



**THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER IN THE PREVENTION OF CHILD  
TRAFFICKING IN SOUTH AFRICA**

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## **SUMMARY**

### **The role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa**

by

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Child trafficking is a global problem which affects every country. It is a serious crime that many governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community based organizations (CBOs) around the world are trying to address. Child trafficking involves multiple forms of exploitation, therefore it has been described as a form of modern slavery. South Africa, like most countries, is a place of origin, transit and destination. Children are increasingly being trafficked for purposes of sexual and labour exploitation. However, child trafficking has traumatic and devastating effects on the victims, affected families, communities as well as countries as a whole. The effects suffered by victims range from psychological, physical, emotional, social and economical in nature.

The particular psychological, physical, emotional and social harm suffered by the trafficked children and their increased vulnerability to exploitation require that the governments and NGOs deal with them separately from adult trafficked victims in terms of laws, policies, programs and interventions. The best interest of the child must be the primary consideration in all actions concerning trafficked children, whether undertaken by public or private social welfare institutions, courts of law, administrative authorities or legislative bodies.

Research has confirmed that the population of children vulnerable to trafficking is growing worldwide with potentially disastrous effects. The number of orphans in many developing countries, including South Africa, is also rising dramatically due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic. The rapid rise of child-headed households is also creating fertile ground for traffickers. Literature also indicated that children have fewer control decisions about their lives, and that the national systems of child justice and child welfare often have inadequate means of protecting them against trafficking and, as a result, children remain vulnerable to the possible exposure of child trafficking.

A great deal of internal trafficking of children occurs within South Africa for reasons of labour and sexual exploitation. It is confirmed in existent literature that South Africa is a major destination for regional and extra-regional trafficking activities.

In this study, the researcher explored through a qualitative, applied study the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking. The empirical study confirms that the information gathered from this study will benefit not only vulnerable children, families and victims of child trafficking, but also empower the social workers and other role players to render a more effective service to children vulnerable to possible child trafficking.

Through an empirical study, it was concluded that the government in collaboration with NGOs, need to empower social workers in order for them to successfully execute their role in preventing child trafficking in South Africa. Prevention of child trafficking requires a short- and long-term strategy which should target tracking down the perpetrators and providing protection for vulnerable children who end up being victims of trafficking. Prevention of child trafficking focuses on three levels, namely primary, secondary and tertiary strategies.

The following are key concepts used in this study:

- Child trafficking
- Child
- Social worker
- Role
- Prevention

## **OPSOMMING**

### **Die rol van die maatskaplike werker in die voorkoming van kinderhandel in Suid-Afrika**

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**GRAAD: MA: Navorsing**

Kinderhandel is 'n globale probleem wat alle lande raak. Dit is 'n ernstige probleem wat deur baie regerings sowel as nie-regeringsorganisasies aangespreek word. Kinderhandel is 'n vorm van hedendaagse slawerny en sluit baie vorme van blootstelling in. Kinders word in toenemende mate verkoop vir kinderarbeid, asook vir seksuele blootstelling. Kinderhandel het traumatiese en vernietigende gevolge vir die slagoffers, hulle families, die gemeenskap asook die betrokke lande. Die letsels wat gelaat word wissel van sielkundig, fisies, emosioneel, sosiaal tot ekonomies van aard.

Die spesifieke sielkundige, fisiese, emosionele en sosiale skade wat deur slagoffers van kinderhandel gely word, asook hulle toenemende weerloosheid vir blootstelling vereis dat regerings en nie-regeringsorganisasies 'n ander aanslag moet gebruik as in die geval van volwasse slagoffers in terme van beleid, programme, die wet en terapeutiese intervensies. Kinders se behoeftes moet sentraal gestel word in alle aksies rakende kinderhandel – deur regerings- of deur nie-regeringsorganisasies, die hof, administratiewe of wetgewende liggame.

Navorsing het bevestig dat die aantal kinders wat kwesbaar is tot kinderhandel wêreldwys kommerwekkend toeneem, met potensieel vernietigende gevolge. Die aantal weeskinders in ontwikkelende lande, insluitend Suid-Afrika, styg kommerwekkend as gevolg van die MIV-pandemie. Die voorkoms van huishoudings wat deur kinders gelei word, is vrugbare grond vir kinderhandelaars. In die literatuur word dit ook duidelik getoon dat kinders minder beheer het om oor hulle eie lewens te besluit, en dat nasionale sisteme van kinderreg en kinderwelsyn nie genoegsame kapasiteit het om kinders teen kinderhandel te beskerm nie. Die gevolg is dat kinders steeds blootgestel word aan kinderhandel.

Kinderhandel binne die grense van Suid-Afrika sluit kinderarbeid en seksuele blootstelling in. Dit word bevestig in die bestudeerde literatuur dat Suid-Afrika 'n eindbestemming vir streeks- en wyer mensehandelpraktyke is.

In hierdie studie poog die navorser om deur middel van 'n kwalitatiewe studie, die rol van die maatskaplike werker in die voorkoming van kinderhandel te ontdek. Die empiriese studie bevestig dat die inligting wat van hierdie studie verkry is, nie net weerlose kinders, families en slagoffers kan bevoordeel nie, maar dat dit ook maatskaplike werkers en ander rolspelers kan bemagtig om meer effektiewe diens aan kinders wat blootgestel is aan kinderhandel diens te lewer.

Deur middel van die empiriese studie, is daar gevind dat regerings- sowel as nie-regeringsorganisasies in samewerking met mekaar maatskaplike werkers behoort te bemagtig, om hulle rol in die voorkoming van kinderhandel in Suid-Afrika meer suksesvol te kan vervul. Voorkoming van kinderhandel vereis 'n kort- sowel as langtermynstrategieë wat daarop gemik moet wees om kinderhandelaars te identifiseer, en beskerming te bied aan weerlose kinders wat moontlike slagoffers van kinderhandel kan word. Voorkoming van kinderhandel fokus op drie vlakke, naamlik: primêre, sekondêre en tersiêre strategieë.

Die sleutelkonsepte wat in hierdie studie gebruik word, is soos volg:

- Kinderhandel
- Kind
- Maatskaplike werker
- Rol
- Voorkoming

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## 1. CHAPTER ONE

### 1.1. INTRODUCTION

Child trafficking is a serious crime that many governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) around the world are trying to address. According to Redlinger (2004:8), child trafficking involves multiple forms of exploitation, and therefore has been described as modern slavery. It involves forced labour such as prostitution and other forms of sexual exploitation, debt bondage, coercion or the threat of violence against the victim, as well as physical and mental abuse and related violations of fundamental human rights. Trafficking is a global problem and the victims have issues of poverty and desperation in common. According to The Palermo Protocol (2000:14), child trafficking is defined as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children, through threats, force, coercion, abduction, fraud and/or deception.

Mauer, Hollander, Huifen, Hunter, Isenbugel, Kohonick, Maveena and Wolfe (2004:23) assert that trafficking in children has emerged as an issue of major global concern in recent years. Largely facilitated by globalization and modern communication technology, it is becoming increasingly transnational in scope. The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) (2005:49) states that the trafficking of children takes many different forms. Some children are forcibly abducted, others are tricked and still others opt to be trafficked, seduced by the promise of earnings but unaware of the level of exploitation they will go through at the end of the recruiting chain. Child trafficking always involves a journey, whether within the country or across a border. At the final destination, the trafficked children are plunged into the underworld of criminality and illegality.

Redlinger (2004:8) states that the population of children vulnerable to trafficking is growing, with potentially disastrous effects on the entire world community.

UNICEF (2006:50) states that trafficked children are invisible in the eyes of the statistician. Collecting data about trafficked children is notoriously difficult. Global statistics of the United Nations (UN) estimate that trafficking affects about 1,200,000 children each year. Redlinger (2004:8) agrees with the above statistic, and puts the UN estimates of trafficked people at about 4,000,000 annually. The International Labour Organization (ILO), also part of the UN system, recently estimated that 1,200,000 children are victims of trafficking every year. McDonnell (2006:9) claims that about 50% of trafficked victims worldwide are children, both boys and girls.

Redlinger (2004:8) indicates that in Sub-Saharan Africa, the number of orphans in many developing countries is rising dramatically due to the HIV/AIDS pandemic that kills their parents. The rapid rise of child-headed households is creating fertile ground for traffickers. Additionally, the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) (2003), as cited by Carol (2006:6), is of the opinion that child trafficking occurs for many reasons and it is an overwhelmingly demand-driven phenomenon. The problem occurs predominantly because there is a market for children in the labour and sex trade, and this is matched by an abundant supply of children, mostly from poor families, who are easy prey for those who seek to make a profit by exploiting the victims' vulnerability. The trends and patterns of human trafficking in Sub-Saharan Africa became visible to policy makers in the 1990s. Its deeper roots are becoming apparent through the process of intervention to counter the problem. Where there is insufficient grasp of the reasons for the phenomenon of child trafficking, policy tends to lurch inconsistently in different directions, often suppressing the voices of those affected (Truong, 2004:53).

Martens et al. (2003:17) state that recent research has shown that most countries in Africa have yet to ratify protocols against human trafficking and the absence of domestic anti-trafficking legislation offers law enforcement little incentive to pursue criminal syndicates responsible for the activity.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2003:6) reveals that a diverse range of activities involving the trafficking of children occurs within the local borders of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. It is said that documentation is scarce but persistent and it is suggested that, as a contemporary form of slavery, child trafficking has existed for a century. In 1990, Anti-Slavery International (ASI) confirmed that children from all corners of the African continent were being trafficked into South Africa, where they were sold as sex workers and labourers. IOM (2007:8) alludes to nine countries in the SADC region that have ratified the United Nations Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially children. Furthermore, the Public Prosecutions Director, advocate Thoko Majokweni, reported on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2007 that statistics in Southern Africa are difficult to obtain because most countries in the region have not criminalized the trafficking of people (The Pretoria News:21-10-2007).

Close to home, internal trafficking of children occurs in South Africa, largely for reasons to do with labour and sexual exploitation. However, South Africa is also a major destination for regional and extra-regional trafficking activities (Materns, Pieczkowski & Vuuren-Smith, 2003:125). McDonnell (2006:12) agrees with the above-mentioned notion and says that South Africa is identified as a major trafficking centre for both internal and cross-border trafficking. It is reportedly Africa's major cross-border destination for receiving children trafficked from over ten countries. Female children are the primary victims, although male children have also been identified as victims.

It is reported that 28,000 to 30,000 female children engage in prostitution in South Africa. The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), AM Live (28-03-2007), agreed with the above observation that South Africa is the destination for the trafficked children, especially those between the ages 13 and 18. These children are exploited in the labour industry. Some of the victims who were interviewed on the radio stated that the traffickers are known to them and that the traffickers take advantage of the victims' poverty.

The IOM (2003:13) states that South Africa is a major destination for trafficked children from most Southern African countries. It is stated that children are recruited along the major transportation routes from various countries (such as Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia and Botswana) by long distance truckers, with promises of marriage, jobs or education opportunities in South Africa as part of the deal. Furthermore, some children who are recruited from the rural areas within Gauteng are promised good jobs and a prosperous life in the cities. Once in Johannesburg, the victim is held as the trafficker's sex slave in a flat in the Central Business District (CBD) where the trafficker brings clients who pay him/her to have sex with the victim. The victim is also featured in pornographic videos that are transmitted on the Internet, with the victim's name and contact details. The children are also sexually exploited in private homes and are sold to paedophile rings.

According to The Pretoria News (21-10-2007), the International Association of Women Judges were told in a conference, held in Boksburg on the 20<sup>th</sup> of October 2007, that South Africa is being used as a destination and transit point, as well as being a source for, human trafficking. According to SANGONet (2004:2&4), a child rights organization reported that the Western Cape, Gauteng and Eastern Cape Provinces, especially Cape Town, Johannesburg and KwaZulu-Natal, are the major recruiting centres for child trafficking in South Africa. SANGONet has recorded that trafficking of children within the Western Cape Province, are mainly for the following reasons: sexual exploitation, domestic work and farm labour.

In addition, child trafficking for child prostitution and child pornography have become major money making operations for individuals, gangs and syndicates in Cape Town, Johannesburg, Pretoria, Durban and other parts of the country, just as they are in the rest of the world. Molo Songololo's research reveals that children are trafficked across South African borders, both into and from South Africa, as well as within its borders.

### **Example of child trafficking:**

The researcher has dealt with a number of cases of children from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda and Burundi, who currently reside in Pretoria. After interviewing some of the children, they reported that they came into South Africa with truck drivers who promised them a prosperous life. Upon arrival, the victims were dumped in either Pretoria or Johannesburg CBD with no one to take care of them. The result was that these children found themselves in the hands of men and women who employed them and let them do harsh jobs for no remuneration.

Since South Africa is part of the global village and therefore not immune to this devastating problem, it is against this background that the researcher is motivated and seeks to conduct this study on the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking in the country, with special emphasis on a specified region of Pretoria. The researcher believes that children have little control over their own lives, and that the national systems of justice and child welfare often do not adequately protect them and, therefore, they are more vulnerable to child trafficking. The rationale for this study is therefore to explore the perceptions of the social workers regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking.

Consequently, the questions to be explored are as follows:

- What role do social workers play and how can they contribute towards preventing this grave problem of child trafficking in South Africa?
- How do social workers identify the trafficked children?
- Do social workers have enough resources to tackle the problem and assist the trafficked children?

- Are there any specific services in place to protect the children from being trafficked or re-trafficked?
- Do the victims receive satisfactory service? If not, what is the reason?
- Are there any interventions and do such interventions involve families?
- What obstacles do social workers face in the prevention of child trafficking?
- What is the government doing to prevent child trafficking?
- Are the laws applicable and what are the legal implications?
- What should be done by social workers to contribute effectively and efficiently towards the prevention of child trafficking?

According to Kelly, Maghan and Serio (2005:142), the trafficking of children, both transnational and internal, frequently involves deception, seduction or force. Young children between the ages of 14 and 18 answer advertisements for models, dancers or other entertainment industry jobs. Once they arrive at their destination, their identifying documents are confiscated by the traffickers or brothel owners. The relocation takes children away from their families, communities and support networks, leaving them isolated and utterly vulnerable to exploitation. Often the children are even more disempowered by being transported to a place where they do not speak the local language, thus making it much more difficult for them to seek help or escape. Due to their illegal status in the country, these children are unable to access the rights of legal citizens that entitle them to services like education, medical services and recreational services.

According to UNICEF (2004:2), Kelly et al. (2005:142) and Redlinger (2004:22-23), the root causes of child trafficking are numerous. Trafficking occurs when the child's protective environment collapses. The causes of the child trafficking phenomenon include economic hardship, patterns of instability in the government, weak laws and corrupt law enforcement, new communication and technology, natural disasters, oppression and discrimination, unstable family units, armed conflict, traditional practices like early marriages or rituals where they use human private parts, globalization, HIV/AIDS and a lack of birth registration. However, poverty is viewed as the most visible cause of trafficking.

Mertinez (2007: 9) and Kelly et al. (2005:143) agree with the abovementioned points and add the following negative indicators which may lead to the identification of the victims of child trafficking:

- Malnutrition, dehydration or poor hygiene
- Debt bondage
- Signs of rape and sexual abuse, which may be coupled with sexually transmitted infections
- Post Traumatic Disorder
- Isolation
- Victims' fear of law enforcement and a failure to recognize and seek assistance
- Threat of exposure – victims feel they have failed and are often ashamed
- Victims will tolerate abuse in order to protect their family, which contributes to the hidden nature of this type of exploitation.

Child trafficking has a negative impact on the victim and their family, as well as the community and the nation as a whole. The number of children vulnerable to trafficking is growing, with potentially disastrous effects to the entire world community.

Redlinger (2004:24) outlines the effects of child trafficking, which will be discussed in detail in chapter two, as follows:

- Child trafficking is a crime and violation of human rights.
- Child trafficking increases social breakdown and promotes crime
- Child trafficking subverts government authority.
- Child trafficking deprives countries of human capital.
- Child trafficking undermines public health.

In short, McDonnell (2006:8) concludes that child trafficking causes emotional, social, psychological, physical and economic trauma to the victim.

According to Wikipedia (2007:6), it is imperative to understand Maslow's hierarchy of needs with regard to trafficked children. These children are deprived of physical safety, love, a sense of belonging and self-esteem, which enables homeostasis and takes first precedence in the child's life. Trafficked children need to breathe fresh air, get enough sleep, get good nutrition, feel secure, receive emotional support from a caring family and society, have a good self-esteem, make the most of their unique abilities and strive to be the best. An absence of the abovementioned needs causes ill health, pain and discomfort. Traffickers rob children of their innate gifts.

Mauer et al. (2004:23) add that preventing child trafficking requires policy and program interventions that are comprehensive in addressing both the causes and the processes associated with trafficking, whether they are found on the trafficking route or at the intended destination. Interventions must not only target children, but also their families, their communities, the recruiters, traffickers, exploiters and society at large.

Below are the international, regional and national legal conventions, protocols and charters which provide a framework to protect children from trafficking:

### **International**

- The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989 prevents the abduction, sale or trafficking of children for any purpose.
- The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime or the 'Palermo Protocol' of 2000 defines child trafficking.

### **Regional**

- The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child of 1990 is the foundational African commitment to combat trafficking.

- The New Partnership for Africa's Development of 2001, is a framework that has anti-trafficking initiatives built into it.

## **Republic of South Africa**

- The South African Child Care Act No. 74 of 1983; Children's Act No 38 of 2005; declares that the state protects children from being trafficked.
- The new Criminal Law (Sexual Offences and Related Matters) Act No. 32 of 2007; protects all children from sexual predators.

The Pretoria News (21-10-2007) documented that necessary legislative reforms are underway in South Africa. Advocate Thoko Majokweni stated that the South African Law Reform Commission has prioritized finalizing the combating of Trafficking in Persons Bill to make child trafficking a criminal offence in this country. Consequently, on the short-term, other legislative measures such as the provisions of the Children's Act of 1983, the Sexual Offences Act of 2007 and racketeering charges are being used to prosecute those involved in trafficking. However, these laws have limitations because cases tried under the Sexual Offences Act, criminalize the act of trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation only, which means that sentences issued under these laws often do not correlate with the severity of the crime.

Furthermore, in South Africa the Children's Act (1983:144-146) as amended in 2005 Section 284 (1) and Section 286 (b) (IV), clearly states that no person, natural or juristic, or a partnership may allow a child to be trafficked. When assisting a child who is a victim of trafficking, the child shall be referred to a designated social worker for investigation upon the child's entry into the Republic of South Africa, in terms of section 155(2).

If, after investigation, findings reveal that the child who is the victim of trafficking is a child in need of care and protection, the evidence serves as an authorization for allowing the child to remain in the care of the state until intervention in the best interest of the child is reached.

Different experts in this field from diverse organizations shared their experiences with the researcher:

- Ms. Moreraine, Victim Assistant Specialist at IOM (2007), acknowledges that South Africa serves as the origin, destination and transit point for trafficked children and human trafficking and that it is currently experienced as a serious problem. Furthermore, many people do not know much about this phenomenon. Therefore there is a need for awareness and prevention.
- Ms. Stiglic, the coordinator of Reducing Exploitative Child Labour in Southern Africa (RECLISA) (2008), stated that child trafficking has a negative impact on the victim. Child trafficking affects the child emotionally and psychologically, and it denies the child the right to education.
- Mrs. Khoza (2007), a foster care worker at Child Welfare Tshwane, recognizes that there are people who traffic in children from rural areas to Pretoria with the pretence of releasing them from poverty and illiteracy. In reality such people are exploiting the children by subjecting them to forced labour, while the trafficker benefits from the foster care grant.
- Mrs. Bermudez, a social worker from IOM (2007), is of the opinion that there are many examples of internal child trafficking from rural areas to urban areas for both sexual and labour exploitation. She added that, from her discussion with an undercover child protection officer, there is evidence that most brothels are preparing for the soccer World Cup tournament in 2010 by moving closer to the soccer stadiums. These brothels are planning to traffic children, especially female children, between the ages of 12 and 18 years, by any means in order to train and use them in the sex industry to serve clients during the tournament.

- Mrs. Martinez, Victim-Witness Specialist US Immigration and Custom Enforcement (2007), explained that children are trafficked for forced labour and sexual exploitation purposes and are mostly found in massage parlours, brothels, bars, strip clubs, domestic service settings, commercial agriculture, factories, construction, forced begging and sweat shops.

According to ILO (2006:3), the role of the social worker in Asia, with regard to preventing child trafficking, is clearly defined and this role can be transposed to South Africa to curb this grave problem. The social worker's role includes primary, secondary and tertiary prevention as outlined below. Details will be highlighted in chapter three.

**A. PRIMARY PREVENTION:** Empowering the children and protecting them from being trafficked.

- Running information and awareness campaigns
- Empowerment projects
- Social mobilization
- Capacity building

**B. SECONDARY PREVENTION:** Identifying those at risk of being trafficked and help them. Also rendering services to children found in transit.

- Treatment
- Involvement in government strategies to develop policies and laws and implementation (cuts through primary to tertiary prevention)

**C. TERTIARY PREVENTION:** Rendering services to trafficked children rescued from the traffickers and brothels.

- Rehabilitation
- Reintegration

Since child trafficking has a devastating impact on all aspects of the child's life, there is a dire need for the South African Government to speed up the reinforcement of the national legal provisions to criminalize child trafficking. In addition, understanding the role of the social worker in preventing child trafficking is crucial since the primary beneficiary from this study will be the children, families and the victims of child trafficking. Secondly, this study will benefit the social worker as a helping professional in child trafficking cases to be aware of the role they can play when dealing with the child trafficking phenomenon. Finally, the nation as a whole will benefit from the outcome of the study because the social worker, the child, the parents and the communities involved in child trafficking cases will be empowered.

## **1.2. PROBLEM FORMULATION**

According to Fouché and De Vos (2005:100), problem formulation is a process of pinpointing a specific problem as soon as a researchable topic has been identified. Child trafficking has a devastating impact on the victims, as well as the countries involved. The researcher has noted that the victims are affected on a social, psychological, economical and physical level. The researcher's views are confirmed by Redlinger (2004:26), who says that child trafficking is a violation of children's rights and it is a crime. Social workers need to respond to the problem of child trafficking because it increases social breakdown and promotes crime. Further, trafficking undermines public health by brutally exposing children to rape, torture, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted diseases.

UNICEF (2005:39) concurs with the above-mentioned observation that child trafficking occurs when the child's protective environment collapses. This includes economic hardship, patterns of instability in the government, oppression and discrimination, unstable family units, armed conflict, traditional practices like early marriages, rituals involving the use of human private parts, particularly for witchcraft, as well as the lack of birth registration. Poverty is viewed as the most visible cause of trafficking. In such instances, populations are forced to flee across or

within their national borders. Refugees and displaced children may be particularly exposed to trafficking, violence, sexual exploitation and harmful working conditions.

Redlinger (2004:21) adds that the lack of birth certificates and national identity documents exacerbates the problem. Children who do not have birth certificates or national identification documents cannot access social services rendered by the government, as these documents are a means to partake of and enjoy the social services. Child trafficking has been compounded by the effects of HIV/AIDS. In particular, female children trafficked for the purposes of prostitution are among the most vulnerable to HIV infection, just as children orphaned by HIV/AIDS are vulnerable to trafficking.

The researcher's view is that child trafficking exists both internally and across borders. Child trafficking is a social problem which needs a multidisciplinary intervention approach, involving social workers, legal practitioners, medical personnel and psychologists. According to Mauer et al. (2004:20), trafficking in children is a particularly pernicious form of child labour and there is an urgent need to promote awareness about it and take immediate and effective action to combat it. They add that, over the last few years, the number of reports of children being trafficked within South Africa and across its borders for labour exploitation has steadily increased.

SANGONet (2004:2&4) agrees with McDonnell (2006:9) and provides an illustration of the following forms of child trafficking:

- Labour exploitation: Children work as cheap labour on farms, in sweatshops or mines.
- Domestic work: Children work as house servants.

- Sexual exploitation: Children work as prostitutes or are forced into intergenerational relationships.
- Illegal adoptions, forced marriages, recruitment as child soldiers, beggars or market sellers and organ trafficking.

The ILO (2006:15) states that child victims of trafficking endure harmful repercussions that affect their physical and mental health, which sometimes contributes to personality and behavioural disorders, and disturbs normal child development processes. These negative impacts require a range of recovery services represented by the diverse professions in a multidisciplinary team. The physical treatment and rehabilitation process will include the following: diagnosis of the phenomenon, examination of various types of the phenomenon, evaluation of the need for treatment, setting of treatment priorities, pooling of team resources, treatment planning and implementation of the rehabilitation regime.

The ILO (2006:16) further observes that children, who have been trafficked, often report feeling a sense of shame, guilt and low self-esteem due to social stigmatization in their communities. Some children have been abused by their own family members and become repeat victims of trafficking. Moreover, trafficked children can also be traumatized during the implementation of official procedures to prosecute traffickers. These processes are usually in conflict with each other and are based on the convenience of the professionals involved, as opposed to the children themselves. Children have also been negatively affected by professional interventions into their family life for the purposes of recovery and prosecution of traffickers. This is true when the roles of the professionals concerned are not clearly defined and also when the state does not have any clear legislation to criminalize traffickers. Finally, children have expressed feelings of guilt and shame when adults do not believe that they are victims, or when the abusers or traffickers deny that they are responsible or at fault, hence the need for social workers' early intervention to avoid the above situation.

Formulating the research problem gives a broad indication of what the researcher wants to achieve through the purpose of the study, as stated by Mouton (1996:101). The researcher has reason to justify the need to clearly identify the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking, which includes:

- The need to understand social workers' perceptions with regard to the issue of child trafficking, the awareness programs they are involved in, their understanding when dealing with trafficked children, the challenges they face as they assist the victims and their constitutional knowledge on how to protect the children who are vulnerable to trafficking.
- The need for greater capacity to prevent and deal with complicated child trafficking cases with a wider range of perspectives and approaches to analyze problems and arrive at solutions by capacitating social workers and other role players with relevant skills (ILO, 2006:16).
- The need to network with other stakeholders in different areas of expertise, for example, medical practitioners, law enforcement personnel, teachers and psychologists, to minimize system-inflicted trauma in children and their families. The responses should become better coordinated and sensitive to children's needs and the services should focus on the best interest of the child (ILO, 2006:16).

Therefore, the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking will include an understanding of child trafficking as a social phenomenon, the root causes, its impact and prevention. In addition, the role of the social worker will be clearly defined with regard to primary, secondary and tertiary prevention, which will include raising awareness, capacity building, fact finding or investigation, immediate and short-term protection, rehabilitation, reintegration and prevention of repeat victimization of the child.

The flowchart below (Figure 1) summarizes the research problem in this study in that children are profoundly affected when they are trafficked, setting them on a long trail of painful experiences often characterized by economic hardships, torture, exploitation, sexual abuse, and a lack of love, attention and affection. Furthermore, they withdraw from school and experience psychological distress. In addition, they run the risk of being infected with HIV/AIDS and suffering from malnutrition, illness, stigma, discrimination and isolation (The Frame Work, 2004:9).

**Flowchart of complex and interrelated problems among trafficked children (Figure 1)**

By referring to the above flowchart, the problem statement for the study can be formulated as follows: The trafficked children experience pain and trauma after their rights are violated by the traffickers and need the support of social workers; therefore, it is crucial to determine the perceptions of the social workers regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking.

### **1.3. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY**

#### **1.3.1. Goal**

Fouché and De Vos (2005:105) define a goal as the end toward which effort or ambition is directed to achieve a dream. Answers Corporation (2007:3) concurs, stating that a goal is something worked or striven towards and it provides a sense of direction. The goal of this study was to explore the perceptions of social workers regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa.

#### **1.3.2. Objectives**

Objectives are what one intends to achieve. As a personal or organizational desired endpoint in development, objectives have to be specific, measurable, attainable and realistic and within a timeframe (Answers Corporation, 2007:5). Fouché and De Vos (2005:107) agree that objectives are the steps one takes, one by one, realistically at grassroots level, within a certain timespan, in order to attain the dream. The objectives of this study were as follows:

- To conceptualize a theoretical framework regarding child trafficking as a phenomenon in South Africa.
- To suggest the significance of legislation in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa.

- To explore with an empirical study, the perceptions of social workers regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking.
- To formulate conclusions and recommendations based on the outcome of the empirical study regarding the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa.

#### **1.4. RESEARCH QUESTION**

Punch (2000:6) states that a research question tells the reader what question the research is trying to answer or what questions will initiate the inquiry in an unfolding study. It also implies that an emerging or unfolding type of study needs to indicate what general question will initiate the research and how it might be refocused and refined as the study progresses. Strydom and Delport (2005:321) state that all questions should be related to the goals and objectives of the investigation.

In this regard, the research question for this study can be formulated as follows: What are the perceptions of social workers regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa?

#### **1.5. RESEARCH APPROACH**

There are two well-known and recognized approaches to research, namely the qualitative and the quantitative paradigms. In the qualitative approach, the researcher attempts to gain a holistic understanding of a phenomenon of interest. In this study the phenomenon of interest is child trafficking and an understanding is gained by means of a flexible strategy or problem formulation and data collection, which is shaped as the investigation proceeds (Strydom, 2005:73-74).

On the other hand, the quantitative approach is highly formalized and more explicitly controlled. Its range is more exactly defined, relatively close to physical science. It has a hypothesis that remains constant throughout the investigation. Furthermore,

its data procedures are applied in a standardized manner; for instance, if all the respondents answer the same questionnaire (Strydom, 2005:73-74).

Neuman (1997:19) narrates that qualitative data is frequently used in explorative studies because the data gathering technique is less connected to a specific theory and is therefore more open to use a range of evidence in discovering new issues.

The researcher applied a qualitative research approach which aims to establish facts, gather new in-depth data and determine if any interesting patterns can be found when analyzing the newly collected data on child trafficking. Furthermore, the meaning of the phenomenon and the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking was sought and understood through the respondents' views (Mouton, 1996:103).

## **1.6. TYPE OF RESEARCH**

There are two types of research, namely basic and applied research. Basic research seeks empirical observations that can be used to formulate or refine theory and provides a foundation for knowledge and understanding. On the other hand, applied research aims to solve specific policy problems or help practitioners accomplish tasks. Applied research focuses on solving problems in practice (Fouché & De Vos, 2005:105). The New Social Work Dictionary (2004:4) agrees that applied research is directed at the solution of some problem in social work.

The most appropriate research type used for this paper was applied research, with exploratory research as a sub-type. The research focused on exploring the perceptions of social workers regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking as a social phenomenon in South Africa.

## 1.7. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### 1.7.1. Research design

According to Fouché (2005:268), a research design refers to all the decisions a researcher makes in planning the study and it can be qualitative or quantitative. Creswell (1998:2) refers to design in the qualitative perspective as the entire process of research from conceptualizing a problem, to writing the narrative.

The New Social Work Dictionary (2004:53) defines research design as the plan of a research project through which data is gathered in order to investigate the hypothesis or to realize the aim.

There are several types of qualitative research designs namely, biography, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography and case studies (Fouché, 2005:269). There are three types of case studies, namely intrinsic, instrumental and collective case studies. The purpose of an intrinsic case study is solely to gain a better understanding of an individual case while an instrumental case study is used to facilitate the researcher's knowledge about a social issue. A collective case study on the other hand furthers the understanding of the researcher about a social issue or population being studied (Fouché, 2005:272). For the purpose of this study, the researcher applied a collective case study research design. The exploration of cases took place through a detailed, in-depth data collection method involving semi-structured interviews (Soy, 2006:1). The product of the research was an in-depth description of the cases and the focus was on exploring the perceptions of the social workers regarding their role in the prevention of the child trafficking phenomenon (Fouché, 2005:273).

The researcher used a collective case study because it excels at bringing the researcher to an understanding of complex issues and adds strength to what is already known through previous research. This type of study emphasizes a detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their

relationships. A collective case study research design examines contemporary real-life situations and provides the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods in which single or multiple sources of evidence are used (Soy, 2006:1).

The participants in this study were social workers who work in child protection organizations. The exploration of the perceptions of the social workers regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking was done through detailed, in-depth interviews. The validity of this research study was based on the description of the perceptions and understanding of the respondents as explored by the researcher.

### **1.7.2. Data collection**

Punch (2000:57) states that data collection is the question asked about instruments and procedures to be used in collecting information. Greeff (2005:296) is of the opinion that researchers use semi-structured interviews in order to get a detailed picture of a respondent's belief about or perceptions on or accounts of a particular topic. The method gave the researcher and participants much more flexibility.

An explorative collective case study research design takes place through detailed and in-depth data collection methods. To reach the goal of this study, the researcher used semi-structured, one-on-one interviews based on the interview schedule. The method allowed the respondents to share more freely in the direction the interview took, which allowed the respondents to introduce issues the researcher had not thought about (Greeff, 2005:296).

### **1.7.3. Data analysis and interpretation**

Strydom and Delport (2005:333) define data analysis as the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. The researcher utilized qualitative data analysis, which transformed data into findings by reducing the volume of raw information, sifting significance from trivia, identifying significant patterns and constructing a framework for communicating the essence of what the

data reveal. The researcher sought general statements about relationships among categories of data and attached meaning to the collective case study research design on the perception of the social worker regarding their role in prevention of child trafficking.

After each interview, the researcher sufficiently and appropriately analyzed the data in order to reach the goal of the research study. The data was reduced to an intelligible and interpretable form so that the relations of the research problems could be studied, tested, and conclusions could be drawn.

Strydom et al. (2005:334), assert that the above might be achieved by the use of Creswell's qualitative data analytical spiral process which entails the following steps:

- Planning for recording: The researcher did a systematic recording of the data; semi-structured interviews with participants were conducted and recorded; tape recorders were used with the participants' consent.
- Data collection and preliminary analyses: There was an on-going data analysis; data collection and analysis went hand in hand and it built a coherent interpretation of the data.
- Managing or organizing the data: Data was managed in file folders, indexed files and computer files.
- Reading and writing memos of the data collected were made to get a sense of the whole picture; reading, reading and reading once more through the data forced the researcher to become familiar with the child trafficking data in intimate ways.
- Generating categories, themes and patterns: The researcher intellectually identified salient themes, recurring ideas or language and patterns of belief that link people and settings together; the data was winnowed, reducing them to a small, manageable set of themes and was written into a final narrative.
- Coding the data: The researcher attached codes to the categories and themes by the use of abbreviations of key words or numbers.
- Testing the emergent understandings: In this phase evaluating the data for usefulness and centrality was important; the researcher determined how useful

the data was in illuminating the questions being explored and how central the data was to the story that was unfolding around the social phenomenon being studied.

- Searching for alternative explanations: The researcher challenged the discovered categories and patterns in the data and sought other plausible explanations for the data and the links among them; and identified, described and demonstrated why the explanation offered was most plausible of all.
- Writing the report: Analyzed data was presented in the form of written descriptions.

## 1.8. PILOT STUDY

According to Strydom (2005:205-206), a pilot study is a small study conducted prior to a larger piece of research to determine whether methodology, sampling, instruments and analysis are adequate or appropriate. The pilot study is a prerequisite for the successful execution and completion of a research project.

The researcher understands that a pilot study is an essential part of the larger research process and it serves as a pre-test that increases the precision of the main investigation.

The aspects of a pilot according to Strydom (2005:206-207) are as follows:

- Study of the literature
- The experience of experts
- Feasibility of the study
- Testing the measuring instrument

In this study, the researcher covered the first two aspects in the introduction. Therefore, the pilot study focused on the feasibility of the study and testing the measuring instrument in order to test and fine-tune the research design for the main inquiry.

### **1.8.1. Feasibility of the study.**

At this stage, the researcher addressed the goals and objectives, resources, research population, procedures of data collection, data gathering method and possible problems which may occur (Strydom, 2005:208).

The respondents of this study were social workers from The International Organization for Migration (IOM), Tshwane Leadership Foundation and Mercy House. The researcher approached the abovementioned organizations and the permission to conduct the study, was granted. The researcher continued to interact with the experts whose experiences and opinions were already mentioned in the introduction so as to get more information. The researcher obtained the literature in the form of books, journals, newsletters and compact discs from the librarian of the Embassy of the United States of America as well as the IOM (Strydom, 2005:208).

The researcher anticipated some problems, such as financial constraints, as she was self-sponsored. Therefore the researcher used cost-effective methods to complete the research project, for example, she used e-mails instead of telephonic communication and made use of shared transport. The researcher also controlled expenditure on overhead costs, such as administrative and printing costs.

### **1.8.2. Testing the interview schedule**

The researcher interviewed two social workers from the above mentioned organizations. The sampling criteria of participants were purposive and they were exposed to a similar situation as the planned main inquiry. They were exposed to the exact procedures as planned for the main investigation in order to test and modify the interview schedule.

The semi-structured one-on-one interviews were conducted to gain a detailed in-depth picture of the social workers' perceptions and understanding of the complexity

of child trafficking, as well as their role in the prevention of it. The respondents in the pilot study did not form part of the main study.

## **1.9. DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH UNIVERSE, POPULATION, SAMPLE, AND SAMPLING METHOD**

### **1.9.1 The universe and study population**

Strydom (2005:193) draws a distinction between the term universe and population. Universe refers to all potential subjects who possess the attributes in which the researcher is interested. In this study the universe were all social workers who attend to child trafficking in South Africa.

McBurney (2001:248) defines a population as the totality of persons, events, organization units and case records with which the research problem is concerned. It refers to individuals in the universe who possess specific characteristics the researcher is interested in. The targeted population in this study were social workers who work specifically with trafficked children at The International Organisation for Migration, Tshwane Leadership Foundation and Mercy House organization in Pretoria.

### **1.9.2 The study sample and sampling**

Zeihemester (2001:25) refers to sampling as the procedures used to select a sample to represent a population. Sampling determines the extent to which the research findings from the study sample can be generalized to the larger population from which the sample was drawn.

Strydom (2005:193) ascertains that a sample refers to a small section or a set of individuals selected from the population. Graziano and Raulin (2000:13) mention that the sample taken should be considered to be representative of the population from which it was taken. Therefore it is important to understand the concept

representativeness and its relationship to generalizability. This means that the sample had the same characteristics as the population from which the sample was drawn from.

The fact that the population in this study consisted of six (6) social workers in the selected organizations, no sampling took place. The researcher used the whole population.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher interviewed social workers employed by The International Organisation for Migration, Tshwane Leadership Foundation and Mercy House. In order to ensure a good ethical standard during the research process, the researcher developed a specific informed consent "agreement" to gain informed consent from the participants. In this study all the respondents had the following characteristics:

- Qualified social workers
- Registered with The South African Council for Social Service Providers
- Social workers in the above organizations who work with trafficked children

#### **1.10. ETHICAL ASPECTS**

Strydom (2005:57) defines ethics as a set of moral principles suggested by an individual or a group, which is subsequently widely accepted, and offers rules and behavioural expectations about the most correct conduct towards experimental subjects and respondents, employers, sponsors, other researchers, assistants and students.

The New Social Work Dictionary (2004:22) refers to ethics as a set of rules and prescriptions, based on social work ethics, regarding the actions and accountability of a social worker in professional situations.

In this study, ethical guidelines served as a standard and basis upon which the researcher evaluated her conduct. The following moral principles and rules were observed to guide the researcher's behaviour and to protect respondents throughout this research:

#### **1.10.1. Avoidance of harm**

Strydom (2005:58) states that subjects can be harmed in a physical or an emotional manner. Neuman (1997:446) states that although physical harm to respondents is rare in social research, the researcher made sure that the respondents suffered no physical harm as a result of the research.

To prevent such a situation, the researcher ensured that the interview was conducted in a safe, conducive and relaxed environment. Respondents were allowed to take breaks in the process of the interview.

Emotional harm to respondents is often more difficult to predict and to determine than physical discomfort, but it has more far-reaching consequences for the respondents (Strydom, 2005:58). Therefore, to minimize such harm, the respondents were informed in advance about the potential impact of the investigation, like fatigue and time taken off work. The respondents were informed that they had the right to withdraw from the investigation at any stage if they so wished.

To protect the respondents from possible harm with regard to their setting, the respondents were assured that their identity, opinions and views would be treated as confidential.

#### **1.10.2. Informed consent**

Strydom (2005:59) states that obtaining consent implies that all possible or adequate information on the goal of the investigation should be made known to the

respondents in order for them to make informed decisions on participation in the research. The procedures which will be followed during investigation, the possible advantages, disadvantages and dangers to which respondents may be exposed must be presented to the respondents.

The credibility of the researcher, with regard to her experience and training on research, was provided to potential respondents. The researcher was aware that respondents must be legally and psychologically competent to give consent and they were informed that participation in research was voluntary and that they were at liberty to withdraw from the investigation at any point in time.

The emphasis was placed on giving accurate and complete information, and on the demands the research project would make upon respondents in terms of time, activities and disclosure of confidential information. Adequate opportunity was given to respondents to ask questions before the study commenced as well as during the investigation. Furthermore, written consent was obtained from the respondents.

### **1.10.3. Deception of subjects**

Deception of subjects is when the researcher deliberately misrepresents facts in order to make another person believe something that is not true, violating the respect to which each person is entitled. Deception involves withholding information, or offering incorrect information in order to ensure participation of respondents when they would possibly have refused it (Strydom, 2005:60).

Neuman (2000:229) concurs by stating that deception occurs when the researcher intentionally misleads respondents by way of written or verbal instructions.

In this study the respondents were not deceived in any way. The respondents were supplied with accurate information on the goal of the research study.

#### **1.10.4. Violation of privacy / anonymity / confidentiality**

Privacy implies the element of personal privacy, while confidentiality means dealing with information in a confidential manner. Confidentiality places a strong obligation on the social worker to jealously guard the information that is confided to her. At the same time, the respondents will have the right to self-determination in that the individuals will make their own informed decision (Strydom, 2005:61-62).

The researcher maintained the anonymity of the respondents by not attaching their names or identifying particulars to the outcomes of the study. The interviews were conducted in a private place and recorded information obtained through audio tapes or field notes was treated responsibly and in a confidential manner.

#### **1.10.5. Actions and competence of researcher**

Strydom (2005:63) asserts that researchers are ethically obliged to ensure that they are competent and adequately skilled to undertake the proposed investigation. Babbie (2001:475) adds that an obligation rests on the researcher towards all colleagues in the scientific community to report correctly on the analysis of data and the results of the study.

The researcher is a qualified social worker, registered with the South African Council for Social Service Providers and is employed as a social worker, responsible for a shelter for women and their children at Tshwane Leadership Foundation.

The researcher obtained the necessary skills from the research project she conducted at third year level in sociology in 2005 and fourth year level in social work in 2006 at the North West University.

The researcher respected the views, opinions and beliefs of the respondents. At the same time, the researcher remained sensitive to their values and refrained from

making value judgments about their perceptions and opinions. Extra caution was taken to look professional all the time, be tactful, maintain integrity and remain neutral.

#### **1.10.6. Release of publication of findings**

According to Strydom (2005:64), the findings of a highly scientific investigation must be introduced to the reading public in written form; otherwise these findings will not be viewed as research. The researcher must compile the report as accurately and objectively as possible with clear and unambiguous information. Plagiarism is a serious offence and therefore all due recognition will be given to sources consulted and people who collaborated. All shortcomings and errors will be admitted.

The researcher made sure that the report is as clear as possible and contains the information necessary for readers to understand the perceptions of the social workers in preventing child trafficking in South Africa. The findings will be submitted as a manuscript for possible publication in a journal. Data will be stored for ten years, according to the policy of the University of Pretoria.

#### **1.11. DEFINITION OF KEY CONCEPTS**

##### **Conceptualization**

This term is defined as the clarification and analysis of the key concepts in the study and also the way in which one's research is integrated into the body of existing theory and research (Mouton, 1996:109).

In this study the following key concepts were defined according to the context of the study:

### **1.11.1. Child trafficking**

According to IOM (2003:5), trafficking in children means the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child, or children by the use of force or other forms of coercion. Trafficking also involves abduction, fraud, deception, the trafficker's abuse of power, the victim's position of vulnerability, giving or receiving payments or benefits, all this for the purpose of exploitation.

The Palermo Protocol (2000:14) defines child trafficking as the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children for the purpose of exploitation, even if this does not involve any fraudulent means.

In this study child trafficking, regardless of circumstances, means the recruitment and removal of any child, often below the age of consent, from a familiar environment to one that is unfamiliar, and keeping the child without a supportive social network for exploitative purposes. As mentioned above, this happens by means of fraud (or no fraud), force, seduction and/or enticement/persuasion on the pretext of helping him/her, often taking advantage of factors such as the victim's vulnerability, ignorance, desperation and defenceless situation. On the other hand, the researcher is of the opinion that some children are forced by desperate circumstances and voluntarily avail themselves to traffickers in an attempt to improve their economic status. For example, children from broken families, orphans, homeless children and street children get involved in crime, prostitution or child labour because of their impoverished situation.

### **1.11.2. Child**

According to the United Nation Convention on the Rights of the Children (1989), a child refers to all persons under the age of 18 years.

The amended South African Child Care Act of 1983 (2005:20) defines a child as a person under the age of 18 years.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher adopted the definitions of the United Nations and South African Child Care Act of 1983, and therefore a child means any person below the age of 18 years.

### **1.11.3. Social worker**

A social worker is a person who is registered and authorized, in accordance with the Social Act 1978 (Act 110 of 1978), to practice social work (The New Social Work Dictionary, 2004:54).

De Vos, Schulze and Patel (2005:17) define a social worker as a well-trained professional with a theoretical knowledge base of methods and techniques for participating in wider social action and policy making.

The researcher in this study defined a social worker as a qualified professional who is registered by the South African Council and authorized by the state to render social services to the community. The services include (but are not restricted to) the prevention of child trafficking.

### **1.11.4. Role**

A role is defined as the function or position that somebody has or is expected to have in an organization, in society or in a relationship (Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, 2005:1268).

The New Social Work Dictionary (2004:54) defines the term role as the expected or prescribed working method of a social worker in specified situations which develops during social work intervention.

For the purpose of this study, the term role was simply defined as the expected function and position of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking.

### 1.11.5. Prevention

The term prevention is the process which aims at minimizing and eventually eliminating the impact of certain conditions that may lead to social malfunctioning (The New Social Work Dictionary, 2004:46).

Thus prevention is the act of stopping something bad from happening rather than dealing with the problem after it has happened (Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, 2005:1149).

The researcher defined prevention as a series of intervention strategies that are used to reduce, curb and control the scourge of child trafficking as it leads to social malfunctioning in South Africa.

## 1.12. CONTENTS OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

The research report consists of a total of five chapters, which are structured as follows:

Chapter one	A general introduction and the research process of the study (Methodology used).
Chapter two	Child trafficking as a global problem. Child trafficking as a problem in South Africa. A need for child trafficking legislation in South Africa.
Chapter three	Factors that contribute to child trafficking. The impact of child trafficking. The role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking.
Chapter four	Empirical findings and literature control.
Chapter five	Conclusions and recommendations.

## 2. CHAPTER TWO

### CHILD TRAFFICKING AS A GLOBAL PROBLEM, CHILD TRAFFICKING AS PROBLEM IN SOUTH AFRICA AND THE NEED FOR CHILD TRAFFICKING LEGISLATION IN SOUTH AFRICA.

#### 2.1. INTRODUCTION

Child trafficking is a global phenomenon that involves the movement of people in complex patterns. Child trafficking takes place for many purposes, including sexual exploitation, domestic labour, agricultural and mine work, as well as for sport and for adoption. Both boys and girls are trafficked, and even where children are not destined for sexual industry, they are at risk of physical abuse, including sexual abuse, (UNICEF 2005:55).

Laczko and Gozdziaak (2005:105) also state that child trafficking involves the recruitment, abduction, transportation, harbouring, transfer, sale and receipt of children, within national or across national borders, through force, coercion, fraud or deception; to place the child in a situation of slavery. The slavery like conditions involve forced labour services, prostitution services, domestic servitude, bonded sweatshop labour and debt bondage.

According to Kelly, Maghan and Serio (2005:145), child trafficking makes huge profits at relatively low risk, especially in countries where the legislature does not clearly address child trafficking as a criminal offence. Consequently, the traffickers, pimps and brothel owners are motivated to break the law because the benefits are so great that many continue using children in sex businesses and the labour industry even after being arrested and serving time in prison.

Some 1.2 million children are estimated by United Nations to be trafficked every year. With globalization and increasing demand for sexual and cheap labour, this number is expected to rise significantly (UNICEF 2008:1).

## 2.2 DEFINITION OF CHILD TRAFFICKING AS A PHENOMENON

According to the UK Committee (2008:1) children are trafficked for several reasons including sexual exploitation or provision of cheap labour for domestic or commercial purposes. Child trafficking is defined as recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of children by means of threats, force, coercion or deception.

The Palermo Protocol (2000:14) summarizes the phenomenon of child trafficking in Figure 2 below. The Protocol covers both national and cross national borders child trafficking, for sexual or labour exploitation.

### **Elements of the Palermo Protocol's definition of trafficking (Figure 2)**

**Source:** (Pharaoh, 2006:8)

UNICEF (2008:1) states that, every year, over a million children are trafficked into the modern-day equivalent of slavery. The children are secretly transported across borders and sold like commodities or trafficked within countries for the sole purpose of exploitation. Child trafficking is a crime that violates the basic rights of the children and destroys their lives.

### **2.3. CHILD TRAFFICKING AS A GLOBAL AND SOUTH AFRICAN PHENOMENON**

Laczko et al. (2005:75) reported that trafficking of children takes place within, outside and into the African region. This activity infringes on the victim's rights and involves intermediaries or third parties, especially scams and criminal gangs. In recent years, trafficking in children, for commercial sex and exploited domestic labour, has assumed such an alarming culture of silence that the issue is not being addressed with the urgency it deserves.

Laczko et al. (2005:75&79) stated that Sub-Saharan Africa is a region characterized by a variety of migration configurations, including cross-border movements; contract workers; labour migrants and the migration of skilled professionals, refugees and displaced persons. Child trafficking is the latest addition to this list. In addition, trafficking in children for sexual exploitation is a simmering problem in Southern Africa, especially Lesotho, Mozambique, Malawi, Zambia and South Africa.

Moreover, Kelly et al. (2005:145) have alluded to the fact that organized, international child trafficking networks are more sophisticated and consequently, the most dangerous and difficult to combat. The networks use fraudulent and authentic, usually stolen, documents which they falsify. Such networks can change routing and means of transportation when the traditional route is blocked. Network members are present world-wide, where lodging and logistical support are at their disposal in countries of transit and destination.

Laczko et al. (2005:79) confirmed that South Africa is a destination for regional and extra-regional child trafficking activities. Children are trafficked from refugee

producing countries like Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo through a network of refugees that are residents in South Africa. The researcher's perspective is that countries such as Zimbabwe that experience economic and political instability are a fertile ground for child trafficking. The researcher, in her field experience, has encountered a number of cases of trafficked children aged 16 years and under who are often unnoticed by the community. In the brothel environment some of the victims are so completely brainwashed, that they refuse to move out of the abusive environment.

According to SANGONet (2000:6), traffickers recruit male and female street children, victims of physical and sexual abuse at home or children orphaned by AIDS. SANGONet (2000:10), continued by saying that, such children migrate from rural areas and border towns from where they are trafficked by mostly white South African Afrikaners who use force or promise of employment in the Eastern Free State and asparagus farms in the border region of Bloemfontein. Long distance truck drivers also traffic child victims from various countries to Pretoria, Johannesburg and Cape Town with the help of corrupt immigration officials at the border posts. Pharaoh (2006:23) adds that, at their destination, victims are locked up in private homes, starved of food while being sexually, physically and verbally exploited. Sometimes the trafficked children are deployed to work as street vendors, child minders or domestic workers.

Materns, Pieczkowski and Vuuren-Smith, (2003:125) echo the above view, saying that internal trafficking of children occurs in South Africa for labour and sexual exploitation. They conclude that South Africa is also a major destination country for regional and extra-regional trafficking activities. McDonnell (2006:12) supports the observation that South Africa is identified as a major trafficking centre for both internal and cross-border trafficking. South Africa is the continent's major destination; reportedly receiving children trafficked from over ten original countries. Girl children are the primary victims, although boy children have been identified as victims as well. It is reported that between 28,000 and 30,000 girls engage in prostitution in South Africa.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) (2003:6) reveals that a diverse range of child trafficking activities occur within the local borders of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region. Further, documentation on child trafficking is scarce but persistent and suggests that child trafficking has existed for a century as a contemporary form of slavery. In 1990, the Anti-Slavery International (ASI) confirmed that children from all corners of African countries were being trafficked into South Africa where they are sold as sex workers and labourers. IOM (2007:8) observes that nine out of fifteen countries in the SADC region had ratified the United Nations Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in persons, especially children.

The IOM (2003:13) also confirms that South Africa is a major destination of trafficked children from most Southern African countries. It is stated that children are recruited along the major transportation routes from various countries like Malawi, Zimbabwe, Mozambique, Zambia and Botswana by long distance truckers who promise marriages, jobs or education opportunities in South Africa. Further, some children who are recruited from rural areas within the country to Gauteng, are promised good jobs and a good life. The victim is then held as the trafficker's sex slave in the Central Business District (CBD), where she or he is sexually exploited for financial gain. The victim is also featured in pornographic videos that are transmitted on Internet with the victim's name and contact details. The children are sexually exploited in private homes and are also sold to paedophile rings.

The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC), AM Live (28-03-2007) agreed with the notion that South Africa is a destination of trafficked children of 13 to 18 years who are exploited in the labour industry. Some of the victims interviewed by the SABC narrated that the traffickers are known to them and take advantage of their poverty.

The researcher has evidence, through her field work, that South Africa is a source and destination for both internal and cross-border child trafficking.

### **Example of child trafficking:**

The researcher interviewed a young girl, 16 years of age, who was recruited from a rural (Mpumalanga) to an urban area (Pretoria) for better prospects but ended up in a child labour exploitation situation. She reported that she was promised a well-paying job by a woman in the CBD of Pretoria. However, on arrival her identification document was confiscated and the victim was forced to work more hours for less than half of the promised wage. Since the environment was unfamiliar to her and her movement was restricted, she persevered for several months before she finally escaped.

Consequently, the researcher is of the view that child trafficking is real and rampant. Therefore, there is a need for an intensive proactive intervention like raising awareness across the country in all children and parents. UNICEF (2008:1) stated that child trafficking is an urgent human rights and development issue which requires action-oriented research, multidimensional policy measures and aggressive operational responses by the South African government as well as the private sectors. Child trafficking is complex, dynamic and structural in nature and reflects implications for social, economic and organizational conditions in societies. For a child, this is an extreme and threatening violation of his or her rights.

### **2.4. HOW CHILD TRAFFICKING OCCURS**

Laczko et al. (2005:77) state that child trafficking occurs in many ways namely:

- Abduction of children which refers to kidnapping or taking children away illegally by use of force and keeping them as prisoners. Children are kidnapped to be used as commodities for traffickers to get money or as a source of sexual

gratification for an older person. In most cases the child is detained or transported by strangers or people known to them to far distant places for criminal purposes for example child labour, child sexual abuse, torture and murder.

- Opportunity to study abroad: Traffickers visit third world countries and recruit children, promising them to further their education in reputable countries and schools. The offers are too good to be true, because the trafficker does all the paperwork and transportation to facilitate smooth transaction for the prospective student.
- Payment of sums of money to poor parents who hand over their children on the promise that their children will be treated well: Parents are cheated by traffickers to hand over their children for a certain amount of money under the presupposition that their children will be treated well. These parents have no idea what type of life their children would be exposed to.
- Bonded placement of children as reimbursement for debt: Parents or guardians use children to pay back debts they incurred. In this case, the parent of the child leaving home to work, accepts payment of the child's wages in advance and it is this advance that bonds the child to his or her employer. According to Dottridge (2004:44), bonded placement is a practice which requires the child to work to pay off a loan when the value of their work greatly exceeds the value of the original loan. Many trafficked children are told by their exploiters that they must continue working until they have paid off the debt which was incurred to pay the cost of transporting them. Children are used as commodities to clear the bond.
- Placement for a token sum for a specified duration: The caretaker uses the child as a small gift, a token of gratitude in payment for a service. The agreement with the trafficker is to use the child for only a period of time. The

reality of the situation is that the child disappears for good and experiences terrible exploitation.

- As gift items: Some parents give their children away as a thank you symbol or a present of appreciation to strangers or friends. The gesture is done out of trust that the gift will be cared for.
- Enrolment for a fee by an agent for domestic work at the request of the children's parents: Parents approach agents who recruit domestic workers and they are deceived into enlisting their children under the guise that they would be enrolled in school, trade or training.

## **2.5. FORMS OF EXPLOITATION EXPERIENCED BY TRAFFICKED CHILDREN**

McDonnell (2006:9) agrees with SANGONet when she illustrates the following forms of exploitation experienced by the trafficked children:

- Labour exploitation: Children work as cheap labourers on farms, in sweatshops or mines. Sweat shops refer to both a workplace and labour system. Answers.com (2008:4) adds that sweated work is undesirable, unhealthy and undemocratic and it is characterized by harsh conditions, long hours, very low wages, and job insecurity and often takes place in illegal and temporary workplaces. Child victims are exposed to hazardous work, in places where conditions are harsh for their age and earn very little money or nothing at all. The perpetrators take advantage of children because they do not understand the value of money.
- Domestic work: Children work in servitude rather than in legal forms of employment. Teenage boys and girls as young as 10 years are recruited and brought to industrialized towns or countries to be exploited in the labour industry (Dottridge 2004:24).

- Sexual exploitation: Children work as prostitutes or are forced into intergenerational relationships. Usually children are lured by traffickers by promises of lucrative jobs only to find themselves in brothels where they are forced to work as sex slaves and generate huge gains for their masters. Dottridge (2004:24), illuminates that boys and girls of 15 to 17 years are trafficked into industrialised countries and towns for commercial sexual exploitation, for example, prostitution and production of child pornography.
- Illegal adoption: Illegal adoption exposes children to sexual or labour exploitation. Adoption facilitated by false documents makes it difficult for government officials to follow up on the adoption case. As a result, illegally adopted children are forced into marriages or to work as slaves.
- Forced marriage: In other cases, cultural practices force underaged children into intergenerational marriage relationships where the child wife is virtually raped by the older partner.
- Recruited as child soldiers: In some cases children are forced to work as soldiers especially in warzone countries where they are subjected to further abuse.
- Beggar or market seller and organ trafficking: Trafficked children are also forced to act as beggars or market sellers on behalf of their masters. Other children are virtually murdered for vital organs which are traded for huge profits by the perpetrators.
- Illicit activities: Children are used in criminal activities like house breaking, theft and murder. In some cases children are used for claiming social security payments (Dottridge 2004:24).

Laczko et al. (2005:76) concurs with the above notion when he summarizes that child trafficking in South Africa occurs primarily for farm labour, domestic work within and across countries as well as sexual exploitation.

## **2.6. PERPETRATORS OF CHILD TRAFFICKING**

Usually the perpetrators of child trafficking are drinkers, drug abusers, and gamblers. The traffickers are also frequently women who were formerly victims of trafficking themselves and venture into this industry because of its alleged profits. Child trafficking perpetrators are also known to go to poverty stricken areas to seduce their targets or victims with promises of high paying jobs and an easy life. They also pretend to fall in love with the girls and promise to get married to them, (Kelly et al. 2005:145).

In some cases parents give little thought to the morality of selling their daughters' virginity or of selling them into prostitution. Some of the girls perceive the whole thing as a normal business transaction or a way of paying debt to their parents (UNICEF, 2005:21).

Kelly (2005:145) states that in border regions, traffickers who provide internal and international transport to trafficked children are usually taxi owners, small boat owners and truck drivers who carry children on the coast across narrow straits or over poorly secured borders. The corrupt immigration and police officers facilitate and promote child trafficking by allowing traffickers access through the borders with the trafficked children.

Dottridge (2004:24-33) agrees with the above notion and summarizes that people involved in child trafficking include:

- Children's parents, elder brothers and sisters, other relatives and close friends, government agencies and commercial agencies. These groups recruit the children both for entertainment industry and also as maids.

- Leaders and prominent members in the society like village headmen, church leaders, police officers, orphanage directors, brothel owners, local doctors, bank officials, taxi drivers, tour operators and criminal gangs.
- Professionals including adoption officers, school teachers, and government officials in justice, like lawyers and those in health departments.
- Immigration officials who help traffickers: Cross-border trafficking of children requires the services of a document forger to produce fake documents. In other cases the document might be genuine but show false ages.
- All sorts of transport workers play a role in trafficking children; bus and lorry drivers, taxi drivers, sailors operating ferries and airport check-in staff. They may facilitate the act consciously or unconsciously but the bottom line is that child trafficking is a business in which a lot of people have a stake.

The researcher's perspective based on the example of child trafficking below is that friends also recruit fellow children and expose them to devastating labour and exploitative sexual conditions.

### **Example of child trafficking:**

The researcher interviewed a survivor of child trafficking who was enticed by her friend to leave her rural home in the Eastern Cape for a promise of an unspecified lucrative job in Pretoria. On arrival, the friend introduced her to two strange men whom she described as foreign nationals. However, instead of getting a good job offer, she was taken to an affluent suburb of Pretoria where she was confined in a highly secured house. At this house, she endured abuse and sexual exploitation, working as a sex slave she was often under the influence drugs and was forced into prostitution under death threats with various clients for a fee charged by her abductors. She finally escaped after one month under very difficult circumstances and reported the matter to the police who did not act immediately. When the child and the police went back to the premises where the trafficked child was kept as a slave, the traffickers had already vacated.

## **2.7. INDICATORS WHICH SHOW THAT THE CHILD IS TRAFFICKED**

Martinez (2007:9) and Kelly et al. (2005:143) agree with the abovementioned points and add the following negative indicators which point out that the child is trafficked:

- Malnutrition, dehydration or poor hygiene: The victim is kept in locked rooms with no food or water and poor ventilation. As a result, the victim becomes under-nourished and dehydrated. Due to starvation and a lack of proper care, the child's health deteriorates.

- Debt bondage: The victims cannot send money home because they are forced to pay back debt. The most common scenario is one where the victim's parent or guardian has accepted a payment in advance from the trafficker. This state of affairs puts the child into debt bondage for either a specified or unspecified period of time (Dottridge 2004:26).
- Signs of rape and sexual abuse which may be coupled with sexually transmitted infections: The researcher came in contact with a survivor who had escaped from a brothel and complained of severe abdominal pains. Her private parts were so sore and swollen that she could not sit or walk comfortably. She experienced an unusually smelly vaginal discharge.
- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD): Refers to a mental health diagnostic category applied to victims of other traumas, including child trafficking victims. Victims of child trafficking experience flashbacks, nightmares, intrusive thoughts, hyper arousal, and an inability to concentrate. Victims often experience multiple layers of trauma including psychological damage from captivity and fear of reprisals if escape is contemplated. Additionally, emotional effects of trauma can be persistent and devastating. Victims of child trafficking suffer from anxiety, panic disorder, major depression, substance abuse and eating disorders. For some child victims the trauma induced by someone they once trusted results in a pervasive mistrust of others and their motives. The impact of child trafficking if left untreated, is chronic and debilitating (Clawson, Salomon and Grace 2008:2-3).
- Isolation: The abductors subject the victim to heavy security at the commercial establishment, including barred windows, locked doors, and isolated location with electronic surveillance. Travel and all identification documents are confiscated from the victim, and usually they cannot speak the local language. Consequently, the victim is usually unable to express himself or herself fully. The researcher also interviewed a survivor who described the

place she was locked up and hidden as terrible. The victim said that the room was heavily guarded, with strong steel burglar bars on both windows and gates which were always locked. Her cell phone was confiscated to cut her communication with the outside world.

- Assistance: Victims fear law enforcement and fail to recognize assistance. The traffickers brainwash the victims not to seek any kind of assistance. This is especially so with those victims who not have any legal status to stay in the country and fear to be revictimized by the officials. The reason for not seeking assistance is that the trafficker would have warned them that seeking assistance would land them in jail because they are illegal in the country.
- Threats of exposure: Victims feel they have failed and are often ashamed. For most child victims, shame is seen as one of the greatest barriers against seeking help (Clawson et al. 2008:3).
- Victims are afraid of the perpetrators as violence and threats are used by them: The perpetrators abuse the victims physically and threaten to kill them if they do not comply with the orders dictated to them. The researcher came upon a survivor who had facial palsy due to beatings inflicted by the trafficker who was not amused when the victim resisted his sexual advances. The victim reported that the trafficker beat her in the face with a broom handle.
- Victims will tolerate abuse in order to protect their family: The trafficked children tolerate abusive situations if a family member was involved in facilitating the trafficking transaction. Children remain quiet and try to protect the family member from facing the consequences even though they themselves would be suffering terribly under the behaviour of the trafficker.

## 2.8. CHILD DEVELOPMENT AND THE NEEDS OF THE TRAFFICKED CHILD

### 2.8.1. Child development

Psychologists like Piaget and Erickson, analyzed children's development from infancy to adulthood and found that adolescence is the most critical stage of the development of one's identity. Erickson theorized that one has eight stages of development and each stage is characterized by common crises. One's ability to move, develop and progress beyond each stage is dependent upon one's ability to effectively handle the crises that each stage presents (healthplace.com, 2000:4).

On the other hand, it is important to understand Maslow's hierarchy of needs with regard to trafficked children. It is stated that trafficked children are deprived of physical needs, safety, love or belonging and self-esteem. All these needs enable homeostasis and take first precedence in the child's life (Wikipedia, 2008:6).

In this study, the researcher will present the developmental stages of children and the crises of each stage first by Piaget, and then Erickson, as cited by Tutuzdad-ga (2003:4) and healthyplace.com (2000:2-3). The needs of the trafficked children according to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, will follow. The developmental stages are categorized and summarized as follows:

- **Stage 1: Infancy; ages 0-1 year**

Crisis: Learning Basic Trust versus Basic Mistrust (Hope)

Children who are well handled, nurtured and loved develop trust and security and basic optimism. If badly handled children become insecure and mistrustful.

- **Stage 2: Toddler; ages 1-2 years**

Crisis: Learning Autonomy versus Shame (Will)

Well-parented children emerge from this stage sure of themselves, elated with their newfound control and proud rather than ashamed.

- **Stage 3: Early childhood; ages 2-6 years**

Crisis: Initiative versus Guilt (Purpose)

During this stage healthily developing children learn to imagine, to broaden their skills through active play of all sorts, including fantasy. Children cooperate with others and are able to lead and follow. Immobilized by guilt, they are fearful, hang on the fringes of groups, continue to depend duly on adults and are restricted both in development of play skills and in imagination.

- **Stage 4: Elementary and middle school years; ages 6-12 years**

Crisis: Industry versus Inferiority (Competence)

At this stage Children learn to master the more formal skills of life by relating with peers according to rules. They progress from free play to play that may be elaborately structured by rules and may demand formal teamwork such as baseball. This is the stage the child masters social studies, reading and arithmetic. Homework is a necessity and the need for self discipline increases yearly. Children who, because of their successive and successful resolutions of earlier psychosocial crisis, are trusting, autonomous and full of initiative would learn easily enough to be industrious. However the mistrusting children would harbour doubts about the future. The shame and guilt-filled children would experience defeat and inferiority.

- **Stage 5: Adolescence; ages 12-18 years**

Crisis: Learning Identity versus Identity Confusion (Fidelity)

Children at the adolescent stage, learn to answer satisfactorily and happily to the question "Who am I?" During this stage, mature time perspective is also developed and the young person acquires self-certainty as opposed to self-consciousness and self-doubt. Children come to experiment with different, usually constructive roles

rather than adopting a negative identity. They anticipate achievement and go on to achieve, rather than being paralyzed by feelings of inferiority or inadequacy.

- **Stage 6: Young adulthood; ages 19-40 years**

Crisis: Learning Intimacy versus Isolation (Love)

Most successful young adults can experience true intimacy for the first time. They experience the sort of intimacy that makes it possible to engage in healthy marriages or genuine and enduring friendships.

- **Stage 7: Middle adulthood; ages 40-65 years**

Crisis: Learning Generativity versus Self-absorption (Care)

In adulthood, the psychosocial crisis demands generativity, both in the sense of marriage and parenthood and the sense of working productively and creatively.

- **Stage 8: Late adulthood; ages 65 years - death**

Crisis: Integrity versus Despair (Wisdom)

If the above seven psychosocial crisis stages have been successfully resolved; mature adults develop the peak of adjustment and integrity. They trust, are independent and dare the new. They work hard, find a well-defined role in life and develop self-concept with which they are happy. They can be intimate without strain, guilt, regret or lack of realism.

For the purpose of this study, the researcher will concentrate on stage five, ages 12-18 years where one has to experience identity crisis versus role confusion (healthyplace.com 2000:2). In general, traffickers target children of this age who can be easily lured and trained into prostitution and labour exploitation. This is the stage when children establish early values, accept certain beliefs, associate with ethnicity and culture, and migrate to those who share the same bond. In the worst scenario of child trafficking, the victim fails to resolve the conflict and is likely to

suffer from a sense of confusion and be undecided about or uncertain of choices. This is true for decisions regarding vocation, sexual orientation and its role in life in general (Tutuzdad-ga, 2003:4). This can be catastrophic, as the very next phases include love, intimacy and relationships. Thus by failing to successfully confront the identity crisis in this life sphere, children are certainly at risk of facing a worst case scenario in the forthcoming psychosocial stages as stated above.

### **2.8.2. The needs of the trafficked child**

The researcher's view is that the above developmental stages of children could be achieved successfully if the children's needs are met. Therefore, after understanding developmental stages of children and their crises, it is imperative to look at the needs of trafficked children in order for these children to survive according to Maslow as cited by Wikipedia (2008) and ILO (2006:24) and will be discussed as follows:

- **Physical needs**

Victims of child trafficking need to breath fresh air, sleep enough, eat proper meals and regulate body temperature. ILO (2006:24) agrees with the notion that the survivor of child trafficking, needs safe and adequate accommodation, food and clothing as well as health care. The absence of these physiological needs will lead to sickness, pain and discomfort.

- **Safety needs**

A well functioning society or family tends to provide a degree of security to its children from trafficking. The society needs to provide something that these children are not experiencing. This may include protection from violence, delinquency and aggression, moral and physiological security, familial security and health security.

- **Love or belonging needs**

According to ILO (2006:24) and Wikipedia (2008), trafficked children need emotionally based relationships such as a caring family. They need to be accepted and to belong to a family, religious group, school and social clubs. They also need to feel loved and accepted by others. Trafficked children become increasingly susceptible to loneliness, social anxiety and depression, hence the need for rehabilitation and reintegration into a caring, supportive, family and society. According to ILO (2006:24), the social worker should link trafficked children with lawyers in order to access legal help and information relevant to legal processes. This may refer to their immigration status, guardianship and the criminalization of offenders.

- **The need for self-worth**

In general, trafficked children experience low self-worth because of damaging experiences they faced. Children need to be respected, experience self-respect and to be respected by others. Children need to engage themselves in activities in order to gain recognition and engage in activities that give them a sense of contribution and self-value, be it in school, family, or church.

- **Self-actualization**

Trafficked children need to make the most of their unique abilities. Self-actualization is the intrinsic growth of what is already in the child, or more accurately, of what the child is. Self-actualized children are allowed to be spontaneous in their ideas and actions. They are creative and interested in solving problems as well as appreciating life. Traffickers rob children of developing in this regard.

## 2.9. CHALLENGES IN MEETING THE NEEDS OF TRAFFICKED CHILDREN WHO EXPERIENCE TRAUMATIC ABUSE

Clawson et al. (2008:3) state that limited availability and access to appropriate mental health services is a significant challenge for both international and domestic child victims of trafficking. For most trafficked children, shame and stigmatization are seen as some of the greatest barriers against seeking health services.

Additionally, it is difficult to establish trusting relationships with victims. Clawson et al. (2003:4) noted that getting child victims to trust and accept help, is a huge obstacle. The mistrust of victims is often due to their history of betrayal by families, service systems and in some cases, law enforcement and governments.

Moreover, the victims' mistrust is often compounded by fears that any connection with law enforcement or service providers can compromise their safety. They fear that the trafficker can trace them and this may lead to revictimisation. They also fear that law enforcers might deport them or they will be sent back to abusive homes.

Furthermore, Clawson et al. (2003:4) continue to argue that mandated treatment efforts may be counter-productive when working with victims of child trafficking. Having already experienced the loss of control to traffickers can make detention centres seem particularly threatening and essentially re-traumatizing to victims, which might compromise the process of their recovery.

Secrecy is a trademark of boys and girls involved in sex trafficking. Victims may not define their experience as abusive, or attempt to escape. If victims do not define their experiences as abusive, no matter how serious it may be, they are unlikely to seek help or engage in recovery (Ugartel, Zarate, and Farley, 2003:147-165)

According to Hotaling, Burris, Johnson, Bird and Melbye (2003:257), foreign-born trafficked victims face additional barriers related to language, culture and isolation. The lack of English and local language skills limit their ability to access information

about their rights, services and options. Isolation due to these language barriers as well as cultural differences can be hard and devastating for trafficked victims resulting in reinforcing their captivity. This is true even of local victims moved throughout the country.

## **2.10. INTERNATIONAL AND SOUTH AFRICAN LEGISLATION**

In view of the above, Mauer et al. (2004:23) add that preventing child trafficking, requires policy and program interventions that are comprehensive in terms of addressing both the causes and the processes associated with trafficking, particularly when found on the trafficking route. Interventions must target not only the children, but also their families, their communities, the recruiters, traffickers and exploiters, as well as society at large.

The trends and patterns of human trafficking in Sub-Saharan Africa became visible to policy makers in the 1990s. Its deeper roots are becoming apparent through the process of intervention to counter the problem. Where there is an insufficient grasp of the reasons for the problem of human trafficking, policy tends to lurch inconsistently in different directions often suppressing the voices of those affected (Truong, 2004:53).

Pharaoh (2006:1) states that South Africa is one of the 117 countries to have signed the Palermo Protocol which came into force on 25 December 2003. By ratifying the protocol in February 2004, South Africa committed itself to criminalizing child trafficking and developing legislation to prevent it. Currently South Africa does not have a comprehensive anti-child trafficking law (United States of America Department of State Publication, 2003:137). The National Prosecuting Authority has been tasked with driving this process and has formed an intersectoral task team that will oversee the development of the legislation. Provision on child trafficking has already been included in the Children's Bill (Pharaoh, 2006:1).

The South African government committed itself to implementing a first call for children by ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. This commitment is consistent with the South African Constitution, which declares that the child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child. Hence, as key-duty bearer, the government must consider children in all strategies, policies and programs to ensure that issues that cause children to become excluded and invisible are addressed (Fact Sheet no 4 of 2006:1). Evidently, child trafficking should be one of the critical issues to be addressed squarely by the government, NGOs and private organizations.

According to the IOM (2007:5) and the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report of 2007, the Republic of South Africa is placed on the Tier 2 watch list for three consecutive years. This means that South Africa does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking. However, the country is making efforts to do so. The TIP Report recommends that the government should demonstrate continued progress towards the passage of comprehensive anti-trafficking legislation and develop national procedures for victim protection, including the screening of undocumented immigrants for signs of victimization before deportation.

As stated already in chapter one (1), the International Association of Women Judges were told in a conference in Boksburg, that South Africa is used as a destination and transit point, as well as a being a source of human trafficking. Further, the Public Prosecutions Director, Advocate Majokweni, reported that statistics in Southern Africa are difficult to obtain, because most countries in the region have not criminalized the trafficking of people (SAPA 2007:5).

Martens et al. (2003:17) state that recent research has shown that most countries in Africa have yet to ratify the trafficking protocol. The absence of clear domestic anti-trafficking legislation offers law enforcement little incentive to pursue the criminal syndicates responsible for the activity.

However, the government of South Africa has some legislation which prohibits child trafficking (IOM 2007:5). For example, Section 75 of the Children's Bill prohibiting child trafficking was passed by the National Assembly and the National Council of Provinces in 2005.

SAPA (2007:5) documented that necessary legislative reforms are under way in South Africa. Advocate Majokweni stated that the South African Law Reform Commission has prioritized finalizing the prevention of Trafficking in Persons Bill, to make human trafficking a criminal offence in this country. Consequently, in the short-term, other legislative measures such as provisions of the Children's Act, the Sexual Offences Act and racketeering charges, are being used to prosecute those involved in trafficking. However, these laws have limitations. Cases tried under the Sexual Offences Act, criminalize the act of trafficking in persons for sexual exploitation only, meaning that sentences issued under these laws, often do not correlate with the severity of the crime.

Further, in South Africa, the Children's Act of 1983:144-146 as amended in 2005, Section 284 (1) and Section 286 (b) (IV), clearly states that no person, natural or juristic, or a partnership may allow a child to be trafficked. When assisting a child who is a victim of trafficking, upon the child's entry in the Republic of South Africa, the child shall be referred to a designated social worker for an investigation. If, after the investigation, findings reveal that the child who is the victim of trafficking is a child in need of care and protection, the evidence serves as an authorization for allowing the child to remain in the care of the state until an intervention in the best interest of the child is reached.

According to the IOM (2005:1), Chapter 18 of the Bill in Child Care Act of 1983 addresses the issue of trafficking in children. The Bill gives effect to the UN Protocol on Trafficking in Persons to criminalize child trafficking. It provides for a fine or imprisonment of up to 20 years, or both fine and such imprisonment, for anyone convicted of this crime. This is in addition to any other offences of which a person may be convicted. This means that if a person convicted for the crime of trafficking

in children has also raped the victim, that person can also be prosecuted for rape. The prohibition also applies to juristic persons and partnerships, which means that syndicates can be prosecuted under the Bill. The parents, guardians and other persons, who have parental responsibilities and rights in respect of children can be prosecuted should they be involved in the trafficking of their children.

Since child trafficking is a devastating experience in all aspects of the child's life, there is a dire need for the South African Government to speed up the reinforcement of the national legal provisions to criminalize the practice. The International, Regional and National Legal Provisions that provide guidance on how to deal with the system in order to protect children, are outlined in the different documents as indicated below:

#### **2.10.1. International**

- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) ratified by many countries including South Africa, state that governments have a duty to prevent abduction, sale or trafficking of children for any purpose. Article 35 requires the governments of countries ratifying The Convention to take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction of, sale of or trafficking in children for any purpose or in any form. According to Dottridge (2004:38), Article 32 and 34 respectively in The Convention, also requires governments to take action to protect children against both economic and sexual exploitation.
- The UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime or the 'Palermo Protocol' of 2000 document, defines child trafficking. The Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking in person, especially children.

### **2.10.2. Regional**

- African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child 1990, foundational African commitment to combat trafficking.
- New Partnership for Africa's Development 2001, framework for anti-trafficking initiatives throughout Africa.

### **2.10.3. Republic of South Africa:**

- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108 of 1996 chapter 2 section 28 (2) states that a child's best interests are of paramount importance in every matter concerning the child (The Constitution of Republic of South Africa 1996:14).
- The South African Child Care Act of 1983:144-146, as amended in 2005 Section 284 (1) and Section 286 (b) (IV), protects the child from being trafficked and much has been stated on page 27.
- The South African Criminal Law of Sex offences Amendment ACT, 2007 (Act No. 32 of 2007) prohibits some forms of sex trafficking. The New Sexual Offence Act protects children from sexual predators and helps South Africa's efforts to fight sexual crimes against all persons especially vulnerable children (The department of justice (DOJ) and CD 2007).

### **2.11. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, UNICEF (2005:57) indicates that children are often trafficked for domestic labour, service industries, construction, agriculture, fishing, begging and to work in sex industries. Various patterns of child trafficking have been documented in different parts of the world. Trafficking for purposes of labour is largely demand-driven and is part of a large unmet demand for labour that is

cheap and malleable. Child labour is attractive not because it is cheap, but rather because children are easier to abuse, less assertive and less able to claim their rights than adults. They can be forced to work longer hours with less food, poor accommodation and no benefits. Victims of trafficking for child labour, often work in conditions hazardous to their physical and mental health.

Consequently, it is imperative for the South African government to prioritize, finalise and implement child trafficking legislation. The law will give the Social Workers the obligation and authority to render effective social services.

In the following chapter the focus will be on the role of the social worker in preventing child trafficking.

### **3. CHAPTER THREE**

## **FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO CHILD TRAFFICKING, THE IMPACT OF CHILD TRAFFICKING AND THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER IN PREVENTING CHILD TRAFFICKING**

### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

The population of children vulnerable to trafficking is growing with potentially disastrous effects for the entire world community. The number of orphans in many developing countries has risen dramatically due to HIV/AIDS that kills their parents, (Redlinger 2004:8). According to the Fact Sheet no. 4 (2006:1), the Republic of South Africa has 3,360,165 orphans. This has resulted in the rapid rise of child-headed households, a situation which has created a fertile ground for traffickers.

Additionally, the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) (2003), as cited by Carol (2006:6), has shown that child trafficking occurs for many reasons and is an overwhelmingly demand-driven phenomenon. Child trafficking occurs predominantly because there is a market for children in labour and sex trade, and this is matched by an abundant supply of children, mostly from poor families, and who are easy prey for those who seek to make a profit by exploiting their vulnerability.

UNICEF (2004:2) states that the contributing factors that exacerbate the problem of child trafficking are numerous. Trafficking in children occurs when the child's protective environment collapses. This includes economic hardship, patterns of instability in the government, oppression and discrimination, unstable family units, armed conflict, traditional practices like early marriages or rituals which use human private parts, and the lack of birth registration. Poverty remains the most visible cause for trafficking.

### 3.2. THE FACTORS THAT CONTRIBUTE TO CHILD TRAFFICKING

Kelly et al. (2005:142) and Redlinger (2004:22-23) discuss the contributing factors of child trafficking in detail as follows:

- **Poverty:** Child traffickers thrive in urban slums and poor villages, where poverty severely blunts educational and employment opportunities. These traffickers bribe, coerce and lie to families, promising marriage or employment to obtain children. After obtaining the children, traffickers transport them long distances away, sometimes across the borders. Families may also willingly send their children to areas where there are better chances of employment and thereby, inadvertently, exposing the children to risk of exploitation.
- **Gender discrimination:** Since in many African societies men are held in higher esteem than women, women and children are often treated as commodities or property and denied a voice and right to protection against violence. Families who do not value female children may choose to keep them from school or marry them off early. This practice dramatically limits children's life opportunities and increases their vulnerability to trafficking.
- **Natural disasters and political instability:** Child trafficking and sex violence flourishes in situations where norms break down. Poverty, hunger, general desperation may place children in situations in which they are forced into trafficking and exchange sex for food, shelter and survival.
- **Culture:** Some cultures have long-standing practices of child marriage that make child trafficking permissible. Children are exposed to traffickers who pose as saints and lie to the children's parents saying that they will protect and care for the children through marriage. Unfortunately, the children end up enslaved in small shops, on farms, in domestic servitude and girls are forced into prostitution.

- HIV/AIDS: HIV/AIDS has resulted in a massive rise in the number of orphans and child-headed households in which children must be wage earners. This vulnerability, along with the social stigma associated with AIDS in many parts of the country, leaves these children with little defence against trafficking exploitation.
- Weak laws and corrupt law enforcement: The police and immigration officers are underpaid, overworked and lack resources, making them a target for bribery. Some police officers work as guards in brothels in their spare time to earn extra income, or get involved in trafficking. Efforts to fight against child trafficking may also be crippled by inadequate laws.
- Globalization: The greater movement of people and goods occurring as a result of globalization, has made it easier for child traffickers to transport children across the borders. Globalization has increased the number of destinations where paedophiles can seek sex with children. Globalization has also increased unemployment to locals, reduced wages and social spending, plunging more families into poverty.
- New communication and technology: The Internet and Short Message Service (SMS) have known no national boundaries and is almost without regulation. Today, text, images, audio and video files can be sent around the world in seconds. Child pornography, sex tourism information and mail order brides are offered openly on the Internet. Forums on the Internet like chat rooms and facebook have become meeting grounds for pimps selling children.
- Family dysfunction and breakdown: Drug abuse, divorce and remarriage can place a strain on a family relationship. Where the parents are stressed and are unable to care and protect their children, they create a vulnerable environment for children and fertile environment for child traffickers to take

advantage of. Family dysfunction and breakdown lead children living in the streets, becoming easy prey for the traffickers.

- Social Developmental strategies: Expanded tourism brings an increased number of people with different motives including child trafficking. High profits for organized criminal groups perpetuate child trafficking, causing it to flourish. Newly opened borders or increasingly weaken borders give opportunity to the child traffickers to cross without a proper scrutiny of travel documents.

### **3.3. THE IMPACT OF CHILD TRAFFICKING**

According to Kelly et al. (2005:142), transnational trafficking of children frequently involves deception, seduction or force. Young women, who answer advertisements for models, dancers or other entertainment industry jobs, often become vulnerable to trafficking. Once they arrive at their destination, their documents are confiscated by the trafficker or brothel owner. The girls are essentially kept under close watch and held in captivity.

Such relocation takes children away from their families, communities and support networks, leaving them isolated and utterly vulnerable to exploitation. Often they are even more disempowered by being transported to a place where they do not speak the local language, making it much more difficult for them to seek help or to escape. Due to their state of illegality, children are unable to access the rights of citizens that entitle them to services like education, medical services and recreation services (UNICEF, 2005:49).

The ILO (2006:16) further states that children who have been trafficked often report feeling a sense of shame, guilt and low self-esteem due to social stigmatization in their communities. They feel ignored by fellow members of the community and are expelled from school. Some children have been abused by their own family members and become repeated victims of trafficking. Moreover, trafficked children can also be

traumatized during the implementation of official procedures to prosecute traffickers. These processes are usually in conflict with each other and based on the convenience of the professionals involved, as opposed to the children themselves.

Further, children have also been negatively affected by professional interventions into their family life for the purposes of recovery and prosecutions of traffickers. This happens especially when the roles of the professionals concerned are not clearly defined and when the state does not have clear legislation to criminalize traffickers. Finally, children have expressed feelings of guilt and shame when adults do not believe that they are victims, or when the abusers or traffickers deny that they are responsible or at fault (ILO 2006:18).

Child trafficking has a negative impact on victims and their families as well as the community and the nation as a whole. Children vulnerable to trafficking are growing with potentially disastrous effects on the entire world community. Redlinger (2004:24) clarifies the impact of child trafficking as follows:

3.3.1 Child trafficking is a human rights violation and a crime: Child traffickers violate the universal rights of all children to life, liberty and freedom from slavery in all its forms. Child trafficking undermines the basic need of a child to grow up in a protective environment and the right to be protected from abuse and exploitation. Most children die in transit or upon arrival at their destination. Some children are killed for refusing to submit to forced labour or sexual slavery, or trying to escape, while others die from contracting diseases.

3.3.2 Child trafficking increases social breakdown and promotes crime: Child trafficking interrupts the passage of knowledge and cultural values from parent to child and from generation to generation, making the child more vulnerable to the traffickers and weakening a core pillar of society. Children, who return to their communities as victims of trafficking, are likely to become involved in criminal activities.

- 3.3.3 Child trafficking subverts government authority: Child trafficking operations thwart government attempts to exert that authority, while undermining public safety, particularly the security of vulnerable children. Moreover, bribes which traffickers pay to officials undermine the government's ability to combat corruption among law enforcement, immigration and judicial officials.
- 3.3.4 Child trafficking deprives countries of human capital: Trafficking children for forced labour purposes at an early age and subjecting them to 10 to 18 hours of work per day, denies them access to the education necessary to break the cycle of poverty and illiteracy, a condition ideal for trafficking to take place. Individuals at risk cannot acquire the skills necessary to compete in their country's labour market, leaving national labour forces ill-equipped to compete in the global economy, where success is based on skilled workers.
- 3.3.5 Child trafficking undermines public health: Child trafficking brutalizes children exposing them to rape, torture, HIV/AIDS and other sexually transmitted and infectious diseases. They are also exposed to violence, dangerous working conditions, poor nutrition, drugs and alcohol addiction. Increasing numbers of children trafficked into prostitution as well as street children are contracting HIV/AIDS. Trafficked children are less likely to participate in immunization programs, defeating government efforts to eradicate early childhood diseases. Severe psychological trauma caused by separation, coercion, sexual abuse and depression often leads to a life of crime, drug and alcohol addiction and sexual violence.

In a nutshell, McDonnell (2006:8) illuminates that child trafficking caused social, psychological, physical and economic trauma to the victim:

Emotional Impact:

- The victims feel ashamed, guilty and betrayed.
- The victims have low self-esteem.
- The victims are stigmatized.

Physical Impact:

- The victims are physically abused as the traffickers apply violence to get consent.
- The victims are prone to infectious diseases, for example, HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs).
- The victims may fall pregnant and have unwanted children.
- Some victims suffer severe pain while others die.

Psycho-social Impact:

- The victims lose their childhood.
- Child trafficking violates children's rights to be protected, grow up in a family environment and have access to education.
- Child trafficking inhibits social and educational development.
- Trafficked children face potential legal trouble.

### **3.4. THE ROLE OF THE SOCIAL WORKER IN THE PREVENTION OF CHILD TRAFFICKING**

The International Labour Organization (2006:15) states that child victims of trafficking endure harmful repercussions that affect their physical and mental health, sometimes contributing to personality and behavioural disorders and disrupting

normal child development. These negative impacts require a range of recovery services represented by the assorted professions in a multidisciplinary team. The physical treatment and rehabilitation process include the following: The diagnosis of the problem; an examination of various types of the phenomenon; an evaluation of the need for treatment; the setting of treatment priorities; the pooling of team resources; treatment planning and finally, implementation of the rehabilitation regime.

The role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking, as stated by the ILO (2006:16), includes the following:

- Capacity to handle complicated child trafficking cases with a wide range of perspectives to analyze problems and arrive at solutions.
- Understanding professional protocols and official processes for the handling of child trafficking cases by clearly identifying duties of role players in the prevention of the problem.
- Ensuring informed decision making abilities among the role players. This will include more accurate investigations into the problem and the utilization of more appropriate intervention approaches.
- Networking with other stakeholders in different areas of expertise to minimize system-inflicted trauma to children and their families as responses become more effective coordinated and sensitive to children's needs.

Figure 3 illustrates the process of child trafficking protection as follows:

### **The process of child trafficking protection - Figure 3**

Adopted from Thachildrights 2008

- **Monitoring network:**

The community needs to initiate and build up some mechanisms for the close monitoring of child trafficking in the form of a Child Trafficking Watch. Meanwhile, efforts must be made to create greater public awareness in schools, communities, hospitals and practitioners that are concerned with monitoring children who are vulnerable to trafficking. (thachildrights 2008:5).

- **Investigation or fact finding:**

Upon receipt of suspected cases of child trafficking, the designated social worker must investigate and collect information that can be used to assess the victim. When the information on the child's physical, psychological and social status has been gathered, there will be a need to involve people from

different fields such as paediatricians, psychiatrists, forensic doctors, police and lawyers (thaichildrights 2008:5).

- **Protection:**

The primary information gathered, needs to be assessed to formulate a protection plan. The multidisciplinary team will hold a case conference to discuss and assess the problem, and to plan for protection.

- **Recovery and treatment:**

The child victim may need to receive psychological counselling. In addition, depending on the outcome of the primary assessment of the victim's social and physical condition, immediate medical treatment must be given.

- **Social Reintegration:**

Through treatment and assessment by a multidisciplinary professional team, the victims of child trafficking are prepared physically, mentally and socially for reintegration into the community. In addition, communities, schools and organizations have to be prepared to ensure the children's safety. This also involves clear stipulated roles and responsibilities for parents, guardians and caretakers, of trafficked children.

- **Prevention:**

This outstanding, important process of child protection involves three approaches, namely: primary, secondary and tertiary, which are discussed in detail in the following sections.

The social work roles regarding primary, secondary and tertiary prevention of child trafficking will be discussed according to the situation in Asia.

### **3.4.1 PRIMARY PREVENTION:**

According to Thachildrights (2008:2), the target groups of primary prevention are all the children in the society. Primary prevention is when the social workers become pro-active in their approach in curbing child trafficking. This approach encourages them to organize and conduct child trafficking awareness campaigns and support the campaigns with information, training and media production. This may focus on the following:

#### **3.4.1.1 Run Information and Awareness Campaigns:**

- Community based child run radio and television programs: This is good practice at provincial level in high risk sending zones. For example, areas near the border, places that attract tourists, the central business district and rural areas. The Run information and awareness campaign is an operation of small radio and television activities lead by trained children with the assistance of child welfare organizations. The radio and television station should be attached to drop-in centres that offer catch up education and recreational activities to community children. The radio and television program helps to prevent child trafficking because it promotes the participation of children in the fight against trafficking (ILO 2006:26).
- Organize a drama group: The drama focuses on raising awareness for behavioural change. The drama performance will present the message of cause and effects of child trafficking in a form that can be easily understood by children and the community at large. The drama performance stimulates the audiences to question their assumptions and perceptions about child trafficking and take action (ILO 2006:6).

#### **3.4.1.2 Empowerment projects:**

- The establishment of the Micro Enterprise Development Model for vulnerable families is important: The social worker has the role of assisting vulnerable families to run community based economies through the formation of enterprises that aim to improve the socio-economic status of families with low levels of literacy in South Africa. The business model helps to prevent child trafficking because it improves the family economic situation as a means of fighting poverty, which is one of the root causes of child trafficking and child labour. It also unlocks the entrepreneurial skills of vulnerable families and empowers family relations (ILO 2006:2).
- Empowerment of single women, widows and mothers: The practice of empowerment addresses one of the most vulnerable, often forgotten groups in society. The empowerment practice brings this group to the attention of the public so that their problems and needs are appropriately addressed. The counselling program is necessary because it offers traumatized single and widowed women space to cope with their psychosocial difficulties, build their confidence and create a proactive environment for their children (ILO 2006:49).
- The establishment of a child and youth centre: The establishment of a child and youth centre cannot be over emphasized. This is a multipurpose centre where vulnerable children and the youth can receive training in educational and vocational skills. The educational training programs must include child trafficking and how to prevent it (Cincotta, Dispasquale, Holden, Johnson, McIntosh, Paplinger and Sinclair, 2005:51 and ILO, 2006:62).

#### **3.4.1.3 Social mobilization:**

- The establishment of community vigilant teams: This is a voluntary formation of community vigilant teams in locations within South Africa as a country. The

government, NGOs and private organizations must support their activities to raise awareness, detect risk cases and take action against child trafficking. The community vigilant teams help to prevent child trafficking by taking surveillance actions in their own communities and collaborating with nearby communities to detect cases of children at risk, on transit or being trafficked. Further, it is imperative to refer children at risk to relevant organizations, for example, IOM or Childline to receive appropriate education and welfare services (ILO 2006:9).

- The establishment of vocational skills training: This is a professional vocational package offered to children who are at a high risk of being trafficked; the package is facilitated by child welfare organizations. The model turns crises into opportunities by empowering children, who otherwise would be vulnerable to commercial sex, with commercial skills that can create opportunities for the decent income and dignity (Cincotta et al., 2005:51).
- Mobilize restaurant workers: This seeks to protect children working in restaurants, many of whom are under 18 years old and at risk of being trafficked. The initiative includes mobilizing the workers as peer leaders against child trafficking, improving the workers' understanding of the dynamics, risks and dangers of child trafficking and equipping them with leadership and life skills (ILO, 2006:45).

#### **3.4.1.4 Capacity Building:**

- Teachers' training: Teachers' training is a crucial step in capacity building and raising awareness for teachers and other education professionals. This can be offered as a result of a joint effort of child welfare organizations and the Department of Education. The objective is to improve the quality of education to make formal schooling more attractive to learners. Improved quality education discourages student dropouts and increases teachers' awareness of child trafficking. The teachers, who are well-informed of the dynamics of child trafficking, provide special attention to those children who are at a higher risk

of being trafficked. Engaging and empowering school teachers make them become more effective change agents in the fight against child trafficking (ILO 2006:18). Empowered educators are equipped with knowledge of relevant international instruments and national laws that can protect children.

- Training on psychosocial counselling: This is the delivery of a professional training package on psychosocial counselling by a highly specialized institute. The aim is to produce a cadre of competent social workers, counsellors and psychologists who will serve in child welfare organizations caring for victims of trafficking. The training improves the quality of psychosocial counselling and care for victims of child trafficking (ILO 2006:34).
- Government and NGO joint effort: This is a collaboration which aims at enhancing institutional capacity building in the rehabilitation, recovery and reintegration of child victims of trafficking. The purpose of collaboration between the government and NGOs is to utilize a multidisciplinary approach and psychosocial counselling and care. The main feature of the collaboration is the compact training curriculum, which is specifically focused on the needs of returned children. The initiative is built on a good partnership between the government and NGOs (Cincotta et al., 2005:51 and ILO, 2006:54). This approach results in diverse resources working together for the wellbeing of the trafficked child, affected families, the community and the country as a whole.
- Anti-trafficking surveillance and cyber watch unit: This addresses child pornography, sexual abuse, paedophilia and trafficking. The model comprises of a surveillance of pornographic activities on the Internet, police foot surveillance of crime sites, detection of child abuse cases, arrest and prosecution of perpetrators and the rescue and rehabilitation of victims. The cyber watch surveillance unit monitors paedophile websites, chat rooms and other Internet forums in an attempt to entrap paedophiles that come to South Africa to pursue sexual gratification (Cincotta, 2005:51 and ILO, 2006:72).
- Multidisciplinary approach: This is a group of professionals who render services and recommend activities conducted on behalf of each survivor from the time

of intake through to integration stage. The composition of the team usually includes police, medical, legal, psychosocial and social welfare professionals.

### **3.4.2 SECONDARY PREVENTION**

Secondary levels are especially relevant for the destination countries from a medium- and long-term perspective. The target groups of secondary prevention are children that are at risk of being victims of being trafficked (Antislavery, 2006:3). Children at risk of being trafficked, need to be protected, especially those found in transit to the brothels. Those found at the destinations need to be rescued and protected from being re-trafficked. The following are the services rendered at secondary prevention level:

#### **3.4.2.1. Treatment / Rehabilitation:**

- Children's home or shelter: Children's homes or shelters can be established for comprehensive rehabilitation services for trafficked victims. The victims can benefit from the multidisciplinary and participatory approach because of the improvement in psychosocial care and recovery services for child victims of trafficking and abuse.
- Rehabilitation centres: Social workers in rehabilitation centres should work closely with network organizations for referral recovery, reintegration and legal protection services. The social workers should know that it is imperative to draw on existing expertise in offering well-rounded services and building a good network which involves a multidisciplinary manner. The emphasis on comprehensive services for child victims of trafficking should be in line with the national priorities to strengthen child welfare and protection.
- Case Management System: This is an innovative approach for centre-based intervention to offer high quality services to traumatized children who have

been trafficked. Intake forms for case management and a computerized management information system are two good examples of tools used to record separate cases and support effective rehabilitation processes. The case management system is also necessary for the application of a multidisciplinary approach to rehabilitation. The model aims at delivering services to child victims of trafficking by improving institutional capacity building in dealing with all aspects of protection and rehabilitation of survivors. Child participation is also an important aspect that is knitted in to ensure the best interest of the child. (ILO, 2006:42). ECPAT (2006:113) also confirmed that the social worker, as the case manager, must ensure that the best interest of the child is the priority. The worker should carry out an individual case assessment to determine the needs of the child, develop an individual care and protection plan and refer the child to appropriate services. Victimized children must be involved in identifying their needs and problems, assessing the psychosocial problems and finding solutions which should be implemented. Children must be provided with the support, counselling and motivation which are needed in implementing the rehabilitation plans.

- Assistance during legal/court process: Social workers should prepare and submit social case study reports with case assessments and recommendations focusing on the best interest of the child. Social workers also have to advise the court actors regarding child friendly procedures and ensure that children's best interests are represented during court hearings (ECPAT, 2006:113).

### **3.4.2.2. Involvement in the government strategies to develop policies, laws as well as implementation:**

This point is essential in all levels of prevention strategies.

- Social workers should be involved in the formulation of policies and laws with regard to child trafficking.
- Establishing and maintenance of special law enforcement units for the purpose of investigating cases, rescuing victims and rehabilitation.
- Law enforcement is only effective if it is implemented. Therefore international and national instruments on child protection must be implemented (Cincotta, 2005:51)

### **3.4.3 TERTIARY PREVENTION**

Antislavery (2006:3) states that tertiary prevention is a long term process which involves rehabilitation and reintegration into the society. Such prevention measures include referral mechanisms that provide support and assistance to trafficked children and these measures help to prevent re-trafficking. Thaichildrights (2008:2) adds that, at this level, the target is to protect the children who have been rescued from the trafficking trap by rendering relevant services. The other target groups are the traffickers; they should be prevented from repeating the behaviour of trafficking children, hence they need to be prosecuted.

#### **3.4.3.1 Rehabilitation**

- Delivery and facilitation of accommodation, rehabilitation and reintegration services must be rendered by the designated social worker. It is important to provide safe shelter for a child rescued from trafficking. The provision of

social counselling and rehabilitative assistance for the child victim is necessary to prepare the child for social reintegration and possible family reunification. The reintegration of the child into the community involves facilitating accessibility to schools, vocational training and other community activities or programs (ECPAT, 2006:113).

### **3.4.3.2 Reintegration**

- During the reintegration process: The social worker should be aware that the reintegration process is long-term in nature and requires locating and tracing the child's family, coupled with thorough security and risk assessment to determine the best long term care arrangements for such a child (ECPAT, 2006:113).

Figure 4 below, according to ILO (2006:22), illustrates and summarizes the different stages of recovery and the reintegration process used when a trafficked child is being assisted.

**Stages of recovery and integration process (Figure 4)**

**Source: ILO (2006:22)**

The researcher noted that throughout each of the three stages that there are certain basic aspects of care that should be respected. Access to community is important even though the child may be staying in a shelter on a temporary basis in the process of being integrated back into the community. Likewise, the right to education, medical care, and good nutrition must be promoted in both interim care and during integration.

The ILO (2006:24-28) discussed the stages of recovery and integration process as follows:

- **Intake and assessment:**

The social worker conducts an individual needs assessment and attends to the child's most immediate needs, such as counselling, medical attention and legal assistance. The needs assessment of the trafficked child should be updated on a regular basis until the child leaves the facility and integrates into the society. Once family tracing is successful, then the family and community assessment begins (ILO, 2006:24).

Family assessment focuses on the economic status of the family to support the child, the risk of re-trafficking, the risk of reprisals by the traffickers, the risk of harm by the family through neglect or abuse and changes in family structure since the child left (ILO, 2006:25). Similarly, community assessment focuses on the community's attitude toward trafficked children and related issues such as prostitution, HIV/AIDS and political instability.

The social worker should assess any risks of stigmatization and social rejection and action should be taken to prevent child trafficking. Furthermore, the type of resources that exist in the community that will support the child's integration process must be assessed. Assessment should also focus on external factors that may place the child at risk of further abuse or neglect.

(ILO 2006:25-26) From the beginning, this is an individual participatory process where the child's expressed views and the best interests, are a primary consideration.

- **Interim care and support in recovery:**

This is a stage of recovery and healing. The goal is the long-term and sustainable integration of the child into the family or community, and this must happen as soon as possible. The case management team involves social services, the legal guardian of the child, organizations and individuals experienced in caring for trafficked children (ILO, 2006:27).

- **Reintegration and continuing care:**

The children may have gone back to their families of origin, joined other families such as an extended family system or foster care. In the case of adolescents, they may live independent of others while studying. A long-term placement, such as at an industrial schools or in foster care, places the responsibility for the child's development in the hands of the community and family who are legally responsible for the child's care and welfare (ILO, 2006:28).

### 3.5 THE PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE THE SOCIAL WORKER WHEN DEALING WITH TRAFFICKED CHILDREN

Regarding different resources as indicated below, there are twelve principles that the researcher could identify that can guide the social workers in all their actions, as part of the service rendered to the trafficked children:

- Thijs (2006:18) states that each trafficked child is an individual and the recovery and integration process should be an individual one that promotes the best interests of each child. ECPAT (2006:80) agrees and states that the best interests of the child are the primary consideration. The child should be treated as a unique individual requiring a special approach.
- ECPAT (2006:80) promotes non-discriminatory practice and encourages the worker to be child-friendly and gender sensitive. It should be taken into consideration that children are different from adults, and that boys are different from girls. According to Thijs (2006:18), while respecting differences between individual children, each trafficked child should not suffer discrimination on the basis of age, sex, nationality, race, language, religion or ethnic or social origin, birth or other status.
- No trafficked child should be held in detention at any time. Laws that permit the detention of children should not be enforced in the case of trafficked children (Thijs, 2006:18).
- Each child's right to privacy and confidentiality should be respected and protected at all times, with the necessary measures taken into consideration to protect the privacy and identity of victims. Names, addresses or other information that could lead to the identification of the children or their families must not be disclosed to the public or media. Children must never feel under pressure to talk to journalists (Thijs, 2006:19).

- Trafficked children should be protected from any forms of neglect and physical and psychological abuse at all times. This extends to protection from traffickers, communities, families, the media and individuals working within or visiting a care giving facility (Thijs, 2006:19).
- The views of each child should be considered and actively sought. Child participation should be promoted during every stage of recovery and integration. The views of the trafficked child should be given due weight in accordance with the age, maturity and best interest of the child (Thijs, 2006:19).
- Trafficked children should be made aware of their rights as well as responsibilities. School-going and adolescent children must be informed about the recovery and integration process and their entitlements; while in home care they must be informed about services available and prospects for family reunion (Thijs, 2006:19).
- Trafficked children should be treated with respect, affection and dignity. Self-reliance and reliability of the children should be promoted in line with their age and maturity. In the long-term, in order to foster a spirit of independence in children, care providers should use an empowering approach that enables children, especially adolescents, to make their own informed decisions (Thijs, 2006:19). Avoid any possible re-traumatization or re-victimization of the child. Never treat the child in a degrading or humiliating manner (ECPAT, 2006:80).
- According to Thijs (2006:19), family and community type of arrangements for trafficked children are preferable to those of institutional settings. Even in institutional settings community based measures can be implemented. This can be done by ensuring a minimal level of social contact with members of the community.

- Children should not be separated from their families unless there is a risk of being neglected, abused or re-trafficked. Too many shelters presume that trafficked children are better off in the shelter because their families must have been complicit in their trafficking or because the families are considered too poor. This neglects the basic right of children to be with their families (Thijs, 2006:19).
- Care providers should form networks to ensure that all children experience appropriate physical and emotional care in a setting that encourages their development. Networks between organizations in different geographical areas and between specialized services are more effective and they also save resources (Thijs, 2006:20).
- Care providers should be trained and experienced in caring for the trafficked children and possess the relevant professional qualifications according to their job descriptions (Thijs, 2006:20).

### **3.6 CONCLUSION**

In summary, child trafficking has grave consequences on the children involved and therefore should be prevented. The main contributing factors to child trafficking are poverty, gender discrimination, natural disasters and political instability, cultural aspects, HIV/AIDS, ineffectual laws, corrupt law enforcement, negative effects of globalization, new communication and technology. Family dysfunction and breakdown of the family and poor social developmental strategies also contribute. Further, the impact of child trafficking is devastating because the victims are affected emotionally, physically, socially, psychologically and economically.

To this end, the role of the social worker is paramount in preventing this phenomenon in society. The social workers should be involved at various levels of prevention: The primary, secondary and tertiary level, all of which include information dissemination and awareness campaigns, empowerment projects, social

mobilization, capacity building, rehabilitation and development, and the implementation of policies and laws. When dealing with trafficked children, the principles that guide the social worker are crucial and should be adhered to.

## **4. CHAPTER FOUR**

### **THE EMPIRICAL PROCESS**

#### **4.1. INTRODUCTION**

This study explores the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking. In chapter one (1), the researcher outlined the proposed blueprint according to which the intended study was planned. This chapter presents, analyzes and discusses the execution of the blueprint through empirical research.

In chapters two (2) and three (3), the researcher undertook a literature review to provide a base of theoretical knowledge on child trafficking with the purpose of building on existing and available literature. The researcher discussed child trafficking as a global and South African problem as well as the need for effective child trafficking legislation in South Africa. Further, the researcher focused on the factors contributing to child trafficking, the impact of child trafficking and the role of the social worker in the prevention of this phenomenon. This formed a significant knowledge base for the empirical research in this study.

In this chapter, the researcher attempts to provide an accurate account of the empirical process as outlined in chapter one (1). Therefore, the findings obtained in this research study are presented in a narrative form.

#### **4.2. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

Using exploratory research, the goal of this study was to gain more insight into the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking. According to Fouché et al. (2005:105), the researcher follows an exploratory approach to gain insight into and become acquainted with this phenomenon. Through this study, more insight was gained in the understanding of the root causes, the impact and prevention of child trafficking as a social phenomenon. The experiences and perceptions of social

workers regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking are clearly defined regarding primary, secondary and tertiary levels of prevention.

It is evident through the literature study that trafficked children are going through painful experiences, often characterized by economic hardships, torture, labour, sexual exploitation, as well as a lack of love. Furthermore, trafficked children are denied the right to education as they are withdrawn from school. They experience psychological distress and run the risk of being infected with HIV/AIDS from unprotected sex (The Frame Work, 2004:9).

The following were the objectives which guided the researcher in the empirical study:

- To conceptualize a theoretical framework regarding child trafficking as a phenomenon in South Africa.
- To suggest the significance of legislation in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa.
- To explore in an empirical study, the perceptions of social workers regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking.
- To formulate conclusions and recommendations based on the outcome of the empirical study regarding the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa.

### 4.3. METHODOLOGY

The researcher's motivation for this study was to understand the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa. Therefore, the researcher followed certain strategies as outlined in chapter one (1) to achieve the goal of this study. The researcher used a qualitative research approach to gain a holistic understanding of child trafficking. Social workers' perceptions regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking were also explored. The most appropriate type of research to be used in this study was applied research, which aims at exploring and identifying the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking.

The data collection was done through semi-structured, one-on-one interviews as stated in chapter one (1). In the process of data collection and analysis, the researcher was able to identify salient themes, recurring ideas and patterns (De Vos, 2005:338).

The following themes, form part of the interview schedule:

- Theoretical understanding of the concept of child trafficking.
- Views on the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking.
- Perceptions regarding the services in place to protect victims of child trafficking.
- Experiences regarding obstacles social workers face in the prevention of child trafficking.
- Views on the availability of resources to support social workers in the prevention of child trafficking.
- Knowledge about the existing legislation related to child trafficking in South Africa.
- Perceptions on training needs of social workers in the field of child trafficking.

#### **4.4. THE STUDY SAMPLE**

The universe of this study was described in chapter one (1) as being all social workers who work with trafficked children in South Africa. As it is in most researched studies, it was impossible to involve all the social workers who work with trafficked children in South Africa. Therefore, a population was selected from the universe. The researcher conducted a detailed interview with all the social workers found at the selected organizations as mentioned in chapter one (1) namely: the International Organization for Migration (IOM), Mercy House and the Tshwane Leadership Foundation. A total number of six (6) social workers were interviewed from these organizations.

#### **4.5. EMPIRICAL DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND MANAGING DATA**

According to De Vos et al. (2005:335), data collection and analysis go hand in hand to build a coherent interpretation of the data. Therefore, the relationship between data collection and analysis in qualitative research is inseparable.

In this study, data was collected through one-on-one, semi-structured interviews in order for the researcher to get a detailed picture of the respondents' perceptions (Greeff, 2005:296). The researcher followed the data collection method discussed in chapter one (1).

At the commencement of the interview, the researcher introduced herself to the respondents and reminded them about the topic under study. The researcher involved each respondent in a discussion about the themes of the research. The interview schedule guided the researcher through a series of themes that were discussed without dictating the flow of the interview. In addition, the respondents were perceived as the experts on the subject and were therefore allowed maximum opportunity to narrate their views as recommended by Greeff (2005:296). The respondents were free and enthusiastic to narrate their perceptions on their perceived role in the prevention of child trafficking.

The researcher was granted permission by all the respondents to record the interview sessions for accuracy purposes. After each interview, the researcher classified and interpreted the data. Addendum A contains the list of themes while Addendum B contains the informed consent and Addendum C contains letters of permission to conduct research at the selected organizations.

Managing data was another step the researcher embarked on. According to De Vos et al. (2005:336), data generated by qualitative methods are voluminous. However, the researcher properly labelled and saved all files of interview sessions using a notation system for easy retrieval. As data was being collected, copies were made on Compact Discs (CDs) and one copy was put away for safe keeping. The researcher also transcribed the recorded interviews. The transcribed interviews were studied thoroughly and the researcher gained more insight from the respondents regarding the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa.

#### **4.6. INTRODUCTION OF RESPONDENTS**

Six (6) respondents signed consent forms and were interviewed in this study according to different themes that form part of the one-on-one, semi-structured interview schedule. Two respondents were interviewed from each of the selected organizations. The three selected organizations are all involved in assisting victims of child trafficking in various capacities.

##### **4.6.1. Respondent one**

The first respondent works for the Tshwane Leadership Foundation which runs The Potters House project, a shelter for women and children in crisis including victims of human trafficking. She has been working for the selected organization for the past 15 years. Currently, she is involved in prevention of human trafficking programs through raising awareness and advocacy.

#### **4.6.2. Respondent two**

The second respondent works for the International Organization for Migration. The respondent has been there for the last 5 years and specifically provides assistance to both internally and externally trafficked victims.

#### **4.6.3. Respondent three**

The respondent works for Mercy House, a shelter that accommodates women and children who are victims of domestic violence. The shelter also accommodates victims of human trafficking and the respondent has been with the organization for 4 years. The organization renders services to trafficked victims in partnership with the IOM and the Department of Social Services. The respondent is involved in running human trafficking awareness workshops countrywide.

#### **4.6.4. Respondent four**

The respondent works for the Tshwane Leadership Foundation which runs the Lerato House. This is a shelter for young girls aged 12-18 years, who are victims of domestic violence and victims of child trafficking. The focus is on protecting and empowering girls who are vulnerable to prostitution and human trafficking. She has been working for the selected organization for the past 2 years.

#### **4.6.5. Respondent five**

The respondent works for International Organization for Migration and has been there for 1 year. The respondent specifically provides assistance to both internally and externally trafficked victims, focusing on capacity building.

#### 4.6.6. Respondent six

The respondent works for the Mercy House, a shelter for women and their children who are victims of domestic violence. It also accommodates victims of trafficking. She has been with the organization for more than 7 years. The organization renders services to trafficked victims in partnership with the IOM and the Department of Social Services.

#### 4.7. DESCRIBING, CLASSIFYING AND INTERPRETING DATA ACCORDING TO THEMES

The researcher interviewed six (6) respondents. Five (5) were interviewed in their working environment, while one was interviewed in the researcher's office. After the interviews with the respondents were completed, the data was classified and interpreted according to the themes of the interview schedule. All the interviews were conducted in English as all the respondents were fluent in and comfortable with the language.

The seven (7) themes that form part of the semi-structured interview schedule guided the researcher in the empirical observation process. The content of the latter will be discussed in the following section.

##### 4.7.1. THEME ONE

#### **Theoretical understanding of the concept child trafficking.**

As stated in chapter one (1), this research study focuses on the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking. As such, it is imperative for the respondents to demonstrate their understanding of the concept of child trafficking and what it entails. Therefore, the following sub-themes emerged from theme one:

- Definition of child trafficking.

- Factors contributing to child trafficking.
- Forms and dynamics of child trafficking.
- The impact of child trafficking.
- The needs of trafficked children.
- Indicators to identify trafficked children.

#### **4.7.1.1. Definition of child trafficking**

- All the six (6) respondents stated that child trafficking involves transporting a child from a familiar environment to a non-familiar environment with, or, without the consent of the child for exploitation purposes. Further, they narrated that the trafficker uses coercion, deception (pretence, false promises of jobs, marriage, school and a good life) and fraudulent means to win the victim. Sometimes children can also be abducted. Pharaoh (2006:8) supports the above definition. One (1) out of the six (6) respondents explained child trafficking always involves mobilization and is followed by exploitation, which includes sexual and forced labour. She added that when it comes to the child as the victim of trafficking, consent falls away because no child of less than 18 years can enter any contract (ECPAT, 2006:43).

#### **4.7.1.2. Factors contributing to child trafficking**

All the respondents agreed that factors contributing to child trafficking include poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunities such as education, homelessness for example street children, orphans and child-headed families. However, the respondents expressed different views on the contributing factors as stated below:

- Respondent one (1) stated that child trafficking occurs because of capitalism and that people love and worship money to the extent that, they do not value the child's social well-being. The children are also trafficked to be used in drug syndicates and other criminal activities. Respondent three (3) concurred

with the view when she said children are trafficked because of greed and that it is a moneymaking scheme. This observation of money making by traffickers is in line with literature. Pharaoh (2006:28) concludes that children are recruited by traffickers for their own sexual gratification while others are used as prostitutes for the financial benefits of the trafficker.

- Respondent two (2) was of the opinion that South Africa is a destination and transit country for victims of child trafficking because of the large international airport. Traffickers use the O.R. Tambo airport to transport children in and out of the country without being noticed. Martens et al. (2003:19) confirm this by stating that South Africa is a primary country of destination for victims of child trafficking in the region, because of its extreme pockets of wealth, its first class financial and transportation infrastructure and the growing influence of organized crime. The respondent also indicated that political instability in the countries of origin puts children at risk of being trafficked and creates fertile ground for traffickers. She added that HIV/AIDS has caused families to disintegrate, especially if the parents are infected and become ill, children lack parental guidance and they become vulnerable to trafficking. Redlinger (2004:22) and Martens (2006:66) noted that HIV/AIDS has resulted in a massive rise in the number of orphans and creates many child-headed households. In such devastating socio-economic circumstances, children remain vulnerable to trafficking because they have few defence mechanisms to protect themselves against exploitation.
- Respondent three (3) has the view that child trafficking occurs because of a high demand for young girls and boys in the prostitution industry. Pharaoh (2006:29) agrees with this point and states that children are sold to brothels, syndicates and gang leaders for both commercial sexual exploitation and the buyers own sexual gratification.
- Respondent five (5) and six (6) added that children are vulnerable because of immediate needs. They get attracted and respond to advertisements in

newspapers and the Internet, promising them some form of education opportunities and “a good life”. Often parents are also blinded and they encourage their children to seize the opportunity without proper investigation. ECPAT (2006:56) states that socio-economic factors such as a low level of education and a lack of employment opportunities make children vulnerable to trafficking. The researcher agrees with Redlinger (2004:9) when she states that the Internet provides instant global communication in today’s age and children are finding themselves in dangerous and life-threatening situations, like being victims of trafficking.

- Respondent six (6) narrated that children are trafficked for removal of body parts to be used for “muti”. She gave a scenario of children from Mozambique who were trafficked to South Africa for such purposes. Fortunately, the government intervened before the ordeal befell them.

#### **4.7.1.3. Forms and dynamics of child trafficking**

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) (2006:10), child trafficking takes many different forms and is dynamic and adaptable. Consequently, social workers as service providers must understand the dynamics of child trafficking in order to offer effective services to these children.

- All six (6) respondents had the perception that children are trafficked for forced labour, domestic as well as sexual exploitation. However, respondent two (2) provided all the forms of both internal and external child trafficking. She described them as being domestic servitude, bonded labour as well as removal of body parts and that both have an element of sexual exploitation.

#### **4.7.1.4. The impact of child trafficking**

The empirical study indicates a wide range of experiences when respondents discussed the impact of child trafficking. The general view shared by all the

respondents indicated that child trafficking has a severe psychosocial impact on the victims.

- Respondent one (1) and six (6) narrated that the impact of child trafficking is devastating and traumatic for any child. Their trust in humanity is gone, and the child loses trust in others. Clawson et al. (2008:2-3) stated, that the trauma induced by someone the trafficked child once trusted, results in pervasive mistrust of others and their motives. ECPAT (2006:58) also confirmed that the behaviour of victims of child trafficking includes not trusting adults anymore. The impact of child trafficking if left untreated can be chronic and debilitating.
- Two (2) respondents indicated that the chance of the victim not seeing his/her family again, is a high possibility. In some cases, the children are given high doses of habit forming drugs like heroin and marijuana and become drug addicts. ECPAT (2006:58) confirms that some victims of child trafficking frequently develop drug and alcohol addictions.
- Respondent two (2) verbalized that victims are traumatized and the extent of trauma depends on the type of exploitation. The experience could also be traumatic as the traffickers could be the people they trusted the most, such as family members and church leaders. She had the opinion that 17-18 years old girls might not wish to have children due to multiple unprotected sexual activities through which they may contract STIs. The respondents indicated that victims of child trafficking's health is always compromised. Some children are at risk of contracting HIV/AIDS from unprotected sex, which may also lead to an unwanted pregnancy. Psychologically, victims would not come to terms with what happened to them. ECPAT (2004:57) confirms this observation as follows:

All trafficked children who have been sexually exploited will suffer some form of physical and mental harm. The longer the sexual

exploitation goes on, the more health problems will be experienced. Some children will sustain lifelong damage very quickly, such as contracting venereal diseases and HIV.

- Respondent three (3) explained that the victims become disoriented, confused, they no longer perceive their bodies, they lose inner joy, experience shame, and blame themselves for what happened to them. Respondent four (4) added that victims often feel powerless and helpless. These views collaborate with ECPAT (2004:58) that trafficked children have feelings of hopelessness, a confused sense of time and confused feelings about sex and love. They also experience feelings of guilt and shame. The respondents explained that some victims hate traffickers, but others may yet fall in love with a trafficker. She explained that some rescued victims still want to go back to stay with the trafficker. ECPAT (2004:58) concurs that children who are victims of trafficking sometimes develop dependent relationships with their traffickers. Such victims run away from protective environments and go back to the trafficker. The respondents also verbalized that some victims hate and blame God for their situation. They even ask questions such as, "Where was God when I was experiencing my ordeal?" "How would God allow such terrible experience to happen?"
- Respondent four (4) verbalized that child trafficking affects the economy of the country in a negative way. Instead of focusing on developing and improving the lives of the citizens, the money is diverted to prevent the phenomenon. As the population increases, it becomes difficult to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS. She also held the assumption that the blind people who beg in the street may be trafficked and are used to make money through begging.
- Respondent five (5) agreed with Mertinez (2007:9) and Kelly et al. (2005:143) when she stated that trafficked children experience Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). This can be characterized by nightmares, aggressive

behaviour, poor concentration, flash backs as well as intrusive thoughts. The ILO (2006:59) states that trafficked children suffering from PTSD, are unable to produce a description of what happened to them. They are uncooperative, hostile and have impaired ability to recall events in detail, due to the trauma.

- Respondent six (6) added that some victims feel as if they are dirty and smell bad, and that they are damaged forever. This is true for the children who have been sexually abused. The respondent gave a scenario of one of the trafficked victims, who kept on bathing many times (3-4 times) a day. According to the ILO (2006:58), victims of child trafficking have a low self-image and believe that they are worthless and dirty. The respondent also verbalized that the traffickers deny the trafficked child the right to education. The trafficked child would be gratifying the trafficker instead of attending school. The Frame work (2004:9) confirms that trafficked victims are denied their right to education because they are withdrawn from school and go to serve the trafficker.

#### **4.7.1.5. The needs of trafficked children**

All six (6) respondents verbalized that the basic needs of the trafficked child are of paramount importance. Therefore, focusing on stabilizing the world of a trafficked child is critical. The respondents formulated their views as follows:

- A trafficked child who has been rescued, needs safe and stable accommodation in a secure environment. The ILO (2006:58) states that the victims worry that they may not be able to have a "normal" life again.
- Medical needs should be met. The victim should be taken to a doctor for a medical assessment and must be treated for the diagnosed problem.
- Respondent one (1) and five (5) shared the view that while the victims stay in a shelter, they need to be involved in various programs. Example of the latter

may be skills development programs, such as fabric painting, beading, drama, poetry, catering, tailoring, computer skills and spiritual.

- The respondents also indicated that the dietary needs of victims of child trafficking should be met. They should eat together with the other children in the shelter. According to the ILO (2005:48), it should be ensured that the children have a balanced diet that meet any special dietary needs of the child due to health, religious, ethnic as well as cultural background.
- One respondent verbalized that needs might differ depending on the type of exploitation experienced by the victims but there are several common needs. She explained that in meeting the needs of the trafficked children a victim-centred approach is used. According to Payne (2005:186), the social workers should utilize a victim centred approach when assisting trafficked children. This is because of the belief in each and every trafficked child's uniqueness, potentiality and capacity. Payne (2005: 218) states that every child must be treated as an individual with focus on self actualization, self determination and self improvement. When utilizing the victim centred approach, the emphasis is on the here and now, meeting the immediate needs of the child rather than on the history.
- One of the respondents highlighted that it is important to communicate with the victim in his/her own language. She said that when rendering services to trafficked children it therefore is important to involve a reliable person who understands the child's language. The ILO (2005:44) states that shelters should consider looking for volunteer teachers or translators who could assist children who do not speak the local language.
- The respondents indicated that, the victims need education in all aspects of their life in order to survive in a normal environment. The education package should involve topics such as sex education, awareness of their rights, health education and academic education as well as how to gain access to all

relevant services (psychosocial). According to the ILO (2005:46), the victims of child trafficking need to be equipped with life skills which include various social skills such as self awareness, problem solving, learning to negotiate, decision making, and critical thinking. The victims need to be integrated into the community or family reunification.

- Finally, respondent five (5) specifically, expressed the need for social workers to network with other stakeholders and professionals to assist the trafficked child effectively. The researcher is aware of the fact that social workers alone, can not successful prevent child trafficking.

#### **4.7.1.6. Indicators to identify a trafficked child**

On the issue of identifying a victim of child trafficking, the respondents shared several views. The UNODC (2006:104), states that identification of trafficked children is essential for their protection and the protection of their rights. The respondents verbalized that, from the interview with the victim, one would get the following clues:

- The victim would mention that the trafficker tricked or cheated him/her. The trafficker may have promised him/her a job and lots of money, but the job which they were recruited for at point A would not be what they were doing at point B. There should be an element of mobilization and exploitation. The victim may report that he/she was locked up all the time with restricted movements and not allowed to communicate with his/her family.
- Respondent one (1) and five (5) added that the child may mention during the interview that she was being used for sex and the trafficker was paid for her services. The child may narrate that she was being beaten if she didn't comply with the traffickers demands.

- Respondent two (2) and five (5) mentioned the other indicator as being a language problem, especially if the victim is a foreign national. The victim may not speak any local language and his/her identification documents as well as cell phone, may have been confiscated.
- Respondent four (4) indicated during the interview that the other indicator would be when the child doesn't know the people he/she was staying with. The victim would have been taken to a strange place where he/she would have been staying with people who are strangers to him or her.
- Psychologically, the child would show signs of trauma like being emotional, fearful, anxious, unstable and acting out of the ordinary.
- Physically, the child could have cuts, blue marks on the skin, scars and bruises from being beaten.
- ECPAT (2006:58) and ILO (2005:8) summarize that these children are forced to work, are locked up, suffer sexual, physical and psychological exploitation and are denied their childhood. The children endure traumatic bruises, scratches and wounds on their sexual organs. They also experience anxiety, suicidal thoughts, emotional withdrawal and nervous breakdowns.

#### 4.7.2. THEME TWO

##### **Views on the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking**

The respondents came up with different views regarding the social worker's role in the prevention of child trafficking. However, all of them indicated the importance of the educator role at the primary prevention level. The social worker as an educator raises awareness about child trafficking through information distribution to individuals, groups and communities. The respondents

verbalized that prevention must also take place at an individual, group, institutional, civil society and community level, and in the country as a whole.

In chapter 3 the researcher focused on three types of prevention:

- Respondent two (2) suggested that more information on child trafficking needs to be distributed to the community at large as well as their leaders. She suggested further that social workers should utilize radio and television, as it is a powerful medium to raise awareness about child trafficking. She indicated that creation of opportunities is paramount as you give knowledge to vulnerable communities. The opportunities such as economic empowerment should be introduced to the community members as skills development programs. The ILO (2005:44) states that training to prepare adolescents for employment is necessary. Child victims should be given choices to continue their education if they wish. Training and job placement should be closely monitored to avoid children from being exploited again.
- Respondent two (2) and three (3) indicated that information about child trafficking should be distributed at institutions like schools, hospitals and churches, in the urban as well as the rural areas. The respondent suggested that the social workers should engage with and empower school teachers and other professional role players like doctors, nurses, police officers, immigration officers and those in foreign affairs. She believes that once the teachers and other role players are equipped with knowledge regarding child trafficking they would become effective change agents in the prevention of child trafficking. According to Thairights (2008:2), social workers should make efforts to conscientise greater public awareness in schools, community hospitals and practitioners that are concerned with monitoring children who are vulnerable to trafficking. The ILO (2006:18) states that social workers must equip teachers, church leaders and community leaders with knowledge of relevant international instruments and national laws regarding the worst forms of child labour, child trafficking, children's rights and national criminal codes. The respondent further verbalized that, at the secondary prevention

level, the social workers should make sure that rescued children are accommodated in a child friendly and secure place to protect them from being trafficked again. According to the ILO (2006:34), trafficked children must be in a friendly environment that protects them from trafficking, media and the community. Trafficked children must experience that this environment is supportive and not one that will hurt or punish them.

- Respondent three (3) indicated that the social workers who work with the youth, should guide them to make more appropriate choices regarding opportunities which may come their way. The youth needs to seek advice and guidance before they respond to opportunities that were offered by unknown people.
- Respondent two (2) and three (3) stated clearly that social workers, as service providers, must urge and lobby the government to revise current policies to prevent child trafficking. The social workers should advocate for both children who are vulnerable to trafficking and those who are already victims of trafficking. According to Payne (2005:294), social workers need to represent the interests of powerless victims of child trafficking to powerful individuals and social structures.
- Respondent one (1) stated that social workers should promote the Ubuntu principle. Neighbours in communities should protect and support each other. The community members should interact and care for one another. According to the South African Law Commission (1998:29), Ubuntu is based on the spirit of humanity which encompasses a principle of people caring for each other's wellbeing with the attitude of mutual support. The same respondent indicated that social workers need to intervene in children's use of the Internet and to monitor chat rooms. Hansen (2004:2) illuminates that children spend hours chatting online with their friends and sometimes with strangers. Recent research has shown that one in five children online, is approached by a sexual perpetrator, one who may try to meet up with children to exploit them for

trafficking. The perpetrators often use chat rooms as a hunting ground to locate their victims.

- Respondent five (5) indicated that the social worker should initiate sustainable projects to empower vulnerable groups like children and their families to be self-reliant in the community. Payne (2005:295) states that empowerment seeks to help the trafficked children and vulnerable groups to gain power in decision making. In addition, the victims gain control over their own lives by reducing the effect of social or personal blocks by exercising their existing power, increasing capacity as well as self-confidence in their lives.
- Respondent four (4) narrated that social workers should encourage and motivate individuals, groups and community members to be assertive enough to report any suspicious behaviours in the areas they stay that may be linked with trafficking. She gave a scenario where neighbours in a particular suburb were suspicious of strange activities in their neighbourhood for some time. Only when they reported their concern to the police, did they realize that the concern was for a good reason. Girls between 16-18 years were rescued from child trafficking.

In this section the researcher noted that the respondents verbalized more on their role regarding primary prevention. Secondary and tertiary prevention which involves treatment, rehabilitation and social reintegration respectively were not clearly verbalised.

### 4.7.3. THEME THREE

#### **Perceptions regarding the services in place to protect victims of child trafficking**

All six respondents shared the same perceptions when they stated that the services which are currently in place to protect children against trafficking are inadequate. Therefore, there is a strong need to improve the services in order to meet the needs of the individuals, groups, communities and the country as a whole.

- Respondent one (1) indicated that, shelters for abused children at local level are doing extraordinary work to support trafficked children. The shelters provide accommodation, nutrition and safety, and link the children to other relevant facilities such as schools, hospitals and embassies. The challenge is that there are no specialized workers to attend to and meet the needs of the trafficked children. Although the International Organization for Migration renders a good service to trafficked children, it is not doing much to empower the local service providers to take over when they pull out.
- Respondent two (2) is of the opinion that services to trafficked children are not effective because of the lack of knowledge, trained staff and, in some settings, a lack of commitment. Services rendered by the Gauteng Province are more effective, compared to that of other provinces that consist mostly of rural areas. This is due to the lack of resources. She gave an example in a rural area setting where they used a hospital as a place of safety for a trafficked child – not an ideal place for such a child.
- Respondent three (3) verbalized the fact that the government seems to be happy to be in a partnership with the civil society shelters and to care for the victims of child trafficking. However, victims of child trafficking are often forgotten in shelters with no one to follow up on them. She also indicated that, at consulate level, services are ineffective. The Department of Social

Services is trying to offer training on human trafficking issues to service providers, but its attempts are not adequate due to lack of trained personnel and finances. She posed the following questions just to confirm that services are not adequate:

- ✓ Where are the shelters?
  - ✓ Where are the education facilities to educate the victims?
  - ✓ Where is the goodwill of the embassies to get legal papers for the victims?
  - ✓ Where are the resources?
- 
- Respondent four (4) thinks that the services in place to support trafficked children are inadequate. She indicated that the shelter she is working at, does its best to render effective services to protect vulnerable children. However, she felt that the police are slow to investigate and arrest the perpetrators. She argued that, as long as the trafficker is free, the children remain at risk even though they are in a shelter. Chances are that the trafficker can locate and re-traffic these children.
  
  - Respondent five (5) and six (6) indicated that services are not adequate everywhere in the country, both in urban and rural areas. The rural areas are often the most disadvantaged and lack a lot of resources which result in poor service delivery. The researcher experienced that child trafficking occurs both in urban and rural areas. Therefore, inadequate services and lack of resources in a community put the lives of vulnerable children at a high risk of being victims of trafficking.

#### 4.7.4. THEME FOUR

##### **Experiences regarding obstacles social workers face in the prevention of child trafficking**

All six (6) respondents acknowledged that there is a number of obstacles they face while they work in prevention of child trafficking. They verbalized the obstacles as follows:

- **Lack of knowledge and training:** All six (6) respondents voiced that the major obstacle that they are facing in the prevention of child trafficking, is the lack of knowledge regarding the phenomenon. Respondent two (2) and four (4) verbalized that most social workers do not experience a high level of knowledge about child trafficking and more specifically how to prevent it. As a result, they could not render an effective service to achieve it. Respondent four (4) plainly said she does not have any knowledge about the applicable legislation and does not know how far the South African Law Commission has gone with the formulation of policies regarding child trafficking.
- **Trauma:** Respondent four (4) indicated that most children affected by trafficking do not talk easily because they are so disoriented due to trauma. They sometimes do not know where they come from. Some of the victims would report that their parents died and therefore, they felt secure in the shelter. They are not willing to go back home, and as a result, the shelters are overcrowded.
- **Judgmental attitude:** Respondent three (3) verbalized that service providers often demonstrate judgmental attitudes in their work with trafficked children. This happens when they learn that a victim was trafficked while she was in the prostitution industry. She narrated that social workers should assist children who are victims of trafficking without judging what they have done to

find themselves in the situation. According to Payne (2005:186), the social worker's approach in working with the trafficked children should be non-directive and non-judgmental. It should involve active listening, accurate empathy and an authentic friendship. The focus should be on the importance of self-seeking and personal growth of the victim.

- Removal of halfway passport: Respondent one (1) indicated that another obstacle was the government's removal of the halfway passport from the IOM. The halfway passport used to give IOM officials the authority to escort the trafficked children who are non-South Africans to the airport. The IOM officials were helping the children through processes of immigration until they got on the aircraft. The government removed the halfway passport which meant that the IOM official could escort the child up to the check in point. For now, there is only one official working for Jesuit Refugees Services (JRS) who has the authority to escort all the victims of trafficking countrywide. The challenge is that he also escorts asylum seekers and refugees to the airport and assists them through immigration procedures. She said this is a big task for only one person. As a result it takes long to repatriate and reintegrate foreign national children who are victims of trafficking.
- Language: Respondent five (5) verbalized that language was the greatest barrier when working with trafficked children who are foreign nationals.
- Lack of trust: Lack of trust among the service providers is another setback. This is true when social workers in different settings are not aware of their role in the prevention of child trafficking. Additionally, it becomes a challenge when the service providers do not have knowledge regarding the roles of the service provider at the next setting.
- Lack of legislation: Respondent one (1) and six (6) voiced that the lack of legal processes to guide the social workers could be an obstacle. The fact that there is no effective legislation in place to guide the worker and criminalize

the perpetrator for trafficking children is a big obstacle. The respondents clearly said that the other laws such as Child Care Act and Sexual Offences which are used to criminalize traffickers, demand a light penalty compared to the crime committed. As a result, most of the traffickers walk away without being punished because there are no guidelines to prosecute them.

- **Institutions:** All six (6) respondents indicated that the lack of safe accommodation for trafficked children is an important obstacle. There are not enough shelters in South Africa to accommodate trafficked children.
- **Lack of communication and trust between service providers:** The lack of trust and cooperation among service providers is an obstacle in the rendering of services to a trafficked child. Respondent one (1) added that some role players deny that child trafficking exists. Their argument is that the civil societies just want to get money to fund their facilities. A lack of communication among service providers regarding responsibilities in service rendering to trafficked children is a big obstacle.
- **The absence of a child trafficking forum:** Respondent six (6) voiced concern about the absence of a child trafficking forum. If there were a forum, social service providers' could exchange ideas on how to deal with difficult cases.
- **Confidentiality:** Respondent (4) also voiced that confidentiality for the trafficked children accommodated in ordinary shelters is compromised. The other members within the shelter might not understand the need for confidentiality and security for the trafficked children.

#### 4.7.5. THEME FIVE

##### **Views on the availability of resources to support social workers in the prevention of child trafficking**

All six respondents expressed the view that resources are largely inadequate. They categorized the resources as follows:

- **Human resources:** There are not enough social workers in the field to render services to victims of child trafficking. Respondent six (6) indicated that the Department of Social Services is working hard to train more social workers. The Pretoria News Paper of 25 July (2008:8) confirmed that South Africa is facing a shortage of social workers. The Minister of Social Development Zola Skweyiya stated in Durban that universities in South Africa produce only 300 social workers every year. Research has indicated that, to effectively implement the children's Act and provide efficient and caring services to children, the government needs to have at least 16,000 active social workers. However, those that are available lack knowledge on how to render effective and efficient services to children rescued from trafficking.
- **Infrastructure:** Most shelters in the country are for domestic violence victims and abused children. It becomes difficult to incorporate trafficked victims in such shelters as their needs are so different. Respondent five (5) gave an example of trafficked children, who are non-South Africans, who sometimes need a special type of food which might be expensive. She specifically referred to the Thai clients who were accommodated in the shelters and whose dietary needs were very different from the local food.
- **Finances:** Five (5) of the six respondents, verbalized that finances were lacking in most organizations to support victims of trafficking. Supporting children who were trafficked is expensive and the grant from the Department of Social Services to run shelters, is not enough to support both abused and

trafficked victims. Respondent five (5) verbalized a different view, namely that finances were not a problem, especially if the child was brought to the shelter by the IOM. She stated that the IOM officials do most of the work (such as taking the victim to the doctor for medical attention, to home affairs, lawyers or foreign affairs if there is a need for a legal identification document). They also try to trace the family and carry out the repatriation and integration process. The IOM also gives financial support to the shelters that provide accommodation to trafficked children. An amount of R100 is given per day per beneficiary to meet the daily needs of the trafficked children while they are in the shelter.

- Knowledge: All six (6) respondents stated that they need more information to understand the child trafficking phenomenon as well as how to prevent it. The researcher noted that all six (6) respondents were not knowledgeable enough about the protection process, which involves monitoring, investigation, protection, recovery, treatment and social integration.

#### 4.7.6. THEME SIX

##### **Knowledge about the existing legislation related to child trafficking**

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (2006:12) noted that the governments have the obligation to criminalize child trafficking in their national legislation, irrespective of whether it is transnational in nature or involves an organized criminal group. In chapter two (2) of this study the researcher explained several laws used by the South African Government in trying to prevent child trafficking. The South African Child Care Act of 1983:144-146 as amended in 2005 Section 284 (1) and Section 286 (b) (IV) protects children from being trafficked. The South African Criminal Law of Sex Offences Amendment ACT, 2007 (Act No. 32 of 2007) prohibits some forms of sexual abuse in

trafficked victims. The respondents' knowledge about existant legislation related to child trafficking can be described as follows:

- Four (4) out of the six (6) respondents were aware that the government of South Africa uses the above laws to punish traffickers, but they strongly stated that these laws are ineffective. The other two respondents were not aware of which laws were used to prosecute child traffickers.
- Respondent two (2) and five (5) shared the opinion that the existing legislation is moving forward. Respondent two (2) indicated that the South African Law Reform Commission will soon table legislation in parliament regarding trafficking in persons including child trafficking. She was not sure when this is going to happen. She voiced that South Africa applies the Child Care Act at present to criminalize traffickers although it is not effective, as it does not match the crime. She continued further, indicating that child trafficking needs more harsh penalties. Such legislation would guide social workers from various settings during service rendering to victims of child trafficking. These guidelines would illustrate to social workers, working in various service rendering settings, what is expected from them. ECPAT (2006:80) confirms that collaboration with NGOs, governments and other agencies in providing more efficient and effective services to trafficked children is necessary.
- Respondent one (1) and three (3) shared the same opinion that it is time that legislation is put in place and implemented to guide social service providers and law enforcement officials. According to Martens et al. (2003:177), the lack of domestic anti-trafficking legislation offers law enforcement little incentive to pursue the criminals responsible for the activity. Respondent three (3) added that, six (6) years have passed since South Africa ratified the Palermo Protocol on prevention of human trafficking. Up to now no policy has been put in place to guide service providers as to what is expected of them when they work with trafficked victims. South Africa signed the Palermo

Protocol, which came in force in December 2003. By signing the Protocol in February 2004, South Africa committed itself to criminalizing trafficking and developing legislation to combat it (Pharaoh, 2005:1). These two respondents have the view that the government should consider prioritizing formulation, interpretation and implementation of a child trafficking policy. The researcher agrees with the respondents, child trafficking can be prevented if the guidelines direct social workers and other role players to render relevant services to trafficked victims more effectively and efficiently.

#### **4.7.7. THEME SEVEN**

##### **Perceptions on training needs for social workers in the field of child trafficking**

All six (6) respondents expressed the need for specialized training for social workers in the following aspects:

- Dynamics of child trafficking: Respondent one (1) stated that training will enable the social workers to understand the psychology and dynamics of child trafficking. The service providers will understand the causes, effects and the motives of traffickers as well as the prevention of child trafficking.
- Workshops: All six (6) respondents voiced that specialized training is imperative. Therefore, it must be brought to the level of the service provider through workshops and forums where the professionals can discuss the phenomenon. Specialized training will assist the social workers to know what services to render to the victims and avoid any form of re-victimization. Respondents five (5) and six (6) advocated on-going training through workshops by the Department of Social Development in partnership with IOM. Such workshops are appropriate for exchange of challenges and ideas by professionals who work with trafficked children.

- Effective training: Respondents two (2) and three (3) mentioned that effective training in the dynamics and prevention of child trafficking may contribute to more successful prevention of the phenomenon on short and long term basis.
- Legislation: Respondent four (4) said that she had basic knowledge on trafficking and did not know anything regarding trafficking legislation. She thought that there might be other social workers who also lack such knowledge and therefore, she expressed the need for detailed training on the child trafficking phenomenon and related policy.
- Research: Respondent five (5) expressed the need for social workers to research child trafficking more. There is a need for more social workers to become specialists in this field to enable them to impart knowledge to other professionals. This point agrees with Pharaoh (2006:1) who indicated that there is a need for more research on the profile and motivations of victims and traffickers, South African's attitudes towards and knowledge of child trafficking.

## 5. CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1. INTRODUCTION

Child trafficking is a global problem which affects every country. South Africa, like most countries, is a place of origin, transit and destination. Children are increasingly being trafficked here for purposes of sexual and labour exploitation. Child trafficking has traumatic and devastating effects on the victims, affected families, communities as well as countries in their entirety. The nature of the effects experienced by victims of child trafficking, are psychological, physical, emotional, social and economical. Realizing the traumatic effects child trafficking has on victims is important in order for social workers to be well equipped with knowledge and skills regarding the prevention of the problem.

In order to form a knowledge base for this study, the researcher attempted to describe the problem of child trafficking through a literature study in a comprehensive manner as demonstrated in Chapter two (2). A literature study regarding the factors that contribute to child trafficking, the impact of child trafficking and the roles of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking followed in chapter three (3). The researcher undertook a qualitative applied study which allowed her to explore the perceptions of the social workers who work with children in the selected organizations. The new data gathered through the exercise of research, enabled the researcher to confirm or to add to the existing knowledge as discovered through the literature study.

Conclusions and recommendations for this study are based on the empirical information and outcomes of the study as described in chapter four (4). It is concluded that social workers need to be empowered in order to successfully execute their role in preventing child trafficking in South Africa. Prevention of child trafficking requires short- and long-term strategies which should target tracking down the perpetrators and providing protection to vulnerable children who end up

being victims of trafficking. Prevention involves three levels namely primary, secondary and tertiary strategies.

In order to provide a context for conclusions and recommendations, the achievement of the goal and objectives for this study will be discussed.

## **5.2. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

The conclusion of the study must be in line with the goal and objectives set in chapter one (Fouché, 2005:107). The goal of the study was to explore the perceptions of the social workers regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa.

The objectives were precisely delineated and contributed to the achievement of the entire goal. A thorough foundation for the empirical study was laid through literature study on the following aspects:

- Child trafficking as a global problem as well as a problem in South Africa and the existing legislation to prevent child trafficking in South Africa.
- The factors that contribute to child trafficking, the impact of child trafficking as well as the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking.

The goal of the empirical study was to explore the perceptions of social workers regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa. This goal was achieved through a structured research process as explained in chapter four (4). Certain conclusions could be drawn from this data and the researcher formulated several recommendations regarding the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking.

### 5.3 CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, the empirical process was an eye opener and an exciting and fruitful experience. The respondents were open about sharing what they understood about child trafficking. Most of the respondents acknowledged that child trafficking is a new problem which they have to face in the community. However, the respondents expressed that they are not well equipped to deal effectively with trafficking cases and, therefore, they strongly suggested the need for child trafficking legislation and guidelines to direct social workers in the intervention process. Sadly, South Africa has no specific domestic legislation to prevent child trafficking. As a result of this, traffickers either walk away free or get a lesser punishment which doesn't match the gravity of criminal offence.

The empirical outcome has revealed that child trafficking is a challenging social problem and its dynamics require specialized training for professional social workers. The researcher agrees with the respondents when they state the need for specialized training and raised awareness in vulnerable communities. This view is shared by UNESCO (2007:59), which states that sustained concrete campaigns aimed at specific high risk groups and readily identifiable social and professional groups will be the most effective.

In this chapter the researcher will discuss conclusions and recommendations under each of the themes which formed the structure of the data gathered in the empirical study as presented in chapter four (4).

### 5.3.1. THEME ONE

#### Theoretical understanding of the concept child trafficking

The following are the views of the respondents with regard to their theoretical understanding of the concept child trafficking:

##### 5.3.1.1. Definition of child trafficking, contributing factors, forms and its dynamics

- From the empirical study, it was evident that all six (6) respondents had a basic understanding of child trafficking. All six (6) respondents were able to define child trafficking. It was also apparent that the respondents knew the various factors that contribute to child trafficking as well as different forms of child trafficking as stated in the literature review in chapter two (2). However, only one (1) respondent seemed to have a more extensive understanding and she shared more information on the dynamics of both external and internal child trafficking.

##### 5.3.1.2. The impact of child trafficking

- With regard to the impact of child trafficking, it was apparent from the respondents' views that child trafficking victims experience severe psychosocial repercussions and debilitating effects. It was also evident that when dealing with child trafficking victims, social workers need to link up with other service providers to provide a more efficient and effective treatment to trafficked victims. This study confirms that the best interest of the child must be respected, especially when dealing with the life-threatening traumatic experiences of trafficked children

### 5.3.1.3. Indicators to identify a trafficked child

There are a number of indicators that would enable social workers to identify the victims of child trafficking. However, it was apparent during the interview that the majority of the respondents had little information to refer to, to support them in identifying trafficked children.

- All Six (6) respondents verbalized that from initial investigation in the form of interviews with the victim, one would be able to identify that the child is a victim of trafficking. During the interview, the victims would give information which includes their recruitment, deception, mobilization and later exploitation.
- Two (2) respondents stated that a language problem could also be an indicator. It was evident that when a social worker comes into contact with an unaccompanied child who is not able to communicate in local language, one can suspect child trafficking.
- It was found that most children used in the sex industry could be trafficked and forced to be sex workers. This can clearly be an indication, as no child who has developed normally would exchange sex for money.
- One (1) respondent verbalized that physical indicators enable the social workers to identify a trafficked child. The child might be beaten (for not complying with the trafficker's commands) and would have bruises, scars or red eyes.
- One (1) respondent indicated that another indicator could be that trafficked children may not know the physical address of the place and the names of the people they were residing with during the interview.

This implies that trafficked children may have gone through different experiences of exploitation and can demonstrate different signs and symptomatic indicators. These indicators will enable the workers to identify the child as a victim of trafficking. The indicators range from psychological, physical, social and economical (chapter 1).

### 5.3.2. THEME TWO

#### **Views on the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking**

- All six (6) respondents expressed the view that, at primary prevention level of child trafficking, it is the social worker's role to raise awareness about child trafficking. Through their experience, the respondents stated that primary prevention should target vulnerable individuals, groups and communities. It was evident that the respondents were aware that dissemination of information to the communities about the danger of child trafficking is paramount. However, UNESCO (2007:38) reports that in spite of increased attention to the problem of trafficking by stakeholders in South Africa through the provision of information, the level of awareness in the population still remains very low.
- Three (3) respondents stated that primary prevention methods of child trafficking involve capacity building of different role players. During the empirical study, the respondents indicated that capacity building is the social worker's role. The social worker should capacitate other professionals and role players with child trafficking information in order to render quality services to trafficked children. This means that, in addition to social workers, medical personnel, police officers, immigration officials and teachers should be capacitated with information on child trafficking and how to prevent it.
- Capacity building of community leaders and the consul workers was considered to be important. Only one (1) respondent mentioned that, in order to prevent

child trafficking, it is the social worker's role to also capacitate community leaders through provision of child trafficking information, because they have influence over the community members. One (1) respondent expressed the need for social workers to capacitate the consul workers of different countries. This approach can help to prevent cross-border child trafficking.

- It was found out that the social worker can play a role of advocacy in the prevention of child trafficking. Two (2) respondents indicated that it was the social worker's role to talk on behalf of the children by urging and lobbying the government to formulate and implement domestic anti-trafficking legislation.
- Some of the respondents mentioned the importance of promoting the principle of Ubuntu. The empirical study revealed that the respondents felt that it is their role to promote the principle of Ubuntu among the community members in order to prevent child trafficking.
- Two (2) respondents talked about social workers as initiators of economic projects with regard to empowering of individuals, groups and communities.
- Through the empirical study, the researcher noted that most of the respondents had very little information regarding the role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking. Most of the respondents focused on primary prevention through raising awareness. Two (2) of the respondents indicated that the role of the social worker in secondary and tertiary prevention of child trafficking involves psychosocial support, provision of shelter, running of empowerment programs and the need to reintegrate the trafficked child into the society. It can be concluded that all the respondents indicated the need to take responsibility to prevent child trafficking, but that they lacked sufficient knowledge to do so.

### 5.3.3. THEME THREE

#### **Perceptions regarding the services in place to protect victims of child trafficking**

- Six (6) respondents indicated that services to prevent children from being victimised by child trafficking are inadequate in South Africa. Additionally, a lack of knowledge regarding child trafficking among social workers is the main reason for the situation.
- The lack of shelters in the country to accommodate victims of child trafficking contributes to the ineffective service rendering to trafficked children. This view is supported by Amnesty International (2008:3), which reports that survivors of child abuse in South Africa have few places to turn to for refuge. As the number of abused children becomes higher every year, there are no sufficient, appropriate shelters to provide emergency and long-term shelter.
- There is lack of specialized social workers in South Africa to attend to and meet the needs of trafficked children who have been rescued. It was evident that, services are not effective because of lack of knowledge and lack of trained staff.
- The researcher's conclusion drawn from this is that the inadequacy of services in the fight against child trafficking is alarming. The situation results in the perpetuation of child trafficking and re-traumatizing of trafficked children who have been rescued. Their best interest can not be served through the current quality of service rendering.

#### 5.3.4. THEME FOUR

##### **Experiences regarding obstacles social workers face in the prevention of child trafficking**

- All respondents indicated that lack of knowledge and training regarding child trafficking is one of the major obstacles which social workers face in the prevention of child trafficking. This study confirms that lack of knowledge, in protection of trafficked victims and prevention of child trafficking, results in poor service delivery.
- It was also found that, because of lack of knowledge and training, social workers often engage with trafficked children with a judgmental approach. This may lead to a situation where these children do not feel free to open up to the social workers. They will not trust the social workers.
- The government's removal of the halfway passport issued to the IOM is another obstacle in the process to prevent child trafficking. As a result of this, the process to repatriate non-South African victims of trafficking, takes longer than before. This may lead to unnecessary re-traumatization.
- Language is been viewed as one of the greatest barriers when social workers have to deal with trafficked children of foreign countries.
- The lack of domestic child trafficking legislation to guide social workers in service delivery, is a big obstacle. The absence of child trafficking legislation makes it difficult for the prosecutors to criminalize the perpetrators of child trafficking.
- It was noted that lack of communication, trust and cooperation among service providers rendering services to trafficked children can be viewed as an obstacle for social workers in the prevention of child trafficking.

- The absence of a child trafficking forum to discuss difficult cases and create new ideas to prevent child trafficking in South Africa and globally is a serious obstacle. UNESCO (2007:60) confirms that communication channels to share and disseminate information on child trafficking must be seen as an important strategy.
- The researcher agrees that there are too many unnecessary factors that hamper the prevention of child trafficking. Therefore, it is important for social workers to take note of these various obstacles in order to eliminate them in the process of their work.

#### **5.3.5. THEME FIVE**

##### **Views on the availability of resources to support social workers in the prevention of child trafficking**

- This study found that South Africa does not have sufficient resources to enable social workers to render services more efficiently to trafficked children. It was concluded that the country lacks resources such as manpower, infrastructure, knowledge and finances in the prevention of child trafficking.

#### **5.3.6. THEME SIX**

##### **Knowledge about the existing legislation related to child trafficking**

- The majority of the respondents expressed that the absence of domestic legislation makes it difficult for the social workers to render effective services to trafficked children as there are no specific instruments to be used in the execution of their responsibility to prevent child trafficking.

- The respondents indicated that South Africa uses the South African constitution, the Child Care Act as well as the Sexual Offences Act as instruments to assist child trafficking victims, but they acknowledged that these instruments are not effective enough to support and protect all trafficked children.
- Evidently, the South African government, with the help of South African Law Reform Commission, should prioritize and finalize the formulation and implementation of child trafficking legislation. According to UNESCO (2007:38), South Africa does not have specific laws against human trafficking, but different legal tools are available to address some aspects of human trafficking activities. However, these instruments remain insufficient as they mainly focus on sexual offences. As a matter of urgency, respondent six (6) suggested that it would be wise for the government to pass the anti-trafficking legislation before 2010 FIFA Football World Cup. Her assumption is similar to the researcher's view that there will be a lot of children who will be trafficked into South Africa to serve in the prostitution and labour industry during the tournament period.

### 5.3.7. THEME SEVEN

<b>Perceptions on training needs for social workers in the field of child trafficking</b>
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- All the respondents confirmed the importance of training to understand and prevent child trafficking. They specifically indicated that training will enable social workers to understand the psychology and dynamics of child trafficking. It will further enable service providers to understand to the causes and effects of child trafficking, and the motives of traffickers. UNESCO (2007:59-60) confirms that the establishment of community education programs for the prevention of child trafficking, is a non-negotiable need. The development of training kit for local NGOs, civil authorities and other community actors would include awareness raising.

- The training of social workers to prevent child trafficking needs to focus specifically on role of the social workers, the effective use of current legislation, the effect of child trafficking on the life of a child as well as how to identify a trafficked child.

## 5.4. RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations will be discussed under the following headings: Education, social workers' roles, establishment of shelters, legislation, collaboration with other stakeholders and research.

### 5.4.1. Training:

- Social workers need to be trained to understand the dynamics of child trafficking, the effects on the trafficked child, the factors that contribute to child trafficking as well as the roles of the social worker in prevention strategies. Training on the above aspects will enable social workers to render a more effective service to trafficked children.
- The training can take place through:
  - Workshops
  - Short courses
  - Incorporating child trafficking as a phenomenon in curriculum at tertiary institutions.
- Well-trained social workers can inform communities through community development programmes about the dynamics of child trafficking. This can strengthen the tools of the social workers in the prevention of child trafficking.
- It can be concluded that training is imperative to help social workers and other service providers to gain more knowledge on child trafficking. The government and private sectors should collaborate to empower the workers who in return, would empower vulnerable individuals, groups and communities.

#### 5.4.2. Social workers' roles:

The social workers' roles in the prevention of child trafficking need to be the following:

- Social workers should be responsible for knowledge dissemination:
  - Imparting knowledge to vulnerable and trafficked children.
  - Sensitizing the community members to child trafficking.
  - Educating children on their fundamental rights and responsibilities which are necessary for their survival and protection from potential child traffickers.
  - Imparting knowledge to other professionals and role players who work with children.
  
- Social workers should advocate for vulnerable children and groups in the community.
  
- Social workers can promote capacity building:
  - By motivating the community members to be entrepreneurs.
  - By initiating more income generating projects in the communities to empower vulnerable groups.
  
- Social worker assigned to a trafficked child should act as guardian:
  - To support the trafficked children whenever they seek assistance from other sources.
  - To critically investigate and assess the needs of the trafficked children.
  - To accompany the trafficked children to relevant resources for medical or legal assistance.
  - To facilitate the reintegration process.
  
- Social workers need to link vulnerable and trafficked children with other relevant services and resources:
  - Psychological

- Medical
- Legal
- Police
- Educational assistance
- Church services
- Home affairs

In view of the above, the social worker should be aware of the services and resources needed by the victims of child trafficking and how to access them.

- Social workers working in the Department of Social Services in collaboration with NGOs should also develop skills development programs to assist the effective rehabilitation of rescued trafficked children.
- Social workers working in the Department of Social Services in collaboration with NGOs need to hold more awareness meetings or workshops with other professionals like the police, immigration and medical personnel. In the same vein, social workers should engage with and empower school teachers and other professional role players to create a greater awareness among the community regarding the danger of child trafficking.

#### **5.4.3. Establishment of shelters:**

- More adequate and secure accommodation needs to be provided by the government and NGOs for rescued trafficked children. Presently most child trafficking victims are kept at shelters for victims of domestic violence and abused children. However, child trafficking victims have different needs which require specialized and secure accommodation.

#### **5.4.4. Legislation:**

- Social workers should urgently lobby with the government to revise the current policies to curb the growing problem of child trafficking. Child trafficking perpetrators escape punishment due to the absence of anti-child trafficking laws. Currently, the laws used to criminalize traffickers are light compared to the gravity of the crime committed. The Child Care Act (No. 74 of 1983 as amended in 2005) should be reviewed and adjusted to be in line with specific needs of the trafficked children. In addition, social workers should lobby for the Bill of child trafficking drafted by the South African Reform Law Commission to be tabled and passed by the parliament before the 2010 FIFA World Cup tournament.
- Child-friendly standards and guidelines or guiding principles for prevention, recovery and integration of trafficked children should be adhered to as stipulated in chapter three (3).

#### **5.4.5. Collaboration with other stakeholders**

- Social workers need to collaborate with international and local stakeholders when working with trafficked children.
- Currently, specialized services in dealing with child trafficking are provided by international organizations like the IOM. For long term sustainability, local service providers should be empowered to take over such services.
- The Department of Social Services should deploy trained social workers who are equipped with child trafficking prevention strategies in other departments like police, immigration and civil aviation (airports) to identify and deal with potential victims of child trafficking.

#### 5.4.6. Research

- Social workers should be more proactive and do more research on the topic of child trafficking. This will support them in playing a more prominent role in the prevention of child trafficking. While social workers are currently vaguely aware of the seriousness of child trafficking, very little research has been carried out to render effective service on the primary, secondary and tertiary prevention levels.
- More South Africa-based research needs to be done to guide the social workers in their task to prevent child trafficking.
- The Department of Social Development can provide some resources for social workers to do the abovementioned research.
- Scientific articles, based on research as mentioned, need to be published as a way to sensitize professionals to the traumatic effects of child trafficking.

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**ADDENDUM A:**

**Semi-structured interview schedule**

**Title:**

**The role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking**

**The researcher covered the following themes in interviews with respondents:**

- Theoretical understanding of the concept of child trafficking
- Views on the role of the social workers in the prevention of child trafficking
- Perception regarding the services in place to protect victims of child trafficking
- Experiences regarding obstacles social workers face in the prevention of child trafficking
- Views on the availability of resources to support social workers work in the prevention of child trafficking
- Knowledge base about the existing legislation related to child trafficking
- Perception on training needs for social workers in the field of child trafficking

**ADDENDUM B**

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## **INFORMED CONSENT**

**Researcher:** Juliet Patience Sambo

MSW student, Department of Social Work and Criminology, University of Pretoria

P.O. Box 40770

Garsfontein East

Pretoria

0060

Tel 0727586690

**Name of participant** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Title of study:** The role of the social worker in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa.

**2. Purpose of the research:** The purpose of this study is to explore the perceptions of social workers regarding their role in the prevention of child trafficking in South Africa

**3. Procedures:** It will be expected of me to participate in an interview where I will be asked to share my experiences, opinions and feelings as openly and honestly as possible.

**4. Risks and possible disadvantages to the participants:** There are no known risks or discomforts associated with this project. However, I may experience fatigue and stress while being interviewed or sharing issues that may be sensitive to me. I will be given as many breaks as possible.

**5. Benefits to the participants:** I understand there are no known direct benefits to me for participating in this study. However, the results of this study may contribute to better understanding of child trafficking as a problem and service delivery to victims of child trafficking.

**6. Participants rights:** I may withdraw from participating in the study at any time.

**7. Financial compensation:** I understand that there will be no financial gain for participating in this study.

**8. Confidentiality:** In order to assure that the exact facts are recorded, the interview will be audio taped and notes will be taken where applicable. All the information gained in the interviews will be dealt with confidentially. The results of this study may be published in professional journals or presented at professional conferences, but the identity of the respondent will not be revealed unless written permission is given. I am aware that the data of this study will be stored at the office of the researcher for the next 15 years.

**9. Questions:** If I have any question I can phone Juliet Patience Sambo at 0727586690 during working hours.

Signature of Respondent: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of researcher: \_\_\_\_\_