

GALMUN 2024



UNICEF

Research Report



Definitions

Human trafficking: The unlawful act of transporting or coercing people to benefit from their work or service, typically in the form of forced labour or sexual exploitation.

Civilian Casualties: Individuals who are not members of the armed forces and are mistakenly harmed or killed during armed conflict.

Street Children: Children who live and/or work on the streets, often without parental or guardian supervision, due to factors such as poverty, family breakdown, or conflict.

Psychological Trauma: Emotional or psychological distress caused by experiencing or witnessing traumatic events, often resulting in long-term mental health issues such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, or depression.

Warfare: Engagement in armed conflict or the conduct of military operations between opposing parties or nations.

Forced Labour: Compelling individuals to work against their will, often under threat of punishment or harassment, without adequate compensation or freedom to leave.

Illicit Activities: Actions that are unlawful or forbidden by law, including criminal activities such as drug trafficking, human trafficking, smuggling, and other illegal actions.

Economic Pressures: Economic pressures refer to the various factors and circumstances that create financial strain or hardship on individuals, communities, or nations, often resulting in economic instability, poverty, or inequality.

Breakdown of Societal Structures: The disruption or collapse of the institutions, norms, and systems that govern a society, leading to social disintegration, lawlessness, and a breakdown in governance.

Displacement: When individuals or communities are forced to leave their homes or places of residence due to conflict, persecution, natural disasters, or other reasons, often resulting in migration or relocation to safer areas or refugee camps.

Child Labour: Child labour involves the employment of children in any work that deprives them of their childhood, interferes with their ability to attend regular school, and is harmful to their physical, mental, or social development.



Background Information

Recent decades have seen a significant shift regarding the effects of wars on civilian populations. World War II exemplified this transformation, where civilian deaths surpassed those of soldiers as major cities became bombing targets, leading to widespread devastation and social collapse. In more recent conflicts, such as those between 1990 and 2000, a staggering 90 percent of the four million war-related deaths were civilians.

This grim reality extends to today's conflicts, where innocent populations, particularly children, face dire shortages of essentials like food and medical supplies amidst widespread destruction. Furthermore, armed conflict exacerbates the risks of human trafficking for vulnerable populations. It is within conditions of economic desperation, weakened rule of law, and decreased availability of social services that fertile grounds are created for traffickers to exploit. Conflict often results in broken governments, judicial systems, job markets, and community support structures, leaving citizens vulnerable to disasters and crime, including trafficking. Factors such as high unemployment rates, homelessness, and limited social services are amplified in conflict zones, driving people to resort to illicit activities and thus being exploited by numerous bad intentioned actors. This is particularly felt by children. The closure of schools and breakdown of social support structures force many children onto the streets, exposing them to homelessness and poverty which allows them to be exploited by trafficking networks who abuse and abduct them, leading them into conditions of forced labour, sexual slavery and more.

A horrible example of this is Child Soldiers. Children are increasingly being recruited as combatants by warring factions seeking to further their agendas through the usage of vulnerable youth, and child trafficking is their way of ensuring recruitment. Children are robbed of their innocence and forced to partake in the brutality of armed conflict. In the year 2016, almost 8000 children were found to be associated with armed groups. More than half of the members of Al-Shabaab in Somalia are children, and over 90 percent of the members of the Lord's Resistance Army in Nigeria are children.

Relevant treaties, resolutions and organisation

Convention of the Rights of the Child a treaty adopted by the United Nations in 1990, that aims to protect the social, economic, political, health, civic, educational and human rights of children and minors.

C182 - Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention was adopted by the International Labour Organisation in 1999, that aims at punishing and preventing the forced Labor exploitation of children and minors.

United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime adopted by the General Assembly, resolution 55/25, (2000).



Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime passed by the General Assembly resolution, resolution 55/25, (2000).

Improving the Coordination of Efforts Against Trafficking in Persons passed by the General Assembly, Resolution 68/132, (2013).

Implementation handbook for the Convention on the Rights of the Child which was prepared for UNICEF by Rachel Hodgkin and Peter Newell.

Action to combat international trafficking in women and children passed by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, E/RES/1998/20, (1998).

Mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, which is a special position in the UN that addresses the issues of child trafficking.

Save The Children, an NGO that aims at protecting the rights of children, especially children subject to trafficking.

Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking (CAST), an NGO that is part of **Heal Trafficking**, an NGO that deals with the issues of trafficking worldwide.

Timeline of treaties and resolutions

1990: Convention on the Rights of the Child and Anti-Trafficking Efforts is adopted by The United Nations, establishing the rights of children to protection, education, and well-being.

1999: International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 is adopted, declaring child soldiering as one of the worst forms of child labour and prohibiting the forced or compulsory recruitment of children under 18 in armed conflict.

2000: United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime was adopted by the UN and aimed at increasing cooperation in fighting transnational crime organizations, including trafficking networks.

2000: The United Nations passed the **Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children** as a supplement and support to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organised Crime.

2013: The UN passed Resolution 68/132 **Improving the Coordination of Efforts Against Trafficking in Persons** aimed at improving international cooperation in dealing with trafficking networks.



Current Situation

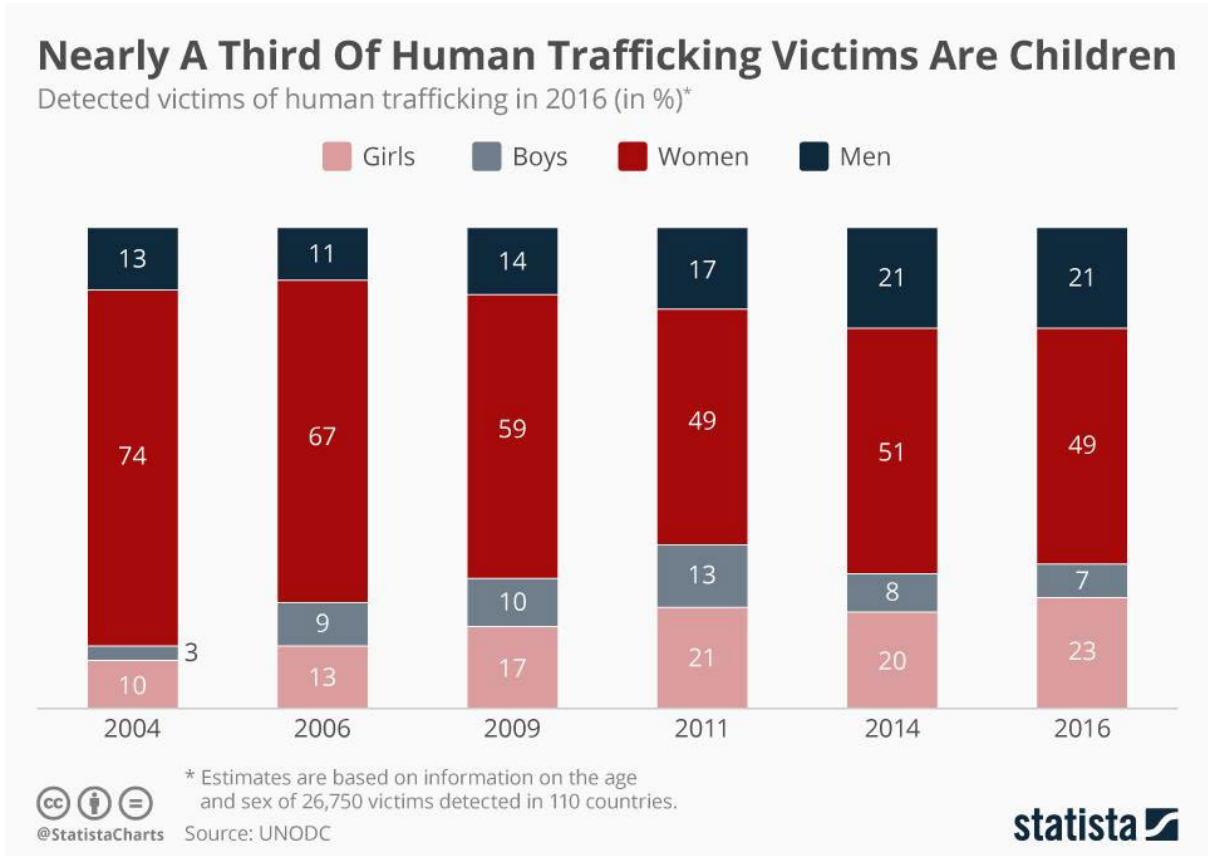
As current wars continue and proliferate, the threat of the trafficking and exploitation of children grows. Worldwide, almost 20% of all trafficking victims are children. A UN report from 2023 has found that in the period between 2005 and 2022, there were more than 300,000 grave violations against children in conflicts worldwide. Amongst them, at least 120,000 children killed or maimed, 10500 recruited as soldiers, 32500 abducted and 16000 exploited in sexual slavery. With wars becoming more frequent and devastating for the civilian population, the international community must work together to address the issues that lead to the trafficking of children in conflict and must work children who have already become vulnerable due to the terrible effects of war.

Questions to consider

- How can the UNICEF committee ensure that countries are preserving children's rights?
- How can countries strengthen their legal framework to combat child trafficking and protect children in war torn regions?
- What measures can be taken to decrease children's trafficking?
- What measures can be taken to reduce the recruitment of children as soldiers in war torn regions?
- What diplomatic efforts can the countries make in order to shield children in worn-torn regions?
- How can technology be used to combat and track human trafficking in conflict areas?
- How can we ensure the ethics of assisting children in worn-torn regions without harming them?
- How can cross border corporations be advanced to prevent the trafficking of children across international borders?
- How can humanitarian aid be effectively delivered to conflict areas to help the suffering families and children?
- How can community-based initiatives be empowered to resist and report instances of human trafficking?
- Is human trafficking common in your country? Does it become more common during times of conflict? If yes, what are the measures that are taken in order to solve this issue?
- What are your country's actions with the view of preventing human trafficking?

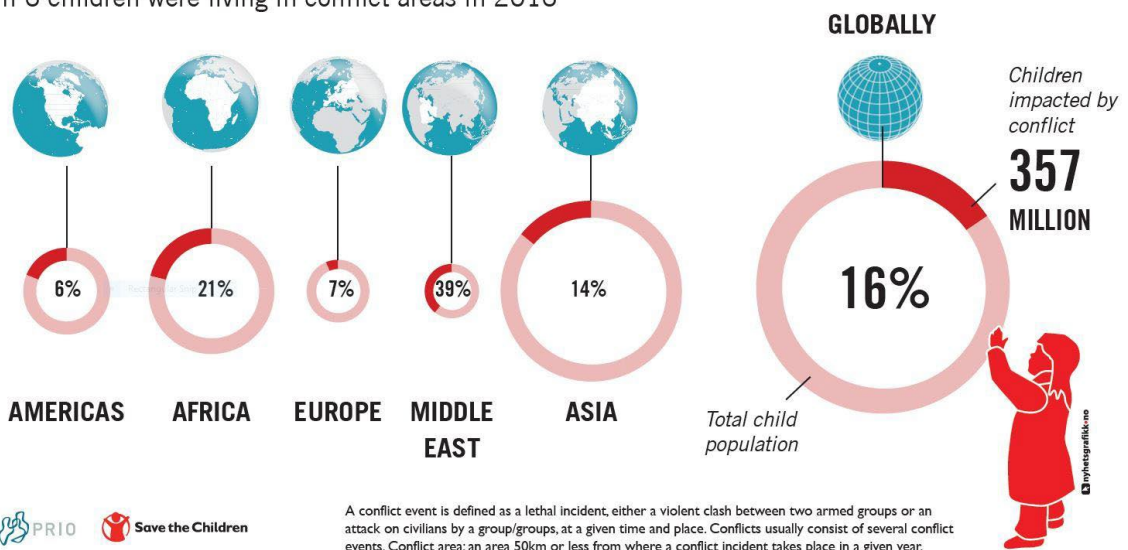


Relevant Media



Children affected by conflict

1 in 6 children were living in conflict areas in 2016





Bibliography and helpful resources

- Children in Conflict Zones
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4921424/>
- More than 300,000 grave violations against children in conflict verified worldwide in past 18 years
<https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/more-300000-grave-violations-against-children-conflict-verified-worldwide-past-18>
- 1 in 6 of the World's Children Live in a Conflict Zone
<https://www.savethechildren.org/us/charity-stories/worst-conflict-affected-countries-to-be-a-child>
- The Fight Against Child Trafficking
<https://www.savethechildren.org/us/charity-stories/child-trafficking-awareness>
- How armed conflict impacts children
<https://www.worldvision.ca/stories/child-protection/how-armed-conflict-impacts-children>
- Coalition to Abolish Slavery and Trafficking
<https://healtrafficking.org/resource/coalition-to-abolish-slavery-and-trafficking/>
- The Connection between War and Human Trafficking
<https://ourrescue.org/resources/education/human-trafficking-in-ukraine>
- War and Human Trafficking: How Global Conflict Fuels Exploitation
<https://sosresponds.org/blog/war-and-human-trafficking-how-global-conflict-fuels-exploitation/>
- UNODC report on human trafficking exposes modern form of slavery
<https://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>
- Global Report on Trafficking in Persons – in the context of armed conflict 2018
https://www.unodc.org/documents/data-and-analysis/glotip/2018/GloTIP2018_BOOKLET_2_Conflict.pdf