities

Intelligence sources at Interpol reveal that THB supplements more traditional criminal activities:

- drug trafficking
- trafficking in arms
- vehicle theft
- money laundering

Traffickers have been linked to money lending to repay debts, extortion for protection money and physical violence.

Traffickers have been known to coerce their victims into smuggling and selling drugs.

Belgian investigators, confirming reports by Europol and Interpol, found that organized criminal groups rarely limit themselves to one activity but are involved in people smuggling, drug and human trafficking, theft and fraud.

THB as a Process

Recruitment Transportation/Entry Exploitation Criminal Proceeds



* *Fraudulent promises*
* *Kidnapping*
Document forgery

* *Assault*
* *False imprisonment*
* *Rape*
* *Forced Prostitution*
Corruption of government officials
Document forgery
Abuse of immigration laws

* *Unlawful coercion*
* *Threat*
* *Extortion*
* *Forced Prostitution*
* *False imprisonment*
* *Theft of documents*
* *Sexual Assault*
* *Aggravated Assault*
* *Rape*
* *Death*
Corruption of government officials

Money Laundering
Tax Evasion
Corruption of government officials

Offences in italics preceded by an asterisk indicate that the offences are perpetrated against the individual victim.

Investigation of Human Trafficking

- Modus operandi of the traffickers (selection of victims),
- Recruitment practices,
- Smuggling and trafficking routes,
- Use of fraudulent documentation,
- Transport methods,
- Deception, coercion and exploitation,
- Involvement of organized crime groups,
- Financial gains and investment
- Criminal Justice and victim protection responses and victim reporting patterns.

Prevention of THB

- Prevention (victims) = Disruption (traffickers and criminal activities)
- Practical Suggestions for Prevention
 - Focus also on domestic victims
 - Intercept potential victims in source and transit countries before waiting for them to be exploited in the countries of destination
 - Follow the money
 - Involve partners outside of the Criminal Justice System

Prevention of Human Trafficking – the Dutch Approach

Attempts are made to investigate and prosecute the entire “trafficking chain” from beginning to end

International collaboration is sought with all partners who can play a role in preventing or inhibiting THB

A Barrier Model has been developed which attempts to influence all the factors which give rise to human trafficking and seem to support its continued existence.

- Plan of Approach, Human Trafficking Task Force, January 2009

The Barrier Model (1)

The Barrier Model aims at involving numerous stakeholders that are in a position to collaborate in constructing structural barriers so that it becomes more difficult for human beings to be trafficked into the Netherlands.

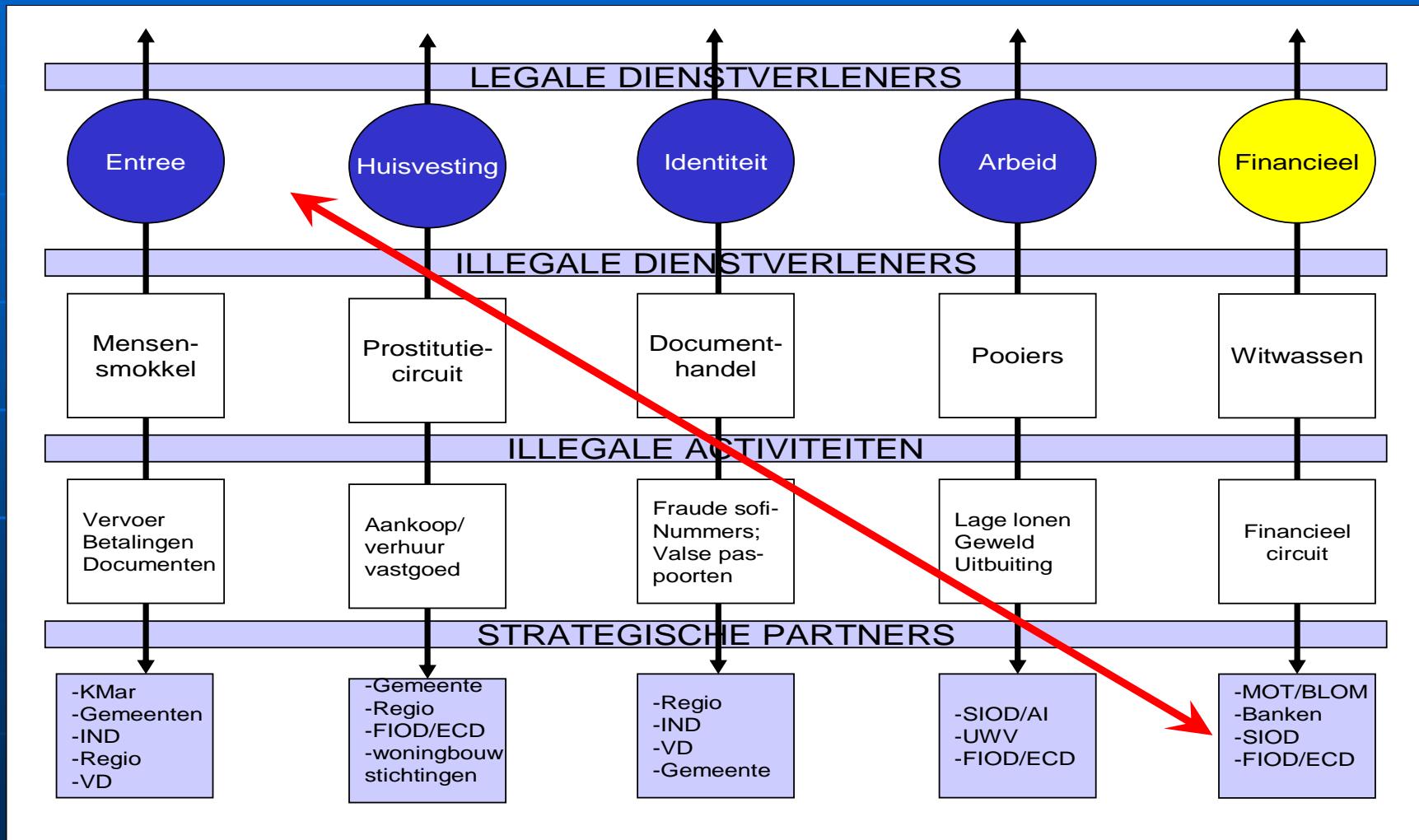
The Barrier Model (2)

- The Barrier Model identifies five stages at which point stakeholders can construct barriers to hinder THB.
 1. **Entrance** (smuggling, border crossing)
 2. **Housing** (prostitution circuit, illegal housing)
 3. **Identity** (false documents, false social security numbers)
 4. **Work** (pimps, exploiters, violence, exploitation)
 5. **Financial** (money laundering)

The Barrier Model (3)

The Barrier Model further identifies illegal service providers and illegal activities at each of the five stages. More importantly, strategic partners have been identified which may come into contact with victims or traffickers at each stage and which are in a position to erect barriers to hinder or prevent THB. Barriers can be erected at any of the five stages, but an integrated approach requires barriers to be erected at all five stages.

Barrier Model (4)



Thank you for your attention!

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