

**Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale**

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may file a grievance for passport withholding with the police or LMRA; a worker may also register a complaint to the court directly if the employer refuses to return the passport. The government typically treated indicators of forced labor—cases of unpaid or withheld wages, passport retention, and analogous abuses—administratively as labor law violations and resolved through arbitration rather than routinely investigated for trafficking crimes; however, if arbitration was unsuccessful a worker could file a grievance against the employer in a labor court. In 2017, the government reported closure of three recruitment agencies and revocation of their licenses for contravening Bahraini labor law, and cancelled 17 additional agency licenses for non-compliance with LMRA regulations. The LMRA's Enforcement and Inspection Department employed 70 inspectors in enforcement of employment violations responsible for worksite inspections. The LMRA and the Ministry of Justice, in partnership with an international organization, trained more than 170 individuals—including journalists, source country labor attaches, social workers, judges, prosecutors, and labor inspectors—over the course of five separate, multi-day workshops focused on trafficking.

The NCCTIP's budget during the year was 500,000 Bahraini dinar (\$1.3 million) for operations and 376,000 Bahraini dinar (\$997,350) for awareness and outreach programs, roughly equivalent to 528,300 and 265,000 Bahraini dinar (\$1.4 million and \$702,920), respectively, the year prior. The government launched an awareness campaign in both local and expatriate communities in Bahrain, involving youth of various nationalities, schools, religious institutions, and foreign embassies. In partnership with an international organization, the NCCTIP held a workshop targeting media personnel to enhance their understanding of trafficking, more accurately report on such issues, and improve the overall role of the media in combating the crime. Also during the reporting period, Bahraini officials participated in a two-day workshop, organized by the General Federation of Bahrain Trade Union, to discuss regulatory mechanisms germane to domestic workers in the region. A quasi-governmental organization produced a campaign to prevent companies from illegally withholding their employees' passports. The LMRA continued to provide booklets outlining labor rights in 13 languages common among expatriate worker populations, and distributed them upon arrival at the Bahrain International Airport and LMRA when applying for initial or renewed residency cards. The NCCTIP hotline was active to both collect reports and serve as a resource to educate workers about their rights and available services in Hindi, Telugu, Sinhalese, Tamil, Urdu, Malayalam, Arabic, and English. In 2017, the hotline received 5,388 calls, most of which pertained to labor rights, advice on workplace situations, and miscellaneous requests; it was unclear how many calls constituted instances or indicators of trafficking, but officials identified one trafficking victim and investigated an unknown number of cases as a direct result of the hotline. The government had memoranda of understanding (MOUs) with several labor exporting countries, including Nepal, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and India, which focused on oversight of recruitment agencies and protection of migrant workers in Bahrain. The government did not make discernable efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex. The government provided anti-trafficking training for its diplomatic personnel.

#### TRAFFICKING PROFILE

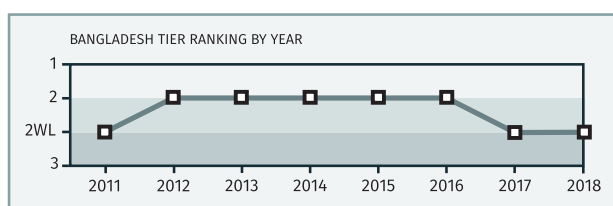
As reported over the past five years, Bahrain is a destination country for men and women subjected to forced labor and sex

trafficking. Men and women, primarily from Bangladesh, India, Pakistan, Philippines, Nepal, Egypt, Jordan, Yemen, Thailand, Syria, and Kenya, among other countries, migrate voluntarily to Bahrain to work as semi-skilled or unskilled laborers in the construction and service industries. In recent years, and particularly during the current reporting period, the greatest influx of workers hailed from Bangladesh, and the Bangladeshi population represented the majority of undocumented workers. Some migrant workers are subjected to forced labor in Bahrain; indicators include passport retention, strict confinement, contract substitution, non-payment of wages, debt bondage, threats or intimidation, and physical or sexual abuse, which preclude employees from reporting instances of exploitation. Nationals of countries without diplomatic presence in Bahrain are particularly vulnerable to trafficking, as are domestic workers, who are only partially protected under Bahraini labor law and cultural norms and existing legal infrastructure avert private home inspection. During the reporting period, local press reported women from Russia, Thailand, and Colombia were recruited to Bahrain via social media platforms or Bahrain-based acquaintances with false pretenses of high-paying jobs and subsequently forced into prostitution. Government and NGO officials report physical abuse and sexual assault of female domestic workers are significant problems in Bahrain, and domestic workers hailing from African countries are increasingly susceptible to labor exploitation and arrive in Bahrain through direct recruitment by local employers. Many migrant workers are paired with employers through intermediaries in Bahrain and unlicensed recruiters in their respective countries of origin, in addition to back-and-forth movement between Saudi Arabia and Bahrain via the causeway as Saudi nationals are able to sponsor foreign workers in Bahrain. Some migrant workers are not in possession of their employment contracts and are generally unfamiliar with the employment terms contained therein. Some unscrupulous employers continue to lure migrant workers to Bahrain and release them illegally in the labor market under the "free visa" scheme—laborers who work for a non-sponsor employer after leaving the employment of the employer who sponsored their entry into the country in violation of the local labor law—thereby rendering them vulnerable to exploitation. Although currently under reform, Bahrain's sponsorship-based employment system continues to put some workers at risk of trafficking by restricting employees' ability to change employers or leave the country, and by giving employers the unilateral power to cancel residency permits.

### BANGLADESH: TIER 2 WATCH LIST

The Government of Bangladesh does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated significant efforts during the reporting period by prosecuting two officials allegedly complicit in human trafficking. The government investigated alleged trafficking crimes against Rohingya refugees and arrested some of the perpetrators, while also establishing humanitarian aid and security that may contribute to the prevention of some trafficking crimes. However, the government did not demonstrate increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period. Courts convicted only one trafficker in 2017—a decrease from 2016 and a low number compared with the scale of the trafficking problem. Official complicity in trafficking crimes remained

a serious problem and the government did not report taking action against some credible allegations. While the government retained a court-order mechanism to refer trafficking victims to rehabilitation services, the government reported referring only one victim to such care in 2017 and it did not have a broader referral mechanism encompassing all relevant stakeholders. The government's protection services, when acquired, were neither designed for trafficking victims' specific needs nor available for adult male victims. While the government maintained labor export agreements with several countries intended to regulate recruitment fees, the government continued to allow high recruitment fees and did not consistently address illegally operating recruitment sub-agents, which left workers vulnerable to trafficking. Therefore Bangladesh remained on Tier 2 Watch List for the second consecutive year.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BANGLADESH

Take steps to eliminate recruitment fees charged to workers by licensed labor recruiters and ensure they are paid by employers; increase prosecutions and convictions, particularly of labor traffickers, fraudulent labor recruiters, and complicit government officials, while strictly respecting due process; proactively incorporate forced labor and sex trafficking prevention measures into the response to the Rohingya refugee crisis; increase investigations and prosecutions of credible allegations of trafficking of Rohingya; establish guidelines for provision of adequate victim care and standard operating procedures for the referral of victims to such services; enhance the training provided to officials, including law enforcement, labor inspectors, and immigration officers, on methods to identify trafficking cases and refer victims to protection services; expand the support services available to victims, including adult male victims, within Bangladesh and at Bangladesh's embassies abroad; expand the Ministry of Expatriate Welfare and Overseas Employment's (MEWOE) mandate to include the regulation of sub-agents; improve quality of pre-departure trainings, including sessions on labor rights, labor laws, and methods to access justice and assistance in destination countries and Bangladesh; complete the draft 2018-2022 National Plan of Action (NPA) and allocate funding to and identify a senior governmental official to facilitate the implementation of the NPA; and accede to the 2000 UN TIP Protocol.

## PROSECUTION

The government maintained anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts. The 2012 Prevention and Suppression of Human Trafficking Act (PSHTA) criminalized sex and labor trafficking and prescribed penalties of five years to life imprisonment and a fine of not less than 50,000 Bangladeshi Taka (BDT) (\$610). These penalties were sufficiently stringent and, with regard to sex trafficking, commensurate with those prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. In the previous reporting period, the government finalized and disseminated the implementing rules for the PSHTA. The government continued to train police officers through an anti-trafficking module at the police academy. The government also provided in-kind support to international organization- and NGO-run trainings for police

and immigration officials. While the government reported 50,780 police officers were trained on human trafficking through a total of 148 programs in 2017, it did not report if police and other relevant officials received training on the PSHTA implementing rules. Various observers stated police officers did not understand human trafficking and, at times, conflated it with migrant smuggling.

The government did not report comprehensive data under the same law enforcement actions as in past years, thereby making past data incomparable. In 2017, the government reported 778 cases were recorded with police under the PSHTA, of which 496 remained under investigation at the end of the year. Of the 282 completed investigations, 86 cases were unsubstantiated and 196 cases resulted in charges against the accused, although the government did not report the number of prosecutions initiated during the year nor did it categorize the cases between sex and labor trafficking as it had in the past. In 2016, the government investigated 290 cases—122 sex and 168 labor trafficking cases, 31 of which were specifically investigated for bonded labor—and prosecuted 302 alleged traffickers under the PSHTA. In 2017, the courts reached verdicts in nine cases and convicted one trafficker, compared with three convictions in 2016. The other eight cases resulted in acquittal. The courts sentenced the convicted trafficker to life imprisonment.

Observers stated convictions remained rare because the government did not dedicate sufficient resources to pre-trial investigations in all types of cases and prosecutors persisted with trials to meet the statutorily required timeline of 180 working days for the disposal of cases even if they were inadequately prepared. The government also had not established the anti-human trafficking tribunal, stipulated in the PSHTA to specialize in human trafficking cases. The Women and Children Violence Protection Tribunal continued to hear trafficking cases in the interim; however, observers commented the prosecutors were overburdened and lacked expertise in trafficking cases. An NGO expressed concern that some village courts, five-person panels of local government officials and villagers, adjudicated trafficking cases as they only administer financial penalties of up to 75,000 BDT (\$915) and may have subjected victims, whose traffickers frequently had local connections, to intimidation, fraud, and corruption. During the reporting period, nearly 700,000 Rohingya, of which over half were women and children, fled Burma to Bangladesh. The government reported it arrested some traffickers attempting to exploit Rohingya refugees, although it did not report specific numbers of alleged traffickers arrested or if they were prosecuted. Media reported the government deployed the Rapid Action Battalion to investigate allegations of trafficking and mobile courts to process legal cases. An international organization trained Bangladeshi law enforcement officers assigned to the refugee camps on the prevention of trafficking and the identification and subsequent protection of victims.

Complicity of officials in trafficking offenses remained a serious problem. Observers reported police took bribes and sexual favors to ignore potential trafficking crimes at brothels. Observers accused officials from district employment and manpower offices of facilitating trafficking and some labor attaches, local politicians, judges, and police of requesting bribes from victims and their families. Observers stated some traffickers in rural areas were politically connected and therefore operated with impunity. According to NGOs, some local politicians convinced victims to accept payment from recruitment sub-agents to not report fraudulent or exploitative actions to police. In September 2016, a federal court in New York entered a default

judgment against a former Bangladeshi consular officer and his wife and ordered them to pay approximately \$920,000 to a Bangladeshi citizen in a civil suit in which the plaintiff alleged violations of the TVPA as well as federal and state labor laws. The consular officer left the United States and remained in the Bangladeshi foreign service as an ambassador. The default judgment remained unpaid while the case was on appeal. During the reporting period, the plaintiff alleged experiencing retaliatory actions by the Bangladesh Consulate in New York. In another case, in June 2017, a Bangladeshi consular officer was indicted in a New York court on charges of labor trafficking and assault for allegedly forcing a Bangladeshi citizen to work without pay through threats and intimidation. In January 2018, the consular officer pled guilty to the charge of failure to pay a minimum wage and paid \$10,000 in restitution to the victim. The government did not report taking any action during the reporting period to hold either consular officer accountable. The government reported that two government officials were investigated and prosecuted under the PSHTA in 2017 but did not provide further details of the case; the prosecution remained ongoing at the end of the reporting period.

## PROTECTION

The government maintained victim protection efforts. The Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), the government's lead agency for combating trafficking, had standard operating procedures (SOPs) for the proactive identification of trafficking victims; however, the government did not report how widely officials disseminated or used these SOPs. Some police officers used a checklist to proactively identify victims when they came into contact with commercial sex establishments; however, the government did not formally adopt or disseminate the checklist and its use was inconsistent. The government did not report victim identification data based on substantiated cases of trafficking as it had in the past, thereby making past data incomparable. The government reported 770 potential victims based on the number of cases recorded with police in 2017; of those identified, 383 were men, 258 women, and 129 children. The government identified 355; 1,815; and 2,899 victims in 2016, 2015, and 2014, respectively; experts commented the decrease from thousands of victims identified in 2015 and 2014 may be due in part to the application of a more accurate definition of trafficking. Police directly recovered from exploitative situations 545 of the 770 potential victims identified in 2017. NGOs and international organizations reported identifying more than one thousand victims during the reporting period. Notably, one international organization identified 37 Rohingya victims who were subjected to trafficking within Bangladesh and provided them rehabilitation services. The Bangladesh Army and Rapid Action Battalion reportedly were active in the identification of potential Rohingya victims of trafficking.

While the government did not provide services specifically designed for trafficking victims, the Bangladesh Police operated victim support centers in each of Bangladesh's eight divisions for women and children victims of violence, including trafficking victims. The centers provided temporary shelter for up to five days and medical and psychological counseling. With partial funding from a foreign government, the Ministry of Social Welfare (MSW) operated one-stop crisis centers at medical facilities for women and children victims of violence, including trafficking victims, to provide shelter, medical care, psychological counseling, and referral to other services, including legal assistance and police for case filing. MSW operated nine one-stop crisis centers at the divisional level and 40 smaller centers

at the district and 40 at the sub-district levels. The government did not provide shelter or rehabilitation services, other than repatriation and job placement, to adult male victims. Foreign victims were not provided access to government services. While the government retained a court-order mechanism to refer trafficking victims to rehabilitation services, it did not have a broader referral mechanism to refer victims to rehabilitation services. In 2017, the government reported referring only one victim to government or NGO-run services and reported all other victims were returned directly to their families. Some NGOs reported the government referred victims to them for rehabilitation during the reporting period, but such referrals were ad hoc and the government did not track victim care in a systematic way. NGOs provided male victims with some services, although shelter was not available. NGOs continued to state government services did not meet minimum standards of care and insufficient rehabilitation resources contributed to victims being re-trafficked. Government shelters did not allow victims to leave without a court order and a court order was also required for NGOs or international organizations to be able to contact victims in government shelters to provide further rehabilitation services.

The government continued to implement its 2015 memorandum of understanding with the Government of India on human trafficking, which included coordination on the rescue and repatriation of Bangladeshi victims. In practice, NGOs reported the Bangladeshi government sometimes provided only the necessary travel documents for repatriation. NGOs or the victim's family frequently paid the cost of repatriation from India and other countries and at times this resulted in family members incurring burdensome debt. The government continued to operate one safe house in Lebanon, one in Oman, and three in Saudi Arabia for female Bangladeshi workers fleeing abusive employers. The government maintained 29 labor offices in embassies and consulates overseas to provide welfare services to Bangladeshi migrant workers, including legal and interpretation services. Overseas Bangladeshi workers who secured their employment through the Bureau for Manpower, Education, and Training (MEWOE), could lodge complaints with MEWOE to seek restitution for labor and recruitment violations, including allegations of forced labor, through an arbitration process, although observers stated the awards were often minimal. MEWOE reported 344 complaints were settled from July 2016 to June 2017 through the recovery of 297,300 BDT (\$3,630) from recruiting agencies; it did not report if any of these complaints involved forced labor. Victims could also file civil suits seeking restitution.

The PSHTA entitled victims to protection during judicial proceedings, including police security. The government did not report if it provided such protection to victims during the reporting period and NGOs noted insufficient implementation of this provision resulted in traffickers intimidating victims not to pursue cases. NGOs reported some Bangladeshi trafficking victims who transited through various land and sea routes, instead of being detected as victims, were detained and fined for failure to carry a passport. Unregistered Rohingya refugees, including potential trafficking victims, may have been at risk of indefinite detention because of their lack of documentation. The government did not provide legal alternatives to the removal of foreign victims of trafficking to countries where they might face hardship or retribution.

## PREVENTION

The government maintained efforts to prevent trafficking.

The 2013 Overseas Employment and Migrants Act (OEMA) criminalized fraudulent recruitment and unlawful recruitment fees; however, the government-set recruitment fees were at rates high enough to render many migrant workers indebted and vulnerable to trafficking. Under the OEMA in 2017, MEWOE suspended or cancelled 29 recruitment agencies' licenses, fined 12 agencies, and sentenced four agents to imprisonment ranging from 15 days to three months for false advertising, trading in visas or work permits, charging fees above the legal maximum, or other violations of the OEMA. MEWOE reported its vigilance task force conducted 14 operations in 2017 against corrupt recruitment and travel agencies, and dalals, illegal and unregulated sub-agents who operated in rural locations and connected prospective migrant workers to licensed employment agencies. The Bangladesh Association of International Recruiting Agencies (BAIRA) acknowledged migrant workers frequently paid dalals fees in addition to the legal amount BAIRA agents charged before the worker began the formal recruitment process. Dalals also directly connected workers to overseas jobs by providing fake visas and other documentation, and in some cases, incorrect information about the migration process and the job in the destination country. Observers stated overseas work placement was determined by a migrant worker's ability to pay for the job, not by skills or abilities, and frequently resulted in workers paying as much as five times above the government's maximum fee level.

The government continued to use a number of bilateral labor agreements, in part intended to try to protect Bangladeshi workers abroad. In 2017, the government sent more than half a million workers to Saudi Arabia, approximately 15 percent of whom were female workers, under an agreement that mandated employers cover travel costs and domestic workers be employed by a third party rather than the private households in which they work. However, the agreement did not stipulate the maximum cost or eliminate the processing fee charged to the migrant by recruitment agencies. NGOs reported female migration to Saudi Arabia through irregular channels was as high as three times the official figure and media reported multiple stories of women paying dalals fees for work only to be told by their employer in Saudi Arabia and other Gulf states that the employer had "purchased" the woman and she was now subject to forced labor. In the previous reporting period, the governments of Bangladesh and Malaysia began to implement an inter-governmental agreement to facilitate the migration of Bangladeshi workers to Malaysia. The agreement aimed to mitigate the impact of private recruitment agencies' high fees and sometimes unscrupulous practices for an initial 5,300 Bangladeshi workers by removing agents from the migration process. The government continued to require pre-departure training, including safe migration and anti-trafficking components, for some migrant workers, including a 30-day pre-departure training course for female domestic workers which focused on learning practical skills and included modules on trafficking awareness and self-protection. The government provided safe migration information through its 42 district employment and manpower offices and 47 technical training centers.

MHA acknowledged the government's 2015-2017 national action plan had not been fully implemented. In partnership with an international organization, the government began drafting its plan for 2018-2022. MHA did not publish its annual report on human trafficking during the reporting period. Some district- and sub-district level counter-trafficking committees allocated funding for coordination and victim support while others were not functioning. The government continued to

conduct national awareness campaigns through print media, television, and text message, at times in partnership with NGOs.

The government began the process of biometric registration for Rohingya refugees and allowed the UN, international organizations, and foreign governments to provide assistance and protection to the refugees. While some international NGOs that assist Rohingya refugees and work with organized labor reported difficulties in meeting stringent government administrative requirements to get visas and approvals required to carry out programs protecting vulnerable populations from various forms of exploitation, the government allowed other NGOs to extend their ability to stay in the country to continue relief efforts for the Rohingya, including some counter-trafficking efforts. The government allowed the UN and other humanitarian actors to conduct trafficking awareness campaigns in the Rohingya camps. The government deployed security forces to guard and control access to Rohingya camps which may have contributed to the prevention of some trafficking crimes.

The government trained military personnel to recognize and prevent trafficking in persons prior to their deployment abroad on international peacekeeping missions and provided anti-trafficking training for its diplomatic personnel. The government did not make efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts or forced labor. Bangladesh is not a party to the 2000 UN TIP Protocol.

## TRAFFICKING PROFILE

As reported over the past five years, Bangladesh is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Some Bangladeshi men and women who migrate willingly to work in the Middle East, Southern and East Africa, South and Southeast Asia, Europe, and the United States face conditions indicative of forced labor. Before their departure, many migrant workers assume debt to pay high recruitment fees, imposed legally by recruitment agencies belonging to BAIRA and illegally by unlicensed sub-agents; this places migrant workers at risk of debt bondage. Some recruitment agencies and agents also commit recruitment fraud, including contract switching, in which they promise one type of job and conditions but then change the job, employer, conditions, or salary after arrival. Women and girls who migrate for domestic work are particularly vulnerable to abuse. Some women who migrate through Bangladeshi recruitment agencies to Lebanon or Jordan for domestic work are sold and transported to Syria and subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Some women and children are subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor in India and Pakistan.

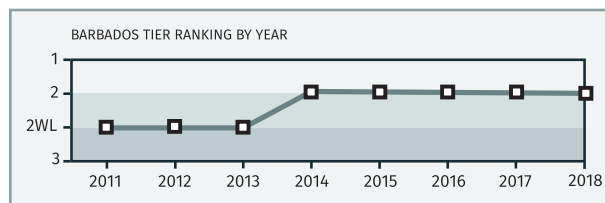
With nearly 700,000 Rohingya fleeing Burma for Bangladesh since August 2017, Bangladesh is host to more than 1 million undocumented Rohingya, including hundreds of thousands who fled Burma in previous decades. The Rohingya community's stateless status and inability to work legally increases their vulnerability to human trafficking. Rohingya women and girls are reportedly recruited from refugee camps for domestic work in private homes, guest houses, or hotels and are instead subjected to sex trafficking. Rohingya girls are also reportedly transported within Bangladesh to Chittagong and Dhaka and transnationally to Kathmandu and Kolkata and subjected to sex trafficking—some of these girls are "traded" between traffickers over the internet. Some Rohingya women and girls report being subjected to sex trafficking by other Rohingya through fraudulent job or marriage proposals. Rohingya girls and boys are recruited from refugee camps to work as shop

hands, fishermen, rickshaw pullers, and domestic workers in Bangladesh. Although promised monthly wages ranging from 1,500-2,000 BDT (\$18-\$24), these children are paid significantly less or not at all and in most cases are not allowed to communicate with their families and are subjected to excessive working hours. Some Rohingya men are subjected to debt bondage by Bangladeshi fishermen if they place their shelter on the fishermen's land. Some Rohingya men who fled to Bangladesh from Burma decades ago have been trapped in debt bondage to Bangladeshi fishermen for 20 years. In the recent past, some Rohingya and Bangladeshi migrants who traveled by boat to Southeast Asian countries were subjected to exploitation when they were unable to pay ransoms and were instead sold into forced labor.

Within the country, Bangladeshi children and adults are subjected to sex trafficking, domestic servitude, and forced and bonded labor, in which traffickers exploit an initial debt assumed by a worker as part of the employment terms. Street children are sometimes coerced into criminality or forced to beg; begging ringmasters sometimes maim children to increase their earnings. In some instances, children are sold into a form of bondage by their parents, while others are induced into labor through fraud and physical coercion, including in fisheries, domestic work, aluminum factories, and garment and dry-fish production, or exploited in sex trafficking. Bangladeshi children are vulnerable to forced labor in tanneries. According to an international expert on debt bondage, Bangladeshi families and Indian migrant workers are subjected to bonded labor in some of Bangladesh's brick kilns; some kiln owners sell bonded females into prostitution purportedly to recoup the families' debts and some Bangladeshi families are subjected to debt bondage in shrimp farming. Some ethnic Indian families are forced to work in the tea industry in the northeastern part of the country. NGOs allege some officials allow human traffickers to operate at brothels, at India-Bangladesh border crossings, and at maritime embarkation points.

## BARBADOS: TIER 2

The Government of Barbados 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 Barbados remained on Tier 2. The government demonstrated increasing efforts by conducting a raid on a nightclub suspected of trafficking, providing anti-trafficking training for government officials and NGO leaders, and conducting public awareness campaigns. The government, across its interagency, conducted education and training through senior and working level commitments to combat trafficking. However, the government did not meet the minimum standards in several key areas. The government identified no victims during the reporting period, initiated no new prosecutions for the fourth consecutive year, and had yet to secure a trafficking conviction. For the third consecutive year, the government did not complete its national action plan or an anti-trafficking manual for interviewing and providing assistance for suspected trafficking victims. Government agencies reported a lack of resources for their anti-trafficking activities. The government's anti-trafficking law did not provide penalties that were commensurate with other serious crimes.



## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BARBADOS

Proactively screen for trafficking indicators and identify victims in vulnerable populations and areas, such as among migrants; while respecting due process, investigate, prosecute, and convict traffickers, and apply stringent sentences that deter future trafficking crimes; enact a national action plan to combat trafficking; provide adequate funding to implement the national action plan and support government agencies' anti-trafficking activities; complete the anti-trafficking manual for interviewing and assisting victims; amend the anti-trafficking law to remove sentencing provisions that allow fines in lieu of imprisonment; establish adequate accommodations and service provisions for trafficking victims; and amend the Recruiting of Workers Act to specify the government agency that should assume responsibility for the associated administrative and enforcement functions of labor recruiters.

## PROSECUTION

The government maintained prosecution efforts. The Trafficking In Persons Prevention Act (TIPPA), enacted in 2016, criminalized sex and labor trafficking. The punishment for adult trafficking was up to 25 years imprisonment, a fine of up to 1 million Barbados dollars (BDS) (\$495,050), or both. The punishment for child trafficking was up to life imprisonment, a fine of up to 2 million BDS (\$990,100), or both. These penalties were sufficiently stringent. However, by allowing for a fine in lieu of imprisonment, the prescribed punishment for sex trafficking was not commensurate with those for other serious crimes, such as rape.

Authorities conducted five investigations in 2017 (compared with three in 2016, six in 2015, eight in 2014, and three in 2013). One of these investigations stemmed from a raid on suspected trafficking activities in a nightclub (compared with two raids in 2016). Police found no evidence of human trafficking in these five investigations. There were no new prosecutions initiated under the TIPPA during the reporting period; the government has not reported initiating a prosecution since 2013. A 2013 case involving two suspected traffickers remained pending before the court. To date, the government has not convicted any traffickers. The government did not report any investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of government employees complicit in trafficking offenses. The government provided per diem support for two law enforcement, one immigration, and one civil servant official to attend INTERPOL anti-trafficking training abroad. In addition, the police continued sensitization training on trafficking for 120 front-line officers; immigration officials trained 50 front-line immigration officers.

## PROTECTION

The government decreased efforts to protect victims. Officials did not identify any trafficking victims during the reporting period; this compared with eight victims identified in 2016 and 12 in 2015. Since 2014, the government has been drafting an anti-trafficking manual to outline procedures for law enforcement or immigration to use when interviewing suspected