

## **INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**

### ***HUMAN TRAFFICKING WITHIN AND FROM AFRICA***

Co-organised by **Caritas Internationalis** and the **Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People**

#### **DRAFT AGENDA**

**5 September 2016 – 7 September 2016**

**Abuja - Nigeria**

hosted by **CARITAS NIGERIA**

### **Trafficking in crisis situations** **(conflicts and post-conflicts, natural disasters, forced migration, etc.)**

#### **State of affairs**

Every year millions of women, men and children leave their homes and their countries. While some people move voluntarily in search of better opportunities, in many cases migration is forced, as people flee natural disasters, civil unrest, violent conflicts, persecution, human rights violations or poverty. These situations are often exacerbated by local laws and leave vulnerable people exposed to exploitation and human trafficking. So human trafficking is an additional tragedy on top of the tragedy of being affected by a conflict, by certain migration situations or following a natural disaster, as well as their consequences. Trafficking and exploitation of people in these emergency situations, and in their aftermath, are increasingly significant. Yet this issue is barely taken into account in the provision of emergency humanitarian aid and long-term accompaniment to affected populations. This lack of attention may lead to a long-term trafficking pattern in so-called countries under reconstruction after a period of crisis or conflict, as well as in countries that have welcomed displaced people or refugees. Economic exploitation is most common, as it is almost impossible for the people concerned to access the legal labour market due to limited rights or lack of status. This leads to other forms of exploitation. Child labour affects children who before the war never had to deal with it. Exploitation sometimes turns into sexual exploitation or forced criminal activities which tend to become commonplace and even institutionalised. Civil wars lead to long-term rejection of certain minorities by all the warring parties on ethnic or religious grounds, thus creating trafficking victims over several generations and strengthening clannish mindsets and crime. This scourge extends beyond the borders of the countries initially concerned. Moreover, the trafficking of migrants opens the door to slavery, as unpaid sums of money due to traffickers create situations of debt bondage that sometimes result in forced marriages. Many people who are unable to pay their traffickers immediately find themselves in a situation of debt bondage and certain families are forced to

marry off their daughters to the first prospective husband in order to collect the dowry money. Others, notably in Western Europe, end up being economically exploited or forced into crime. Many forms of exploitation and trafficking also arise when people are environmentally displaced, of whom the most vulnerable are women and children. Hard to estimate, yet perceptible, are population movements linked to sudden natural disasters (earthquakes, landslides, etc.), and progressive ones (rising water levels, desert expansion, etc.), or to environmental disturbances arising from human activities (dams, deforestation, etc.). The medium- and long-term consequences inevitably raise issues of reconstruction and internal displacement within a country or a neighbouring country, also leading to the reception of environmentally displaced people without shelter, who are exiles as a result of such events and often restricted to settling in refugee camps.

### **Current challenges for faith-based organisations working on this issue:**

At local, national, regional and global level, it is necessary to improve prevention, identification of victims and protection of people at risk, as well as strengthening the legislative arsenal and further raising the awareness of the general public. Innovative actions and modes of accompaniment have been implemented and analysed in various countries, especially by the Caritas network and its partners.

Civil society and institutions are often closest to situations on the ground and can propose concrete actions for vulnerable populations. However, governments should step up their involvement by supporting these initiatives and turning them into effective policies that support solutions to protect the dignity of people, and strongly engage in supporting all research and analysis activities connected with action on the ground in this little explored field. International organisations, states and civil society should ensure that people fleeing conflicts are welcomed on the ground, not only via humanitarian aid that has to respond to these people's basic needs: food, water, healthcare, shelter, etc. The exploitation or presence of vulnerable groups – such as children unaccompanied by family members, women on their own, and persecuted minorities – are still barely taken into account by emergency aid programmes, either in the conflict phase or during accompaniment of exiled people. Yet human trafficking and exploitation issues seem to be increasingly significant with the multiplication of conflicts and natural disasters in the world, which primarily affect civilians and generate unprecedented numbers of displaced persons and refugees.

A multi-dimensional approach is aimed at dealing with the deep-seated causes of trafficking through advocacy and awareness raising, while working in the short and long term to improve efforts to prevent trafficking and support victims thanks to protection services, police force training and strengthened cooperation with ministries, embassies, consulates and community leaders, as well as with partners in countries of origin.

### **Stakeholders working on the issue at national, regional and international level**

Caritas and its partners are developing initiatives to prevent trafficking and improve protection services for refugees in countries of origin, transit and destination. For example, in Lebanon Caritas provides emergency and legal assistance; a 24/7 hotline; help in obtaining registered addresses, birth and marriage certificates; reassuring reception centres; psychological support; shelter for protection of unaccompanied minors; booklets for migrant workers on their rights and responsibilities available at airports; collaboration with recruitment agencies to prevent all forms of labour exploitation by improving recruitment procedures and contracts; and training security forces to identify trafficking. Caritas organises meetings and events aimed at changing Lebanese people's mentality towards migrant workers who are trafficking victims. It

collaborates with the ministries of justice, labour, general security, and social affairs, and maintains formal cooperation with the embassies and consulates of countries of origin to help victims return home.

International and European institutions have also started to look into this matter: the UN Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, and the European Council Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings – GRETA (in their latest reports), a civil society platform against human trafficking.

Ten European Caritas (Albania, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, France, Lebanon, Rumania, Turkey, Ukraine) have also mobilised on the issue of trafficking in conflict and post-conflict situations by carrying out action research in 2015-2016, which has enabled proposals to be put forward that are cited in the UN Special Rapporteur's report. In June 2015 and also in June 2016 Caritas spoke on the issue at the UN Human Rights Council, and in September 2015 Geneviève Colas participated in a meeting of experts in Amman organised by the UN Special Rapporteur.

For its part, the IOM has prepared a report on trafficking in crisis situations in general<sup>1</sup>.

#### **Outcomes of actions carried out and changes achieved:**

Awareness-raising actions carried out so far need to be expanded and systematic efforts should be undertaken with people who are in contact with potential trafficking victims when they flee their country or region due to a natural disaster or conflict, etc.

Experiments conducted as part of action research into conflict and post-conflict situations in the Euro-Mediterranean space may now give rise to processes on a larger scale with the support of funding from national, European and global institutions.

#### **Our recommendations to Caritas, Bishops' Conferences, religious congregations, other faith-based actors, governments and regional authorities regarding implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals**

Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, the UN Special Rapporteur, insists on the vulnerable situation of people fleeing ongoing and imminent conflicts, or a post-conflict situation. "As they often leave in a hurry, they take risks they would refuse to take under normal circumstances. Conflicts weaken public structures, eliminate protection initiatives and allow criminal networks to operate more freely, including across borders". She recommends measures that governments, civil society and the international community could implement jointly to combat human trafficking in conflict and post-conflict situations<sup>2</sup>.

In conflict situations, all forms of human trafficking may occur: trafficking for forced prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation; trafficking for forced military recruitment, including of children; trafficking for other forms of forced labour; trafficking for forced criminal activities; and trafficking for slavery, servitude or organ harvesting.

#### **Issues to be discussed during the conference (a few ideas to be specified)**

How human trafficking develops in different situations:

- Human trafficking and forced migration (trafficking of people along migration routes, in refugee camps, urban refugees and internally displaced persons)
- Human trafficking and natural disasters ( - sudden and progressive natural disasters: vulnerabilities and trafficking of environmentally displaced people; - environmental

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/press\\_release/file/CT\\_in\\_Crisis\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/press_release/file/CT_in_Crisis_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/NewsEvents/Pages/DisplayNews.aspx?NewsID=20235&LangID=E>

disturbance and disasters arising from human activities: vulnerabilities and trafficking of environmentally displaced people)

- Human trafficking and terrorism

What forms does human trafficking take?

- Forced labour
- Involvement in conflicts, child soldiers
- Babies used, sold, etc.
- Organ harvesting
- Forced, arranged, early and constrained marriages, etc.

The specific issue of children vulnerable to trafficking, trafficking victims

- Victims considered as delinquents
- Social protection adapted within the framework of common rights
- Education/training

The role of culture in combating trafficking and in favour of human rights.

### **Some good practices**

Secours Catholique and its partners have published their work deriving from action research on human trafficking in conflict or post-conflict situations.

Having identified the trafficking mechanisms and forms of exploitation that arise from conflict and post-conflict situations, the Caritas procedure entailed proposing concrete action paths with a direct effect on people at risk or victims of human trafficking in various countries. In order to entrench the reflection on the practices to be put in place in reality, four experiments were conducted by the Caritas in Albania, Armenia, Lebanon and Turkey.

Thus, in order to improve identification of people at risk or victims of trafficking, Caritas Albania proposed training the main actors required to be in contact with refugees. Seven training sessions were organised. 205 people from local institutions, social services, education, labour administration, health centres, the justice system, local police and border police were trained. In order to prevent early marriages and avoid child labour, Caritas Turkey and other associations supported schools and conducted an experiment regarding training in detection of pupils most at risk in classes at several schools in Istanbul that welcome Syrian children. In Armenia, this takes the form of helping refugees to set up business activities in order to make them less dependent, and therefore less vulnerable to unscrupulous employers. In Lebanon, Caritas takes part in training police forces to identify trafficking situations regarding refugee women and children in order to improve accompaniment of victims.

### **Suggestions for a prevention strategy for faith-based organisations**

People's vulnerability to trafficking should be taken into account during all phases – immediately at the time of the conflict and in the long term – including improvement of prevention, identification of victims, protection of populations at risk, strengthening of the legislative arsenal and raising the awareness of the general public, primarily via:

- Campaigns to raise the awareness of the general public and to inform refugees, notably regarding the prohibition of parents working. This is to avoid trafficking situations in various forms regarding parents or their children, as well as people on their own: sexual exploitation, forced labour, forced and arranged marriages, use of babies to facilitate movement, the obligation to beg, being forced to commit crimes, etc.

This requires creation of tools adapted with emergency aid workers and with those who interact with migrants in all the phases of their journeys. The consequences on their

everyday lives, their physical and mental health, and the legal difficulties that may last years after the conflict.

- Better cooperation between states and international organisations in order to ensure, above all, protection of refugees and displaced persons, children's access to schooling, and defence of all the fundamental rights of the person.
- Greater collaboration between civil societies and governments.
- Common law accessible to all exiled people in all areas: social protection, healthcare, housing, employment, etc. Depending on the state, it is necessary to watch out for abolition of administrative procedures that exclude minorities from the social system on a de facto basis (Roma in Bosnia and in Western European countries, Palestinians from Syria in Lebanon, Doms and Yazidis in Turkey, etc.). Implement action plans to combat trafficking with adapted and sufficient resources.
- Strengthened training of all the actors who work with and for refugees and displaced persons (within and outside camps), especially regarding risk identification and prevention.
- Facilitated access to refugee status and employment.
- For unaccompanied minors, simplified and rapid family reunification procedures.

### **List of contributions to the preparation of this document**

Coordination: Secours Catholique – Caritas France, Geneviève Colas

Contributions from Caritas in the Euro-Mediterranean space which participated in the action research on "human trafficking in conflict and post-conflict situations": Caritas of Albania, Armenia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, France, Kosovo, Lebanon, Romania, Turkey and Ukraine. In particular, Caritas Armenia: Movses Hakobyan; Caritas Turkey: Belinda Mumcu; Caritas Albania: Ariela Mitri; Caritas France: Geneviève Colas and Olivier Peyroux

And also a specific article from Caritas Lebanon: Hessen Sayah, "Trafficking in Crisis: Observations and Best Practices"

Contribution from the IOM: "Addressing Human Trafficking and Exploitation in Times of Crisis - Evidence and Recommendations for Further Action to Protect Vulnerable and Mobile Populations" and "IOM issue paper on addressing human trafficking in Nigeria": Michela Macchiavello

Contribution from Haart, "Displacement, Violence and Vulnerability: Trafficking among Internally Displaced Persons in Kenya": Radoslaw Malinowski

Contribution from BirDuino Kirghyzstan, "Le Kirghizstan, pays d'exportation, de transit et de destination pour les victimes de trafic d'êtres humains": trafficking of migrants and domestic work: Tolekan Ismailova

Contribution from the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People, "Traite et désastres naturels", Francesca Dona