

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

Bilagsnr.:	175
Land:	Rwanda
Kilde:	US Department of State
Titel:	2018 Trafficking in Persons Report - Rwanda
Udgivet:	28. juni 2018
Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet:	16. august 2018



2018 Trafficking in Persons Report - Rwanda

Publisher [United States Department of State](#)

Publication Date 28 June 2018

Cite as United States Department of State, *2018 Trafficking in Persons Report - Rwanda*, 28 June 2018, available at: <http://www.refworld.org/docid/5b3e0a983.html> [accessed 15 August 2018]

Disclaimer This is not a UNHCR publication. UNHCR is not responsible for, nor does it necessarily endorse, its content. Any views expressed are solely those of the author or publisher and do not necessarily reflect those of UNHCR, the United Nations or its Member States.

RWANDA: TIER 2

The Government of Rwanda does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period; therefore Rwanda was upgraded to Tier 2. The government demonstrated increasing efforts by prosecuting and convicting more perpetrators of transnational trafficking crimes, opening more short-term care facilities, and continuing to implement anti-trafficking awareness campaigns and other prevention measures. However, the government did not meet the minimum standards in several key areas. The government did not convict any traffickers for internal trafficking crimes, despite the presence of sex trafficking and forced labor within the country. The government did not systematically or proactively identify and refer trafficking victims among vulnerable populations or operate sufficient long-term care facilities for all trafficking victims. While there were no credible reports of Rwandan government involvement in either the recruitment into armed groups or sexual exploitation of refugees, during the reporting period, refugee whistleblowers from 2015 reported reprisal from the government for reporting trafficking concerns in camps. The government did not adequately screen for trafficking victims at government transit centers that serve vulnerable populations, and observers stated these centers continued to function as de facto detention facilities. The government implemented some improvements after an NGO documented physical and sexual abuse at these facilities in 2015, but observers stated the reforms were insufficient.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RWANDA

Systematically and proactively identify trafficking victims among vulnerable populations, and ensure potential and identified victims are not arrested, detained, or punished for unlawful acts committed as a direct result of being subjected to human trafficking; cooperate and coordinate with NGOs and international organizations to provide all foreign and domestic trafficking victims with appropriate long-term protection services, including shelter and psycho-social care; develop and implement a victim-witness support program and expand training for prosecutors dealing with victim-witnesses; develop a formal mechanism to systematically refer trafficking victims to appropriate care; adopt and implement an updated national anti-trafficking action plan (NAP); continue to investigate, prosecute, and convict perpetrators of forced labor and sex trafficking, including internal trafficking; continue to implement protection measures for Rwanda's refugee population; increase training of law enforcement, judicial officials, labor inspectors, and social

workers on the implementation of trafficking laws and victim identification procedures; and expand anti-trafficking awareness campaigns.

PROSECUTION

The government increased law enforcement efforts to combat cross-border trafficking crimes but continued to make inadequate efforts to address internal trafficking crimes. Rwanda's penal code did not criminalize all forms of sex and labor trafficking because it required movement to constitute a trafficking offense. Chapter 8 prescribed penalties of seven to 10 years imprisonment and a fine of 5 million to 10 million Rwandan francs (\$5,850 to \$11,700) for internal trafficking, and 10 to 15 years imprisonment and a fine of 10 million to 20 million Rwandan francs (\$11,700 to \$23,400) for transnational trafficking. Child trafficking convictions were subject to a minimum five-year prison term. These penalties were sufficiently stringent and, with respect to sex trafficking, commensurate with those prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. During the reporting period, parliament passed a revised penal code and, following partnership with a foreign donor to draft the provisions, a standalone anti-trafficking law, the Law on the Prevention, Suppression, and Punishment of Trafficking-in-Persons and Exploitation of Others. However, as the president had not yet signed the legislation into law, it remained pending enactment at the close of the reporting period.

The National Public Prosecution Authority (NPPA) reported increased efforts compared to the government's previously reported timeframe, initiating 65 trafficking investigations and prosecuting at least 25 alleged traffickers in 25 cases of suspected trafficking between October 2016 and September 2017 – a timeframe that does not entirely correspond to the one previously used (July 2015-October 2016). Of the 25 prosecutions of alleged traffickers, five involved internal trafficking. The NPPA reported obtaining convictions for at least 12 traffickers in 12 cases during the specified timeframe, but it did not report the sentences or the laws under which these offenders were convicted. During the previous timeframe, the government reported investigating 44 cases, prosecuting 16 cases, and convicting seven traffickers. In 2017, the government did not adequately prosecute and did not convict any perpetrators of internal sex trafficking or forced labor, despite the presence of trafficking within the country. The government admitted difficulty prosecuting and convicting trafficking offenders due to a lack of investigative and prosecutorial anti-trafficking knowledge, extensive trafficking networks, and lack of victim testimony. Unlike previous years, the government held a complicit official accountable for trafficking offenses, sentencing a former Rwandan National Police (RNP) officer to five years imprisonment for participating in the trafficking of women to Oman. During the reporting period, there were no reports that government officials were complicit in trafficking from refugee camps; however, there were reports that refugee whistleblowers from 2015 experienced reprisal from the government for reporting protection concerns in camps. Following previous years' concerns with complicit officials at the refugee camps, an NGO, in partnership with the government, trained all Ministry of Refugee Affairs and Disaster Management (MIDIMAR) officials on anti-trafficking.

As in the previous reporting period, the RNP continued to operate a 15-officer anti-trafficking unit in its Criminal Investigations Division. The RNP directorate for anti-gender-based violence (GBV) had three officers in each of the country's 78 police stations who served as points of contact for domestic trafficking victims. The government continued to provide anti-trafficking training as a part of standard training and professional development for immigration officers, police, labor inspectors, judicial officials, and social workers. The RNP continued to convene quarterly meetings of provincial and district police, investigators, prosecutors, and immigration officials to provide ongoing training on Rwanda's regional anti-trafficking laws, trafficking recognition and investigation techniques, which reached an additional 39 investigators. The government did not report provision of training to law enforcement personnel on a victim-centered approach and victim-witness support mechanisms. The government also held joint exercises with

Ugandan and Tanzanian officials for the purpose of bolstering cross-border security, including cooperation to combat trafficking.

PROTECTION

The government modestly increased protection efforts, but proactive victim identification efforts remained inadequate. Law enforcement and immigration officials identified approximately 56 transnational trafficking victims and four internal trafficking victims in 2017; officials referred all 60 victims for assistance at one-stop centers. The government also identified four potential victims who were intercepted en route to Uganda. This compared to 60 transnational victims identified and assisted in 2016. However, the government did not report efforts to identify or assist internal trafficking victims during the reporting period. Law enforcement and immigration officials and social workers in victim centers had victim identification guidelines; however, implementation appeared limited and officials still noted difficulty in screening specifically for trafficking victims among the broader population of victims of GBV assisted at the centers. The government did not adequately collaborate with civil society to identify and assist trafficking victims and did not provide protection services specifically catered to the needs of trafficking victims as distinct from victims of other crimes. The government did not adequately protect vulnerable populations from punishment for crimes committed as a result of being subjected to trafficking. Following 2015 NGO reports of abuse at government transit centers, including Gikondo in Kigali, the government adopted guidelines for improving conditions at the centers. However, the government reportedly continued to detain vulnerable persons, including persons in prostitution, destitute individuals, and street children, and advocacy groups continued to report that the transit centers operated without judicial oversight and functioned as de facto detention facilities in which individuals were not adequately screened for trafficking and were held for arbitrary periods of time.

The government expanded its network of Isange One-Stop Centers to assist GBV and trafficking victims from 29 to 44 centers. The government's one-stop centers, located in hospitals and district capitals, provided short-term care and various psycho-social, medical, legal, and law enforcement services to victims. One-stop centers typically have "safe rooms" available that victims may use as temporary shelter for a few days. The government acknowledged that the extent and quality of services varied between locations, particularly regarding the provision of adequate psycho-social counseling, and that trafficking victims were not always screened and identified as distinct from GBV victims. NGOs highlighted gaps in communication between investigators in rural areas and police at one-stop centers, which may have impeded investigation and prosecution of crimes. The government provided long-term assistance to a limited number of victims on an ad hoc basis; in one case, the government provided a house to a female victim pregnant as a result of being trafficked and consequently rejected by her family. In 2017, the government assisted approximately 10 children, a decrease from the previous year, in a rehabilitation center for former child combatants associated with armed groups in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), which provided psycho-social support, education, and reintegration services. However, in general, the government lacked long-term care facilities for the vast majority of trafficking victims. The NPPA continued to operate two safe houses for witnesses in criminal cases, which could include trafficking victims; however, for the fourth consecutive year, the government did not report whether the safe houses were used specifically for trafficking victims. The government reportedly encouraged victims to testify against perpetrators, but officials noted that participation of victims in the investigation and prosecution of traffickers continued to be a challenge. An NGO reported that seven of the one-stop centers are equipped with video recording equipment to help encourage the cooperation of witnesses in prosecutions via recorded testimony. Rwandan law does not provide foreign trafficking victims with legal alternatives to their removal to a country where they may face hardship or retribution; however, in practice, the government made efforts not to deport foreign victims who faced retribution in their home country.

PREVENTION

The government maintained efforts to prevent trafficking. The government reestablished the interagency anti-trafficking working group. International organizations and NGOs reported that insufficient coordination among government agencies and resource constraints continued to hinder the government's anti-trafficking efforts. The government continued to implement its 2014-2017 NAP; an international organization worked with the interagency anti-trafficking working group to initiate development of an updated NAP. Throughout the reporting period, the government continued to conduct multiple national and local awareness raising anti-trafficking campaigns in schools and at community events, as well as on television and radio. These campaigns focused primarily on transnational trafficking and did not adequately address internal trafficking. RNP continued to operate a national GBV hotline, which was staffed by social workers trained to identify and refer trafficking cases, which reportedly identified an unspecified number of victims in 2017. The government had policies to regulate labor recruitment companies, which required their registration with the Rwandan Development Board, licensing from the Ministry of Labor, and submission of monthly reports to the government. The government reportedly prosecuted fraudulent companies in the past; however, there were no reports of prosecutions during the reporting period.

The government made efforts to reduce demand for forced labor and commercial sex through awareness raising campaigns. The government continued to train labor inspectors on identifying and handling child labor cases, including forced child labor. The government provided training to all Rwandan troops on gender sensitivity, human rights, and trafficking prior to their deployment abroad as part of international peacekeeping missions.

TRAFFICKING PROFILE

As reported over the past five years, Rwanda is a source, transit, and to a lesser extent, destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking.

Rwandan girls and some boys, some of whom are secondary school students between the ages of 13 to 18, are exploited in commercial sex in hotels, at times with the cooperation of hotel owners. Local human rights groups reported in 2017 that some Rwandan girls in domestic work who were terminated by their employers after becoming pregnant, and were therefore unable to return to their home villages, were subsequently exploited in prostitution. Some Rwandan men, women, and children are subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor in domestic work and agricultural and industrial sectors in destinations around the world; the primary destinations for Rwandan victims are Uganda, the DRC, and other parts of East Africa. Rwandan victims are also reportedly exploited in domestic servitude in the Middle East and sex trafficking in China. In 2016, some Rwandan girls were forced into marriages with men in Tanzania and may have experienced commercial sexual exploitation through these marriages. Reporting in 2013 indicated that Kampala- and Nairobi-based labor recruiters and brokers recruited Rwandan workers through fraudulent offers of employment abroad and subjected them to sex trafficking and forced labor in agriculture and domestic work, and the government indicated that foreign-based labor recruiters continued to pose a risk to vulnerable Rwandans during the reporting period.

Refugees fleeing conflict and political violence in Burundi and the DRC remain highly vulnerable to trafficking in Rwanda or are subjected to exploitation in third countries after transiting Rwanda. According to an international organization, there has been an increase in sex trafficking of Burundian male and female teenagers through Rwanda to third countries since 2015. In 2015, Burundian refugee girls transited through Rwanda and were exploited in sex trafficking in Uganda; some of these girls may also be subjected to domestic servitude in Uganda. Separately, female child refugees in a Congolese refugee camp in Rwanda were reportedly subjected to sex

trafficking in nearby towns in 2015, allegedly facilitated by one civilian and three Rwandan Defense Forces soldiers assigned to the camp.

Between May and September 2015, Burundian refugees residing in Mahama refugee camp in Rwanda were recruited into non-state armed groups supporting the Burundian opposition; Rwandan security forces charged to protect the camp population reportedly facilitated or tolerated the recruitment activity. Whistleblower refugees in 2015 alleged that recruiters – including both Rwandan officials and other refugees – threatened, intimidated, harassed, and physically assaulted those who refused recruitment attempts. Most recruits were adult males, but in three verified cases in 2015, Burundian refugee children were also identified as recruits from Mahama refugee camp. Refugees reported that Rwandan military personnel trained Burundian recruits, including women and children, in weaponry at a training camp in southwestern Rwanda. There were no reports of forcible or coerced recruitment out of Mahama refugee camp by Rwandan government officials in 2017.

Search Refworld

by keyword
and / or country 

[Advanced Search](#) | [Search Tips](#)

Countries

- [Rwanda](#)

Topics

- [Survivors of trafficking / Persons at risk of trafficking](#)
- [Trafficking in persons](#)