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HARARE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL

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ZIMUN XII

The Cost of Innovation:

*Navigating the Ethical Responsibilities of Technological
Advancements and Societal Change for Inclusive, Sustainable
Development in a Globalised World*



High Commissioner for Refugees

*Examining the specific vulnerabilities of refugee populations to
human trafficking and child labour in conflict zones and host
countries*

Committee: UNHCR

Issue: Examining the specific vulnerabilities of refugee populations to human trafficking and child labour in conflict zones and host countries

Student Officer: Tanaka Banga

Position: Head Chair

INTRODUCTION

The global refugee crisis has been the forefront of some of the most pressing humanitarian challenges of the 21st century and according to this committee UNHCR over 110 million people world wide have been forcibly displaced due to various factors like armed conflict, persecution, Sudan rights violations and particularly women and children are facing heightened risks of being exploited in human trafficking, child labour and other forms of exploitation in both their countries of origin and the countries they have gone to to seek asylum, poverty, lack of legal framework to protect them and limited access to education and basic life necessities have intensified and exacerbated the issue at hand.

DEFINITION OF KEY TERMS

Refugee - “A person who has fled their country due to a well-founded fear of persecution, conflict or violence” - 1951 refugee convention

Human Trafficking - “ The unlawful act of transporting or coercing people to benefit from their work typically in forced labour or sexual exploitation.”

Child Labour - “ Work which deprives children of their childhood, dignity or education and is also harmful to their mental and or physical development.”

BACKGROUND ON THE ISSUE

Though this issue has no true beginning it has been exacerbated by the growing numbers of wars in areas like Syria, Yemen, South Sudan and other zones of conflict and by 2025 the forced displacement figure soared to record levels including internally displaced asylum seekers. The issue being debated has evolved and escalated because of rising numbers of refugees who have been left insecure in various fronts, financially, economically and socially which has made way for false promises of salvation being an easy and enticing lure to desperate and vulnerable groups. Additionally, reductions in the humanitarian funding services have worsened the situation pushing many into desperate survival strategies leading to children in early marriage and child labour.

The main groups affected have been seen to be mainly **children** who form nearly half of the forcibly displaced population as it has been highlighted that **168 million** children are engaged in child labor globally and with conflicts and displacements things stand to get worse.

Women and girls face a large risk of sexual exploitation and forced marriages as a result of trafficking, their vulnerability is made worse by gender based violence as well as social and economic marginalization. **Men and young boys** are greatly targeted for forced labor and recruitment into crime syndicates.

This issue is of dire importance as it is a result of a violation of human rights and it goes fully against the **international** refugee framework which was created which requires the assurance and enforcement of basic rights for refugees who are people as much as each member of the international community.

CURRENT CONTEXT

As of recently the number of trafficking victims worldwide has increased by approximately 25% since 2019 and child victims too have increased with girls being the main targets

the HRC (Human rights council) have drawn full attention to the grave violations which have been suffered by people in areas of conflict

MAJOR COUNTRIES AND ORGANIZATION INVOLVED

The key countries involved have been Ukraine and neighboring states whereby in Ukraine the warfare has displaced millions into

- Romania
- Poland
- Moldova

As well as Jordan which is host to multitudes of Syrian refugees where agricultural and domestic work have involved child labor

The International Centre for Migration Policy Development have helped assess the trafficking risks in Jordan, Iraq, Syria, Turkey and Lebanon

The main acting organizations on this issue have been the following

UNODC

IOM - International Organization for migration who have conducted counter trafficking programs

UNHCR- who have studies on trafficking risks as well as providing guidance for safe means of migration

NGOs have also been the face of many outreach programs.

TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS

1998- the United Nations Security council discussed the issue of “Children and armed conflict” which underscored the recruitment of children in wars

August 25th 1999- The United Nations Security council adopted resolution 1261 which condemned the use of children in wars

19th of November 2000 - saw the “ILO worst forms of child labor” convention which aimed to eliminate the worse forms of child labour

12 December 2000 - “protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons especially women and children”

1st of February 2008 - the council of Europe convention on action against trafficking of human beings served to advance prosecution of trafficking within Europe.

2011 saw the start of the Syrian Civil war which displaced millions as well as the rise of **ISIS in 2014 which worsened displacement and related issues**

In April 2017 - the IOM warned that there were “migrant slave markets” in **Libya** where migrants including refugees were being sold into sexual slavery and labour in their attempts to reach Europe.

24 Feb 2022 - Russia's invasion of Ukraine began, which displaced millions of people. Conflict related displacements were further seen to increase the risks of trafficking and exploitation while attempting to reach safety in neighbouring and host countries.

3 March 2022 - the EU (European Union) invoked a temporary protection directive for Ukrainian refugees to **provide status and reduce the vulnerability of refugees in trafficking and smuggling**

30 sept 2024 - The UNHCR launched a study on vulnerabilities of Ukrainian refugees who were struggling in **Poland and Romania** which underscored discrimination, language barriers and financial insecurities as the key risk factors for refugees

UN Sustainable Development Goals

- the Target 8.7 (2030) to eliminate forced labor and modern day slavery as well as trafficking and the worst forms of child labour.
- target 16.2 (2030) End abuse and exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence involving children.

RELEVANT UN RESOLUTIONS, TREATIES, & EVENTS

1. **15 November 2000:** [Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime](#)
2. **29 September 2003:** [United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime](#)
3. **20 December 2016:** [UNSC Resolution 2331](#)
4. **21 November 2017:** [UNSC resolution 238](#)

PREVIOUS ATTEMPT TO SOLVE THE ISSUE

This issue has been incredibly prevalent in recent years, and therefore there has been a plethora of initiatives from humanitarian and international organisations, as well as individual member states to tackle child trafficking and violence within high density areas of refugees. As mentioned previously above, there have been several legal frameworks and international treaties which have been developed for the sake of protecting refugees and children from exploitation. This includes the 1951, United Nations refugee Convention which introduced a series of rights which refugees in host countries were entitled to. Several other solutions of similar accordance have been developed since, and whilst they have been effective in outlining the rights of refugees, there has still been difficulties in actually being able to protect them, especially young women and children in high density camps. Organizations such as the UNHCR have provided funding, education programmes and protection services within refugee camps to help solve the issue. These have come in the form of safe shelters, access to education and livelihood support to vulnerable groups. International summits such as the Global Refugee Forum have brought together nations, organisations and international agencies to create solutions which can be applied effectively at a global level, and have been particularly helpful in sharing critical data. Nonetheless, this remains a current issue, and one which does not have one simple solution due to the complexity of its nature.

POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS

1. Investing In Education

Issues such as child trafficking and child labour arise in Refugee camps due to not only situations of economic desperation, but also as a result of a severe lack of education. In order to tackle education, solutions can include setting up free education and schooling programmes, and having systems of child social protection workers which work fluidly throughout education programmes. It is critical for child refugees to receive an education, because it not only gives them the potential to develop their own lives and sustainable incomes, which will reduce their likeliness of falling into traps and cycles of trafficking, but will also create safe spaces for children to be vocal with trusted adults as well as have monitoring from social workers.

2. Developing Strong Protection Systems Within Refugee Camps

Firstly, refugees are often pushed into trafficking due to their lack of proper documentation and paper work, which makes them far more vulnerable to being trafficked. Establishing concrete systems within camps, whereby refugees must register immediately upon entering camps, and identification paperwork, will prevent them from being easily exploited, and allow for their statuses to be tracked. Additionally, developing strong networks where refugees are able to report incidents and complications regarding their safety, will allow for them to seek proper support and help without fears of detention, deportation or posing a risk to their individual safety. Finally, imposing training services for official guards, border services and police to recognise signs of trafficking within high risk areas, is a huge step towards reducing illegal crossings and transits, hence reducing risks of child trafficking.

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