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Supplying Slaves: The Disguise of Greener Pastures: An Exploratory Study of Human Trafficking in Uganda

Kyla Johnson

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SCHOOL FOR INTERNATIONAL TRAINING

Supplying Slaves

The Disguise of Greener Pastures: An Exploratory Study of Human Trafficking in Uganda

Kyla Johnson

Spring 2019

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Acknowledgments:

I recognize and thank everyone who was involved in this research who worked tirelessly to connect me to informants and other resources.

First and foremost, I thank my AD, Charlotte Mafumbo for her work in establishing my initial contacts which propelled me into interviews as soon as ISPs began. I am extremely grateful for this and am always inspired by your genius and the experiences that you have had throughout your career.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to my advisor, Nageeba Hassan who took dedicated time out of her own professional classes and research to help me with my own. Her work, courage and life style demonstrated to me that an activist's work is interwoven into one's life. Your help and work are deeply appreciated.

A special thank you to the staff and counselors at Willow and RAHAB International for giving me a warm welcome into their organizations and assistance with all the questions that I had about their work and the general processes of anti-trafficking efforts in Uganda. This information was invaluable.

To the SIT staff for allowing me to bounce ideas off them, especially to Dorothy Kamukama for the encouragement and motivation to work with a vulnerable population and advise that helped me to develop the professional moxy to work with survivors.

I would like to give a sincere thank you to the people who allowed me to tell their stories of survival.

Thank You to Uganda's anti-trafficking efforts and constituencies involved in the fight.

Finally, I want to thank my colleagues who helped me in exchanging thoughts and ideas and for the encouragement to at the final stages of the proposal to push through.

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List of Abbreviations:

CSEC: Commercial Sector

CSO: Civil Society

ILO: International Labor Organization

MFA: Ministry of Foreign Affairs

MGLSD: Ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development

MIA: Ministry of Internal Affairs

UAERA: Ugandan Association for External Recruitment Agencies

UNDP: United Nations Developed Project

UNODC: United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime

PTIP: Prevention of Trafficking in Persons

TIP: Trafficking in Persons

Abstract:

The purpose of this study was to evaluate labor migration in Uganda with a specific focus on the role labor recruitment agencies play in transporting people and how certain circumstances such as lack of knowledge of safe migration can leave people vulnerable to human trafficking. Labor externalization is beneficial specifically for developing countries because it provides jobs for the robust and available labor in these countries. Nonetheless, when reports appear that young girls are stranded abroad in the middle east after being taken there for work, labor recruitment agencies are first to receive the blame. Although Uganda issued a ban on travel to Oman for domestic work, many Ugandans are still sent there for work by unlicensed agencies or individuals. UAERA estimates that Uganda sends about 36,000 Ugandans abroad every year, but that number is significantly higher when the figures for victims trafficked abroad are added. Another challenge is that the provisions given to Ugandans who exit Uganda officially for domestic work are not accessible to people who are taken abroad through unofficial means -- or trafficked. Also characteristic of human trafficking is the victim's total dependence on his or her employer. To ensure complete dependence and immobility a victim's phone is taken from them upon entering their destination country and all travel documents are withheld until the end of the employment contract. For every step of the journey, an information gap exists of the regulations put in place to protect migrant workers. When the official procedures are unknown the victim is kept vulnerable to deception and exploitation and stakeholders remain unequipped in the fight against trafficking. Therefore, a large portion of this study focuses on prevention and awareness measures and their challenges in Uganda. This research is an exploratory study on the nature of human trafficking in Uganda and the aspects of its combat. As such, efforts on the 4ps of combat will be evaluated.

Introduction:

In 2000 the United Nations TIP protocol was signed, formally defining trafficking in persons. In 2009 Uganda wrote and enforced its own TIP law which included a national strategy for combat. It would begin the fight against the atrocity in Uganda. In 2016 Uganda issued a ban on all labor migration to the Middle East to end the countless reports of Ugandans being trafficked and abused there. Under the ban, the black market for human trafficking thrived. A year later, Uganda lifted the ban on labor migration to Saudi Arabia and Jordan. The government secured bilateral agreements with these countries, prescribing rights and protections to Ugandan labor migrants in those Gulf states. As a result, trafficking cases to those places decreased tremendously, yet hundreds pour in from Oman—the only state that has not agreed to sign a bilateral agreement with Uganda.

The initial purpose of this study was to understand how and why Ugandans are trafficked through labor migration from Uganda. The researcher cited severe unemployment of Uganda's youth as the main issue and circumstance that makes people vulnerable and susceptible to being trafficked. Uganda has the continent's largest population of unemployed youth, and the world's largest population of youth. Currently, 80% of youth are unemployed, this figure includes university graduates, 90.9% of whom make up the informal sector due to the lack of available jobs. While this is fact, it is not the only factor influencing trafficking. In 2014, Danielle Yaste, a former SIT student, researched and reported on the culture and influences of Human Trafficking in Uganda. She cited cultural values as a cause of human trafficking which were echoed by the informants of this study. One such person, the founder of RAHAB Uganda Annette Kirabira says, "In Africa or in Uganda it was okay for children to grow up with extended family who would take

them to receive better education or a job, but this cultural value is being abused.” (Kirabira 2019, Danielle Yaste, Hazards of Being Human, 2014.)

Unemployment and social culture are not the only severe issues causing populations to be vulnerable to trafficking however unemployment is a powerful push factor that deter people from their domestic market to explore the job market abroad by any means necessary. The push factors for labor migration include severe unemployment, high drop-out rates from schools and lack of ownership of natural resources such as land titles. Land ownership is especially rare for youth in Uganda. The pull factors for labor migration are the abundance of jobs and the prospect for better work and pay abroad. The pull factor for traffickers to traffic people is that human trafficking is a lucrative business. Second only to drugs and arms trafficking, human trafficking rakes in about \$150 billion.

Uganda supplies an abundance of the low-skilled labor that is demanded by Gulf states and their growing economies (UAERA). Couple that with the realities of being a developing country, it is beneficial for Uganda to provide a way for Ugandans to work abroad through labor externalization systems. The status of labor externalization under UAERA is that “externalization of labor is promoted in line with ILO standards as an interim measure to facilitate able bodied Ugandans to tap into the job market abroad as the country develops its capacity to generate jobs for its labor force.” (UAERA)

Uganda sends about 36,000 Ugandans abroad every year and currently receives over 1.3 billion USD in remittances from migrant workers all over the world. This money is undoubtedly going to poverty reduction by providing children with school fees, house construction and small business creation in Uganda. But at what cost? Even with these successes, news articles report that Ugandan girls are stranded in the Middle East out of debt bondage to their employers or returning

dead from the Gulf states. These stories are giving labor externalization agencies a bad name but there is an issue of trafficking into domestic work and sexual exploitation through labor markets. One of these issues is the information gap. Ugandans do not know about the systems and regulations put in place by the government. Public officers like the police, do not have enough training to identify, investigate and charge human trafficking, and the government of Uganda along with licensed recruitment agencies cannot track Ugandans who do not “exit [the country] officially” (UAERA). Although Uganda issued a ban on all labor migration to Oman, many Ugandans still end up there as a result of searching for “greener pastures”.

Another issue is that the provisions given to Ugandans recruited by licensed agencies such as tracking measures, retention of their phones with family contacts, information training on the job market abroad to mitigate culture shock, and the available consular services at Ugandan embassies, are not accessible to people who are taken abroad through unofficial means -- or trafficked. Characteristic of human trafficking is the victim’s total dependence on his or her employer. To ensure complete dependence and immobility, a victims’ phone is confiscated upon arrival to the destination country and all travel documents are withheld until the end of the employment contract. Such actions are illegal under the bilateral agreements but people who exit unofficially do not know this. At every step of the journey, there is a knowledge gap of the regulatory framework put in place to protect migrant workers. When these are unknown, the victim is kept vulnerable to deception and exploitation and stakeholders remain unequipped to fight against trafficking. Therefore, a large portion of this study focuses on prevention and awareness measures and their challenges in Uganda. This study is an exploratory study on the nature of human trafficking in Uganda and the aspects of its combat.

Statement of the problem:

Uganda is a source, transit and destination for human trafficking. It is internationally ranked as a tier 2 country for Tip, meaning that it has “minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking: (TIP report 2017, 2018). A clear majority of trafficked victims are forced into labor, not sex trafficked. According to the 2009 TIP law written in collaboration with the Human Trafficking Institute, 81% of victims are forced to work outside the commercial sex industry. This leaves the migrating population of Uganda vulnerable to human trafficking because 77% of individuals do not have information on safe migration out of Uganda.

Objectives:

1. Establish labor recruitment agencies and their requirements for applicants.
2. Identify how trafficking reports are made.
3. Understand Ugandan youths’ attitudes towards working abroad.
4. Determine prevention and awareness efforts by government and civil society organizations to combat trafficking and their challenges.

Justification:

Developing countries like Uganda see too many benefits to labor externalization to put an end to it. The remittances stimulate the economy at the micro level and the global job market absorbs the unemployed youth taking the burden off the economy. The prospect for better futures abroad is a risk worth taking over risking it in the Ugandan economy. The youth prove this through their actions. It may cost a person over 600,000 shillings to go through the process to go abroad for work. In some circumstances, people will sell or take loans out on their land, solicit money from family members or friends and incur large debts just to go abroad. Sadly, many of them return as

well off or worse than when they went abroad. Trafficked victims return with nothing. As a result, the youth, often desperate, fall into the hands of traffickers with false promises of employment. Poverty and unemployment are pull factors for traffickers as well as agencies abroad, and push factors for recruits. In 2017 the ban on labor migration to Saudi Arabia and Jordan was lifted and regulations were put on recruitment agencies to mitigate the level of trafficking taking place in Uganda. Yet the system has loopholes, and the extreme vulnerability of the youth and widespread poverty in Uganda has not yet gone away making trafficking in Uganda a relevant issue to research and discuss.

Literature Review:

The researcher used the website of the ministries of Internal Affairs and Foreign Affairs as well as the website of Uganda Association for External Recruitment Agencies to document the licensed recruitment agencies. The number of agencies, their mandates and regulatory standards surrounding them were procured from these sources. The Human Rights Watch report in 2016 supplied information on the state of labor laws in the Middle East. Migrant workers trafficked to remain vulnerable because Oman does not have any rights or protections for domestic migrant workers. Bilateral agreements with Oman also will not be signed soon because it would require a re-working of their labor laws. The United Nations Office of Drug and Crime provided the formal definition of Trafficking in Persons and the elements that must be incorporated for trafficking to be charged. When the law is understood, its implementation and ultimately, the effective enforcement of it will add to the capacity to fight human trafficking in a country or region. The 2009 TIP Act and the subsequent National Strategic Action Plan were also used as background research on anti-trafficking efforts in Uganda.

Research Methodology and Approach:

This research was an exploratory study on the nature of transnational human trafficking within labor migration and the aspects of its combat. This research was qualitative in nature. The sampling pool was pulled from the structures and systems in place for anti-trafficking efforts in Uganda as documented under the National Action Plan for TIP. To explore this topic, the researcher looked for information from the Ministries of Internal Affairs, Foreign Affairs, Gender, Labor and Social Development and Civil Service Organizations.

Research Methods:

Observation: The researcher was invited to the Strategic Planning Workshop on target 8.7 for child labor, human trafficking and forced labor. In attending this workshop, the research was able to observe the professional etiquette extended to each stakeholder in attendance as well as the culture surrounding the forms of modern slavery and forced labor due to the subject areas that each stakeholder presented on. The research took notes on these presentations and policy recommendations.

Formal Interviews: The researcher conducted interviews with experts in the field of human trafficking in Uganda. Interviews were held within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, The Office of the Directorate of Public Prosecution as well as Non-governmental organizations such as WILLOW International and RAHAB Uganda to get a wide spectrum on the fight of human trafficking from every key informant working under the 4ps of combat.

Interviews with 13 key informants.

In-depth interviews: One-on-one focused interviews are efficient for interviewing leadership in government offices. Set appointments with desired informants and use

interview guide. Offices or in the field. Depending on where the informant can meet. For taskforce I would like to see a few of their areas of operations and current projects. Limitations of this method is that the information received will not be fully representative.

Snowball Sampling: All informants were referred to the researcher from the director of labor, police officials and key figures at NGOs for interviewing purposes. All informants were chosen based on their relationship to the fight against human trafficking.

Research Tools:

Scheduled Interviews: Appointments were regularly scheduled with key informants to ensure an hour of their available time was allotted to the interview. A series of questions and the location of the interview were determined by the researcher however with the understanding that the interview was not limited to said questions. (see appendix A)

Free listing- The informant could list answers and the researcher would choose answers to expand on.

Prompt-Can you define “human trafficking” and tell me what it means to you?

Challenges:

Data collection challenges:

An in-depth interview with an informant from the Ministry of Internal Affairs did not occur due to unavailability. The expert head of the fight against trafficking, Mr. Moses Binoga, is an essential person to speak to, unfortunately this study could not schedule a meeting with him. A brief interview was conducted with a Ms. Catherine, a police officer at the Ministry of Internal Affairs who works closely with Mr. Binoga. A recurring challenge was

the lack of public access to data. When discussing human trafficking with informants, many of them would give a very broad answer on external and internal trafficking. The researcher was primarily focused on transnational trafficking so efforts to combat domestic trafficking were not useful except to explain how police lack an understanding of TIP law.

Ethics Statement:

All informants, including labor recruitment agencies will be informed of the purpose of my study and provided consent and human subject review forms. I understand that working in the field of human trafficking is the survivors interviewed could experience trauma in recounting their stories, so no questions were pushed if they were reluctant to answer them. Assurance of confidentiality was granted to all informants at the labor recruitment agencies however, the names of these agencies were granted confidentiality at and when it was required.

See appendix D for consent forms

Finding:

This study relied on scheduled interviews from key informants to shape the understanding of Trafficking in Uganda. Uganda uses the 4ps framework in its legal policy framework for anti-trafficking. The 4ps, Prevention, Prosecution, Protection and Partnership are based on an international human trafficking combat framework that champions non-discriminatory efforts in the combat of trafficking. The 4ps framework is well known by the stakeholders such as the government offices, NGOs, the Ugandan police force, immigration, magistrates and the Office of the Directorate of Public Prosecution (ODPP) etc. Not every office focuses on all 4 ps of combat, rather each stakeholder focuses on one to two strategies like prevention and protection which cut across all stakeholders and duty bearers. The ministries of internal affair and Gender, Labor and

Social Development are mandated to tackle all 4 strategies, whereas NGOs tend to focus on prevention, protection, and partnership--sometimes prosecution. The focus of the ODPP is prosecution. Through scheduled interviews with each sector involved in anti-trafficking efforts in Uganda this study obtained a comprehensive overview of the progress made in these areas and the challenges each face which hold Uganda back from a stronger capacity to fight human trafficking.

Office of the Directorate of Public Prosecution: Tanima Kishore

Tanima Kishore works as an attorney from India at the ODPP in Uganda. Her job consists of working with an organization called the Human Trafficking Institute which has a country project in Uganda. The TIP (Trafficking in Persons) act was put into force in 2009. Under this law, traffickers could be legally charged, and formal protections were given to trafficked victims. The most important element of the TIP act however, is the detailed definition of trafficking at all its stages. Human trafficking or Trafficking in Persons is defined as:

the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation (PTIP Act, 2009)

This definition is broken down into three elements:

1. The Act
2. The Means
3. The Purpose

The definition of trafficking and all its elements is essential to the fight against trafficking because without an understanding of the crime, it can never really be addressed. Kishore noted that one of the key challenges for prosecuting TIP offenders was the lack of understanding of the law and of trafficking as a concept amongst the criminal justice system (Kishore, 2019). “The [TIP] act is a comparatively new law and hasn’t been put into the curriculum in law schools. It is a special statute that people are not exposed to until specifically trained this includes police training.” The lack of understanding from the police is changing however, as police receive more specialized trainings (one of which occurred on April 30 of this year). Other than that, the law is confused with other offences which are elements within trafficking. For example, in the case of child trafficking a police officer will report defilement, kidnapping or child stealing. For domestic sex trafficking reports will come in of rape. The reason trafficking is not charged to the offender is because of the lack of understanding of the law and familiarity with the charges already established for those other offences. “This needs to be fixed”.

Statistical data was mentioned as another challenge to the prosecuting offices and to combat in general. As of now, only about 830 cases were reported to the ODPP for human trafficking, most of these cases being labor cases since domestic cases are almost never reported (due to the first challenge of a lack of understanding the law). This figure however is not verified because it was a baseline survey Kishore conducted from the files at the ODPP from 2009 to July 2018. The only formal body able to collect and distribute data is the Coordination Office whose statutory duties include compiling data on trafficking. Lack of public data on trafficking made it hard for the researcher to conduct background literature review on this topic before starting research. As a result, there are different figures circulating which confuses the true scope and nature of the issue in Uganda.

Other challenges have to do with victim protection in the criminal justice system. “Sometimes the court room is not the best place for victims” says Kishore, “they feel very intimidated, they don’t feel safe enough to testify because they have to sit in front of their exploiter...a lot of times the individual may be from the same community or an extended family member... they fear harm.” Prosecuting transnational cases are more difficult than domestic ones because “the perpetrators are not in Uganda, ultimately the ones that get arrested are the ones in Uganda who are not even the real masterminds. These are usually agents or pawns in the whole game.” These agents can work for licensed or even unlicensed labor recruitment agencies but traffic people and seemingly pocket the money for themselves.

An article entitled “How Ugandan Girls are sold to Oman for domestic work” by the Daily Monitor dated March of this year explains how individuals trick and sell victims to labor agencies abroad, usually in Oman, and pocket the money they receive. This becomes an issue when, the victim experiences exploitation and abuse in their workplace, ask to be sent home and the agencies hold them in debt bondage until the recruiting agent pays them the money incurred to send the victim overseas and to their employer. A problem arises when the agent is not an agency and will not repay the money- which is the condition of any licensed agency in Uganda (Employment [recruitment for Ugandan domestic workers]) but “they do not yet have the funds” (Emmanuel Muhangezi MGLSD). So the burden is put on the families and other organizations to repatriate the person. Ugandan embassies, as an informant Daniel Mulekezi assured, were supposed to help facilitate this process, unfortunately, there is no Ugandan embassy in Oman. Therefore, “individuals who go to Oman are on their own” (MGLSD). The article named an individual Badru who worked with several agencies but advised his victims that he had a “quicker way to get [us]

fixed other than going through the formal arrangements if [we] could raise 1.85 million shillings.” Badru works around Namaganda Arcade in Kampala, near the old taxi park.

When an individual agent or director of these agencies are found to be trafficking offenders either the individual is charged or the company. Ideally both should be made suspects or else “if you don’t charge the company, and just the individuals then the comp continues to exist. Or the other way around, if you just charge the company and don’t charge the individual, those individuals end up forming another company.” In most cases it’s the that individual ends up being charged in Uganda.

Labor Recruitment Agencies: Ugandan Association of External Recruitment Agencies (UAERA)

A common statement from UAERA and the ministry of Gender, Labor and Social Development is that licensed recruitment agencies are safe and people who are trafficked end up that way because they went through unregulated or illegal means. There was no evidence found during this study to stand against their claim. Uganda currently has 114-121 licensed labor recruitment agencies registered with the MGLSD and UAERA. The website for licensed recruitment agencies under the Ministry of Internal Affairs reports 104 licensed companies. Although the numbers vary, all three figures were found on the official websites of the ministries and approved information handbook and booklet from UAERA. The number of listed license agencies were summed up from each source, and the results are those reported above. This means that, the MIA which holds the Coordination Office for the Combat of Trafficking in Persons reports less licensed agencies than does UAERA. The MGLSD, the only body authorized to approve an agency for a license, also reports less licensed agencies than UAERA. UAERA is the umbrella organization for all labor recruitment agencies in Uganda, so it would make sense for them to know

distinctively the exact number of licensed agencies underneath their oversight, however, it is not okay for the government ministries to be misinformed or have out-of-date information. Regardless of whether the claims made by UAERA are accurate, people are still being trafficked abroad under the guise that they will receive decent work and a substantial increase in pay abroad. All survivors reported not knowing about the safe and regulated means for going abroad, which includes where to look for such information, and not having enough money to afford the process. Literacy and education are also required to have a basic understanding of one's labor contract and terms and conditions of one's employment. The labor contracts provided to the researcher to Saudi Arabia and Jordan were written in Arabic and English, so if a recruit is not versed in either language they are more vulnerable to exploitation—be that by a recruitment agency or an individual trafficker.

Licensing

Labor recruitment companies are mandated by the MGLSD to provide 50 million shillings for the repatriation of an individual whose employment did not work out abroad. The MGLSD believes this sum should be increased because it cannot address every candidate that goes abroad and wishes to return. Companies cannot be or be attached to any travel agency neither can they have trafficked anyone or have been involved in the trafficking of an individual. (Employment [guidelines for Ugandans Working Abroad], section 4, 2015).

Survivor: Nakitende Michelle Zubedah

Nakitende Zubedah was 24 years old when she was trafficked to Jordan in December 2017. She lived and worked in Mukono as a small business owner for electronics and mobile money where she made a living. Her circumstances changed when thieves stole all her merchandise and she was left with debts to pay. Her friend Alice had heard about an individual named Rasheed,

who is known for sending people abroad for work. Nakitende recounts that, “it was one person, it was not an organization... I had a friend who took me to that guy-Alice directed me to that person. She even went with us... we were 20. But she returned because of bad situation.” Alice returned “totally sick” from the house in which she worked with what Nakitende described as “demons that sucked blood”. When Nakitende went abroad, she waited for four days until she was picked up by an employer. She began work as a maid, the job she was promised, but after a few weeks she noticed that her fingers were drying out and in pain. They began to turn black because of a cleaning solution she was using that was not supposed to touch the flesh-no one had told her this. After some time, she was taken to the hospital, where they did nothing to help her, she was taken to the office from where she was picked up and remained there for several days, not receiving any treatment. She was returned to her family after four days to return to work. When the pain became too unbearable she was returned to the office which paid for her ticket to return to Uganda.

Back home, her fingers were amputated, and money was raised to cover the costs. She was never taken to the Ugandan embassy in Jordan. When asked whether Nakitende knew about laws against trafficking in Uganda, she responded “no, not yet”. When asked if she knew about awareness of trafficking in her village or in Mukono she replied, “they are there but I don’t know.” When prompted to tell if she has seen posters or heard radio broadcasts or seen news articles, she responded no. She says that families should know about the dangers of trafficking, especially girls should be taught. Awareness education should focus on villages and rural areas. Communities should create jobs for the youth, for the girls.

Nakitende calls out to leaders to hold monthly meetings and teach the girls about the dangers of trafficking and to know that “not anyone can take you [for work]”. The police should have tighter security at the borders and be trained to identify “deformities” of the people crossing.

The government should provide more support for survivors by recognizing their individual needs when victims are rescued/ returned. She also advises that the government fight for the prosecution of people who take kids, who take people and create strict laws for people who take labor abroad. The reality is that the government of Uganda has all these things in place, but Nakitende, and so many others do not see the implementation or fruition of these laws and policies. Such are the challenges with awareness and prevention in the anti-trafficking framework. *The specific route Nakitende took to Kenya and the conditions she and the 20 other girls endured to Jordan are documented in appendix B.*

Civil Societies, RAHAB: Annette Kirabira

Annette Kirabira is the founder and executive of the non-governmental organization RAHAB which provides after-care services to minors who were victims to sex trafficking. They respond to both trafficking in the commercial sector (CSEC) and sex trafficking. They began with responding to victims who experienced sex trafficking in Thailand in 2008 but since began to respond to commercial trafficking and transboundary trafficking as well. “With transnational trafficking there are layers, sometimes someone can begin in labor trafficking and end up in sex trafficking.” When it comes to transborder trafficking we provide temp shelter while the girls are in school, counseling, business training on employability. After some time working in responding and protection of victims from transboundary trafficking, RAHAB began to look at prevention. With that, they have conducted several community engagements and have trained duty bearers “to really know how to use the law” (Kirabira). They engage discussions on root causes and gaps in the law that promote exploitation. RAHAB believes that root causes such as social-cultural narratives about daughters being a source of income, to “be for a man or to please men” brings a level of vulnerability to a young girl where, if provided the opportunity, she and her family will accept any

prospect of a marriage proposal from abroad and endure any kind of treatment she receives from a man. RAHAB also believes that subtle social codes program not only girls, but boys as well because while they teach the young woman to stay vulnerable, it enhances the power dynamic a young man feels over a woman. Boys will assume that girls can be owned by them and are for them so that there is “no need to protect them” (Kirbira).

Lastly RAHAB skill and sensitize communities on the discussion of child protection issues. Communities and duty bearers are engaged in discussions that center around the ways in which children are embedded in and integrated into the community and traffickers have begun to exploit this social fabric. “In Africa or in Uganda it was okay for children to grow up with extended family who would take them to receive better education or a job, but this cultural value is being abused.” (Kirabira 2019, Danille Yaste, Hazards of Being Human, 2014.) Trainings are far from straight forward, because as soon as you train communities “you open up to victim identification, and you must be ready to respond and provide for them”.

Training duty bearers not only leaves the question of whether they will commitment to action but whether there are resources for them to commit to and have a sustainable response. There are no provisions for community led vigilance teams or government shelters for survivors. The reality is that “the integration is good, the training is good, but how it fits into the current circumstance of the participants is important if there will be sustainable work”. Communities may need to be supported until they can lobby to get themselves into the budget to close the gap” between when they are trained and when they begin to operationalize their plans. (Kirabira) It takes about a year’s cycle to lobby to be in the national budget. Duty bearers in law enforcement and local community councils must be trained on how to lobby for better resources to be able to

enforce TIP laws. Uganda is good at writing policy but not at implementing or enforcing it, as Kirabira explains,

“sometimes I feel we have sufficient laws, they’re not perfect laws but I think our biggest challenge is implementation and enforcement.” And of course, to open up knowledge especially in the legal framework because we have the penal code and everything, but the issue comes when duty bearers do not know the law or how to synchronize the law.”

Longitudinal research is another issue to prevention of trafficking. Ms. Kirabira mentions that ““hit and run” surveys, due diligence and following up on research...is a very weak area in Africa”. It could be ten years since awareness training was conducted in an area and the results of its effectiveness will not be assessed. Geographical coverage of shared information on anti-human trafficking measures is still small. There are radio and television broadcasts like station 94.1FM, (Madoyi Sulait, Security leader at the National Mosque) but these are insufficient to reach all the districts of Uganda, not just Kampala and not just remote villages because “on the streets of Uganda and for the girls that are trafficked abroad, every district is represented.” (Kirabira) Sometimes when information is disseminated, people fail to understand that “trafficking is very dynamic”. They start to normalize it, especially because unemployment is so prevalent and so high, so the information falls on deaf ears.

Prevention and awareness efforts are also stunted by people’s understanding of TIP law and the definition of trafficking. According to Kirabira and the UNODC formal definition of trafficking in persons, human trafficking always involves exploitation. It does not need movement across borders because internal trafficking exists in Uganda, and it may involve smuggling. All three elements of trafficking, the Act Means and Purpose, must be proven to charge an offender for trafficking an adult. The Means do not have to be proven for a child because s/he cannot give legal

consent. Because of the stories about trafficking into labor through illegal recruitment, Ugandans are “bunching labor exploitation abroad with human trafficking” (Kirabira) and becoming frustrated with legal labor externalization companies. The reason people are so frustrated and “confused about labor exploitation versus trafficking” (Moses Bingoa at Strategic Planning Workshop for target 8.7) is because they do not understand what trafficking is. Add on the fact that externalization of labor has loopholes within which trafficking has breathing space. People are reported to be either stranded or dying abroad. Victims are calling for attention and help from their friends and families via WhatsApp and other social media platforms and Ugandans are in outrage and disarray. Ms. Kirabira recommends that the solution to this issue to teach about safe migration to all Ugandans, not just those who come to labor recruitment agencies and attend trainings. *The explanation of labor exploitation can be found in appendix C.*

The issue with information sharing on safe migration is that all resources meant to protect labor migrants and regulate labor migration through companies: the lists of licensed recruitment agencies and what to expect from them, the External Management System that tracks Ugandans working abroad, information on how to evaluate whether an agency is licensed and the rights the bilateral agreements give the migrant worker, are all online. The information is not accessible to people who do not or cannot access internet daily, nor do they know to do this research before searching for a way to migrate abroad. Another issue fueling public frustration is that girls are being sent to work in places where labor laws for migrant domestic workers are non-existent. They are also women, which adds another layer of inequality experienced in the workplace in these countries. “You wouldn’t send your child to play in the house of a pedophile, would you? Isn’t it the same if you send people to work in places where slavery is accepted?” (Kirabira) This is especially the case with Oman (Human Rights Watch report, 2016).

Another civil society, WILLOW International which focuses on essentially all 4Ps of combat, cites ignorance and appreciation of the law and budgets as the greatest challenges to prevention measures. They conduct stakeholder meetings and sensitization in universities to teach safe migration and cut trafficking off at the source of the supply.

Both RAHAB and WILLOW advertise their services through partnerships with other CSOs both in Uganda and in Asia. The airport, immigration and police also refer victims to WILLOW. The victims WILLOW receives are mainly from villages all over Uganda, many are from the East, North East Busoga region and the Karamojong regions respectively. Between Jan and march of this year, the office received 18 external and 11 internal referrals, making almost 30 victims of human trafficking in three months. Both organizations are part of Uganda's coalition of trafficking, of which WILLOW is the head. This coalition is membered by CSOs only however all CSOs work closely with the Coordination Office on Trafficking in Persons to share information, provide trainings and receive annual TIP reports.

Ministry of Foreign Affairs, consular services: Daniel Mulekezi and Judith

Under the protection strategy of the legal framework for anti-trafficking, consular services are mandated to support and protect migrant workers abroad through missions. Consular services handle disagreements between Ugandan migrant workers and Saudi families based on the provisions of the bilateral agreement between Uganda and Saudi Arabia. Their services to

Ugandans abroad include: embassy provided shelter and intervention, police, translators to resolve disputes, and support in labor courts. These services are open to all Ugandans abroad provided they know about them. Trafficked victims rarely have information about the Ugandan embassy or are employed far away from its location (Mr. Jumu, journalist for New Vision). Consular services also do not reach Oman. Lack of financing government agencies, the high level of unemployment and compliance with corruption are challenges the Ministry of Foreign Affairs faces with anti-trafficking efforts.

The trafficking in persons 2017 and 2018 report cite NGOs as the primary players in prevention and protection of TIP victims. Although this report is compiled by the commissioner of police and head of the Coordination Office at the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the informants at the MFA say that it's government who plays the lead role, it just does not make as much "noise". While every CSO in anti-trafficking is linked to the government, the government does not have its own shelter or an organization to receive survivors when they return to Uganda. For now, the government relies on CSOs to provide the services they provide. Even the Coordination Office receives funds from WILLIOW to carry out its mandate. Therefore, coordinating partnerships internally through with CSOs and other stakeholders and duty bearers, as well as externally through bilateral agreements especially those with Kenya and South Sudan are imperative for Uganda to combat human trafficking at a higher capacity and move from a status of tier 2 to tier in the international fight against this modern-day form of the slave trade.

Ugandan Youths' Attitudes: Patrick Barasa Inter-religious council of Uganda

Currently, 80% of youth are unemployed, this figure includes university graduates, 90.9% of whom make up the informal sector due to the lack of available jobs. "The youth are frustrated

about the lack of jobs”, says Patrick Barasa, the youth leader for the Inter-religious Council of Uganda, age 27. Barasa believes that the jobs are here, as does Ms. Carol Idembe, another member of the inter-religious council. Idembe questioned why Ugandans want to work in the Middle East when “you can throw a seed on the ground and eat from it. You cannot do that in a desert.” Barasa also references the “dependence syndrome” as a reason why many Ugandan youth would rather work abroad. The dependence syndrome is basically a term given for the cultural expectation of a child to help their parents after they have begun to make money. Elder siblings should help with their siblings’ school fees, ceremony gifts and so on. Uganda has many ceremonies, one being the “Introduction” ceremony where the bride-to-be introduces her fiancée to her family. The fiancé’s family is expected to bring gifts to the girl’s family, and all members must contribute. However, when a person is abroad, the expectation to contribute to such events and send money home decreases, so there is less of a burden.

From an elder’s perspective, the youth are “energetic, beautiful and can withstand climatic conditions” (Madoyi Sulait, security leader at the national mosque, age 47). “An old man will not leave to work abroad but will offer his grandson” who will jump at the change to go. The youth here want “a soft landing” and are “weak minded” because they follow the money.

Conclusion:

A common phenomenon with key informants was that victims were blamed. UAERA and MGLSD argue that, Ugandans who are trafficked go through unofficial routes and end up in dire circumstances. The information is out there, people choose to take other routes. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs echoed the same statement. The researcher could have misread and misunderstood these statements, however, if victims are being blamed how accurate would such a statement be

considering that many of them could not access the information that is so available. They do not have the money to pay for the process of formal recruitment, they may not know what a good contract is supposed to be (assuming they do not go to a licensed agency), and if they do not know where to look for licensed agencies they also will not know UAERA's criteria for a licensed agency which includes what a recruit should look for when they apply so that they can avoid being trafficked. This information is supposed to be provided by mass awareness, sensitization and information sharing, which is the job of the government and CSOs to coordinate. Therefore, is it more accurate to place blame on these institutions? No. But allowing the public to remain unaware helps traffickers supply slaves to the Middle East.

Under the development paradigms trafficking affects human security and human development. A victim trafficked into forced labor is hardly safe and is far from well-being. They should not be punished for expecting decent work as a human right. Additionally, the human development index is indicated here on the dimension of health. Life expectancy will decrease when a person is killed abroad because of exploitative and abusive work environments. Trafficking in Persons has implications on the sustainable development of the country as dictated by the UN sustainable development goals as part of agenda 2030.

TIP directly impacts goals 5, 8 and 16, gender equality, decent work and economic growth, and peaceful institutions respectively. A disproportionate number of women are trafficked more than men. It's reported that 71% of trafficked victims are women and girls (UNDP) some are trafficked into prostitution while others are trafficked into the labor markets in the Middle East as waitresses, maids and babysitters. Under goal 8, target 8.7 seeks to bring development to developing countries in efforts to "eliminate all modern forms of slavery and forced labor". Trafficking in Persons is inherently in violation of goal 8 because victims are sold into indecent work. In addition, a false

sense of development is also present in trafficking because female migrant workers are positive outputs of sustainable development. Labor recruitment agencies push for women to work abroad (Danielle Yaste, *Hazards of Being Human*), yet, it is also females who are most vulnerable in the labor market and end up trafficked. Goal 16 calls for building effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels. Anti-trafficking efforts demand that institutions, stakeholders and duty bearers are accountable to their roles and effective in the fight. The Coordination Office of Combatting Trafficking in Persons is driving this effort.

In an effort to follow-up with the SIT ISP research conducted on Human Trafficking in 2014, the researcher chose three main arguments of the research and compared them to the findings of this paper. The arguments for of low prioritization of data collection, the focus on policy and the source of the problem. First, Yaste cites that ““Legislation is often lacking, inadequate, not implemented, making prosecution of traffickers very difficult or impossible...the level of priority given by local police forces to combatting trafficking has an impact on whether or not data are gathered.” Gramegna & Laczko, 2003, p.183. The same finding was reported in this paper. While there is political will and commitment to action, the local police generally lack an understanding of the law, causing them to charge other offences. Second, “the Acts of trafficking (indicated in the first sentence of the definition of TIP) tend to overlook it’s causes.” Uganda tends to write good policies, but it lacks good implementation and enforcement- the second arm needed to combat TIP. Third, “The problems of trafficking begin not with the traffickers themselves but the conditions that caused their victims to migrate under circumstances rendering them vulnerable to exploitation.” Chuang, 2006, p.140. The efforts made by CSOs on prevention and awareness strategies focus on curbing the supply of victims nevertheless research also suggests that the best way to fight trafficking is by eliminating demand.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Interview Guide

For Labor Recruitment Agencies

When is there an influx of people who come to seek employment and what area(s) do they usually come from?

What is your method of advertisement? How do you reach people to inform them of your services?

Where are the common places people go to work abroad?

How long do people seeking employment wish to stay abroad? If they wish return, what is the process for that?

What is the ratio of men to women who come in to seek employment?

For Key Informants in Government Offices

What is the general attitude youth have towards working abroad, specifically in the Middle East? Literature suggests that the Middle East is a popular destination for Ugandan migrant workers, why is this the case?

How many reports do you receive of a person having been trafficked from Uganda?

Of these reports, how often are cases filed?

What is the jurisdiction of the anti-trafficking taskforce?

What is currently being done on the ground for anti-human trafficking efforts? and transnationally?

What is the system in place? What is part of the negotiation process for repatriation of Ugandans? What other countries besides Saudi Arabia, Jordan and Oman does Uganda work with diplomatically on providing protections for Ugandan migrant workers?

Are there rounds of patrol for police in vulnerable areas/routes for trafficking in persons?

What are the push and pull factors for trafficking in persons in Uganda?

When did Trafficking in Persons really gain prevalence in Uganda?

Is there a rough estimate of how many people go abroad for work a year [specifically domestic work]? Of those, what are the demographics (men, women, youth [boys and girls]).

What are the common reasons victims have for going abroad when they are caught/repatriated/rescued at exit points?

How often are there cases of Ugandans being fraudulently recruited for employment? How many report being exploited?

What protections are migrant workers entitled to when they go abroad? Who provides these protections?

What services and support do survivors generally need upon returning to Uganda? How are these provided and by who?

What can and does consular services provide for trafficked victims?

Of your knowledge, what are the main routes traffickers use to transport people both internally and transnationally? What are the common tactics used to procure victims?

What do licensed labor recruitment agencies require of applicants before they are sent abroad (family or relatives in destination country, guardian or residence in country of origin?)

What are labor recruitment agencies mandated to provide to the labor they recruit?

Why is Uganda not party to the 2000 UN TIP Protocol? What are the requirements for becoming party? What are the implications of that? What are the consequences of not joining?

How does the External Employment Management System work? How is awareness of this tool spread? Has there been a trend between use of the system and the number of cases reported for TIP?

What is the significance of being a tier 2 country when it comes to TIP and what does it mean to be a “minimum capacity for the elimination of trafficking?”

What does anti-trafficking police training consist of? Who receives training and who facilitates training? (are volunteers and employees at refugee camps trained on TIP prevention? If so, by who? Is it Government or NGO led?)

What role do NGOs play in anti-TIP prevention and protection? The TIP report for 2018 says that NGOs play an explicitly lead role in providing for survivors and international organizations on TIP research. Why are NGOs given such large and primary roles?

What budget is given to anti-trafficking endeavors? What is the budget of this office? How many are on the Taskforce team?

What are the greatest challenges to prevention of TIP (in Uganda)?

Do you believe severe unemployment in Uganda has a significant impact on the rate of transnational human trafficking?

What is included in labor contracts?

***Is there any contact you can recommend me to that will help my research.*

For Religious, Non-governmental and International Organizations

Concerning their mission statement on their website: Why is there more impact when contributions are applied to lesser developed regions?

What are the challenges to combatting human trafficking in the areas of prevention, awareness and protection?

For Youth

Are you employed? If so, where? If not, are you looking for work? Where?

Where are job advertisements usually posted? Where do you usually see them?

How do you hear about job openings?

How many of you have seen advertisements for jobs abroad? Where are those usually posted?

*Have you heard about people who have went abroad to for work?

*Have you ever thought about or considered working abroad? Why or why not?

Where would you most like to find work abroad? What job would you most like to do while abroad?
(If this job were not available) What job(s) would you consider doing?

In the place you live, would you say it is easy to find a job?

In the place you live, what jobs do people your age usually do?

More questions to follow as study progresses

For Survivors

How were survivors repatriated?

Did any go through recruitment agencies in Uganda?

Are they able to provide the names of those agencies? If not, can you tell me if any were licensed agencies?

What did the person who brought them abroad provide them (paperwork wise)? What were the survivors asked to provide (and/or pay)?

How did survivors you worked with hear about the agency or individual that took that facilitated them abroad?

What were their situations (economic and social) before going abroad?

did some have jobs? families? dependents? etc

What was the influence to go abroad? What were their reasons?

Had they known about trafficking or labor recruitment in Uganda beforehand? (This question seeks to understand how awareness efforts about safe migration procedures is reaching people in their respective areas).

What part of Uganda are these survivors from?

What part of Uganda were they in when they sought to be sent abroad?

Is there anything survivors wish they knew before going abroad?

Where were the survivors rescued or repatriated from?

How were they identified abroad and how did they receive help?

Did they go to an embassy? Where, if at all, did they look for help?

What is the most common job for young women and young men to do in the areas that they live in?

Appendix B

Routes: Mukono to Jordan

Mukono to Kampala

Recruiter arrives at 11am asked for money for transport

Boarded taxi with 20 other girls at old park to Mbale

Taxi from Mbale to Lwakhakha (4-hour drive)

At Lwakhakha they boda to a secluded house and reached at 7pm. They met a woman there who promised she would bring food to the girls if they brought money. They girls gave her the money, and the woman never returned. The 20 girls stayed for about 3 hours before they moved again.

At 10pm the girls were taken to the Uganda-Kenya border via bodas

From there they were led by one trafficker through water that was chest deep.

Once they crossed the border the girls were taken into Kenya 4 to a boda

It is a long journey

Some of the girls are raped in the bushes, when the bodas stopped for rest.

At 2am they stop at a restaurant

Money is paid for food, but food never comes

From the restaurant they board a taxi to Nairobi when the police stop them for questioning. The police are bribed Shs 1 million to let them pass.

In Nairobi they are taken to a house with 50 other people to wait for their flight. Some people wait for days

After about 4 days some girls are taken to Nairobi airport

One girl is stopped because her passport photo does not match her features

Another bribe is paid for her to go through

They travel from Nairobi to Sasna airport in Mumbai

From Sasna they fly to Jordan

Upon arrival the girls are brought to an office to wait for employers

Some are picked up immediately, others can wait for days

Sometimes girls are brought back to the office by employers but are not permitted to speak to the other girls in the office.

Some return home to Uganda with physical injuries, most however return with psychological issues.

The trafficker who first recruited them leaves them at the Uganda-Kenya border to return to Mukono and traffic again.

Appendix C

Labor Exploitation versus Human Trafficking:

Exploitation includes at a minimum:

- Sexual exploitation
- Forced marriage • Forced labour • Harmful child labour •
- Use of child in armed conflict •
- Use of a person in illegal activities •
- Debt bondage • Slavery or a similar practice •
- Human sacrifice Removal of body parts for sale/ witchcraft/harmful rituals

No deception or fraud need take place. The person agreed to the job they were presented with however conditions during work are abusive.

Human Trafficking:

Key informants' definitions of trafficking:

- An activity involving bringing people from Point A to Point B using promises

Social: luring women with the possibility of marriage proposals abroad

Political: promises of power e.g. ADF

Economic: better paying jobs abroad ~Madoyi Sulait

- Human trafficking is the removal of a person through illegal means to work somewhere. It is a master-slave relationship where the slave has no rights. Victims occupy a position of disempowerment

~Carol Idembe Inter-religious council

- Using a person as a commodity and not treating them as a person

~Tanima Kishore Office of the Directorate of Public Prosecution

Formal definition:

1. **ACT**: the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons,
2. by **MEANS** of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person,
3. for the **PURPOSE** of exploitation (UNODC 2000, PTIP Act, 2009)

All three elements must be proven for **an adult** to be considered trafficked

Only the Act and Purpose must be proven for a child

Appendix D
Consent Forms for Constituencies

Consent Form

My name is Kyla Johnson and I am a student with the SIT program conducting an exploration on labor export in Uganda. I would like to invite you to take part in my research that I am conducting for partial fulfillment of my BA and credit for my SIT Study Abroad program. Your participation is voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about any you do not understand or need more clarification on before deciding whether to participate.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore how domestic workers seek and gain employment abroad through recruitment agencies and other avenues. The research collected will be analyzed and presented in a final report to be reviewed by the School for International Training.

Study Procedures

If you agree to this study I will conduct an interview with you. It will require approximately an hour of your time. You will be asked questions about how people are sent abroad and within what general age range, how you advertise and the number of job seekers that respond, the requirements for a person seeking a job (including correct documentation etc.), what work migrant workers end up doing when abroad, how you keep track of workers while they are abroad and how you deal with grievance if any. With your permission, I would also like to tape-record the interview.

Risks and Discomforts

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this study and no penalties should you choose not to participate. You have the right not to answer any question and discontinue participating at any time.

Benefits

There are no anticipated benefits for you. Due to the high rate of unemployment in Uganda I would like to understand the different employment opportunities available for Ugandans including those abroad.

Confidentiality

Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this research will remain confidential. After the study, your name and the recording will not be discussed with anyone other than my research partners and all data collected will be kept in a secured file. When the results of this research are published or discussed in conferences, no identifiable information will be used. If the interview was recorded, the tape will be destroyed after it has been transcribed.

Participation and Withdrawal

Taking part in this study is voluntary. Your refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this study.

Statement of Consent: I have read the above and I understand its contents and I agree to participate in this study. I acknowledge that I am 18 years or older.

Participants signature: _____ Date _____

Researchers signature: _____ Date _____

Consent to Quote from Interview

I may wish to quote from the interview with you in the presentation or final reports resulting from this work. A pseudonym, or fake name, will be used in order to protect your identity should you choose to keep your name confidential.

Initial the following to indicate your choice:

___ *I agree*

or

___ *I do not agree*

Consent to Audio-Record Interview

In addition to agreeing to participate, I also consent to having my interview tape-recorded. The tape will be destroyed after it is transcribed.

Initial the following to indicate your choice:

___ *I agree*

or

___ *I do not agree*

Consent Forms for Survivors

Consent Form

My name is Kyla Johnson and I am a student with the SIT program conducting an exploration on Human Trafficking in Uganda. I would like to invite you to take part in my research that I am conducting for partial fulfillment of my BA and credit for my SIT Study Abroad program. Your participation is voluntary. Please read the information below and ask questions about any you do not understand or need more clarification on before deciding whether to participate.

Purpose

The purpose of this study is to explore the how human trafficking happens in Uganda and who and what is involved in allowing it to take place. I am specifically looking how domestic workers who seek jobs abroad through recruitment agencies or other places end up trafficked or taken advantage of and how this can be prevented. The research collected will be analyzed and presented in a final report to be reviewed by the School for International Training.

Study Procedures

If you agree to this study I will conduct an interview with you. It will require approximately an hour of your time. You will be asked questions about how people are sent abroad and within what general age range, what work migrant workers end up doing when abroad, the treatment and pay of migrant workers while abroad and the services available to them on arrival back to Uganda. You may also be asked about human trafficking prevention efforts in Uganda. With your permission, I would also like to tape-record the interview.

Risks and Discomforts

There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this study and no penalties should you choose not to participate. I recognize that recalling memories of hardship or trauma may be uncomfortable for the participant therefore you have the right not to answer any question and discontinue participating at any time.

Benefits

There are no anticipated benefits for you. No person should be enslaved so I hope to learn more about the silent trade of people in Uganda.

Confidentiality

Any identifiable information obtained in connection with this research will remain confidential. After the study, your name and the recording will not be discussed with anyone other than my research partners and all data collected will be kept in a secured file. When the results of this research are published or discussed in conferences, no identifiable information will be used. If the interview was recorded, the tape we be destroyed after it has been transcribed.

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Initial the following to indicate your choice:

___ *I agree*

or

___ *I do not agree*

Consent to Audio-Record Interview

In addition to agreeing to participate, I also consent to having my interview tape-recorded. The tape will be destroyed after it is transcribed.

Initial the following to indicate your choice:

___ *I agree*

or

___ *I do not agree*

Appendix E
Labor Contracts for Saudi Arabia and Jordan *respectively*:

Appendix F

Civil Society Organizations Services

- Services that RAHAB provides: Medical services, feeding, shelter (especially for minors), skills training: formal and vocational educations, entrepreneurial training, employability with the private sector, adult literacy, counselling, music dance and drama, spiritual nourishment (as a Christian founded organization) and building self-worth and dignity.
- Services that WILLOW International provides: After-care services, Medical services, Legal services, Psychological services, counselling and community sensitizing

Provisions of bilateral agreements signed with Jordan and Saudi Arabia:

- Paid holidays
- Days of rest
- Minimum wage
- Medical service
- Clear working hours

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