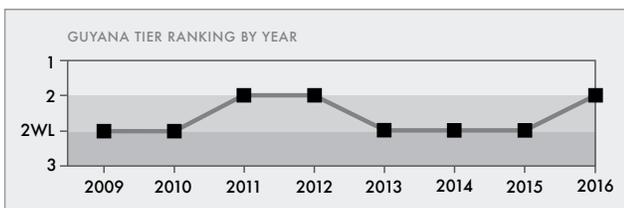


exception of the funds allocated to the aforementioned NGO, no additional funds were dedicated to anti-trafficking efforts in 2015. There was no evidence the government took steps to implement the national action plan. The government made no discernible efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts or forced labor during the reporting period. There were unconfirmed reports Europeans engaged in child sex tourism on the Bijagos Archipelago. Despite these unconfirmed reports, the government did not take action to investigate the claims. The government did not provide anti-trafficking training for its diplomatic personnel.

GUYANA: Tier 2

Guyana is a source and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to sex trafficking and forced labor. Women and children from Guyana, Brazil, the Dominican Republic, Suriname, and Venezuela are subjected to sex trafficking in mining communities in the interior and urban areas. Victims are subjected to forced labor in the mining, agriculture, and forestry sectors, as well as in domestic service and shops. While both sex trafficking and forced labor occur in interior mining communities, limited government presence in the country's interior renders the full extent of trafficking unknown. Children are particularly vulnerable to sex and labor trafficking. Guyanese nationals are subjected to sex and labor trafficking in Jamaica, Suriname, and other Caribbean countries. Some police officers are complicit in trafficking crimes, and corruption impedes anti-trafficking efforts.

The Government of Guyana does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. The government convicted one trafficker, imposed a three-year prison sentence, and required her to pay the victim restitution—the first time restitution has been ordered for a trafficking offender in Guyana. The government also provided 600,000 Guyanese dollars (GYD) (\$2,970) to an NGO-run shelter dedicated to trafficking victims—the first shelter of its kind in Guyana—to enhance the shelter's psycho-social services for victims. The government further increased collaboration with anti-trafficking NGOs by instituting procedures to refer victims to the shelter and including a leading anti-trafficking NGO on its inter-ministerial anti-trafficking taskforce. However, it did not allocate additional personnel to the severely understaffed anti-trafficking unit to facilitate trafficking investigations, nor did it increase protection and services for victims outside the capital or participating in investigations against their traffickers. The government continued to prosecute and punish suspected trafficking victims for crimes committed as a result of being subjected to trafficking.



RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GUYANA:

Continue to vigorously investigate and prosecute sex and labor trafficking cases and hold convicted traffickers accountable—including complicit officials—by imposing sentences that are

commensurate with the severity of the crime, denying bail, and ordering restitution, where appropriate; finalize and issue written procedures to guide and encourage front-line officials—including police, health, immigration, labor, mining, and forestry personnel—to identify and protect victims of forced labor and sex trafficking; train law enforcement, judiciary officials, and front-line responders—especially those working outside the capital—on victim identification, referral to services, and victim-centered investigations; allocate additional staff to the inter-ministerial anti-trafficking unit and provide sufficient funding and resources for it to investigate trafficking in the mining sector and conduct awareness campaigns; provide additional protection for victims to enable them to appear in court and testify against traffickers in a way that does not further endanger them; increase funding for NGOs that identify and assist victims; take efforts to ensure victims are not summarily deported without the opportunity to assist in a trial against their traffickers and that they are not penalized for crimes committed as a result of being subjected to trafficking; open and adequately fund the proposed shelter for male trafficking victims; develop child-sensitive investigation measures and court procedures that protect the privacy of children and minimize their re-traumatization; regularly convene the inter-ministerial taskforce and finalize and implement the 2016-2017 national action plan; offer increased protection and assistance for victims near mining communities outside the capital; and continue to raise awareness of trafficking among civil society.

PROSECUTION

The government modestly increased its law enforcement efforts. The Combating Trafficking of Persons Act of 2005 prohibits all forms of trafficking and prescribes sufficiently stringent penalties ranging from three years' to life imprisonment. These penalties are commensurate with those prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. The government reported investigating 15 trafficking cases involving 56 victims, including 16 children, which resulted in seven prosecutions and one sex trafficking conviction, compared with seven investigations, four prosecutions, and one conviction the previous reporting period. The defendant in the 2015 conviction was sentenced to three years' imprisonment and, unlike defendants convicted in previous years, was denied post-conviction bail and required to pay restitution to the victim. At least one of the defendants in an ongoing prosecution was released on bail pending the outcome of her trial. In response to calls received by the trafficking hotline, government officials conducted raids on mining and logging areas outside of the capital. It is unclear if authorities removed any victims from exploitative situations or initiated any trafficking investigations as a result of these raids. During the previous reporting period, a police officer was convicted of child sex trafficking and sentenced to four years' imprisonment but granted bail pending appeal; his appeal remained pending at the end of the reporting period. Media reports indicated a brothel owner was tipped off by a law enforcement official in advance of a police raid and tried to clear four trafficking victims from her establishment to avoid detection by law enforcement. The government did not report any investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of government officials complicit in human trafficking. Law enforcement lacked training on victim identification, referral, and trafficking investigations, and the government did not directly train these officials or provide in-kind support for such training.

PROTECTION

The government increased protection efforts but victim assistance

remained insufficient, especially in areas outside the capital and for male victims, and the government continued to penalize some suspected trafficking victims. It is unclear how many of the 56 identified trafficking victims were identified by the government and how many by NGOs; the government identified 16 victims during the previous reporting period. In January 2016, the government signed a memorandum of understanding with an anti-trafficking NGO and provided 600,000 GYD (\$2,970) to the NGO for the provision of enhanced psycho-social services to adult, female trafficking victims referred by the government. This is the first Guyanese shelter dedicated solely to trafficking victims. The shelter provided short-term shelter, psycho-social services, and career guidance to two victims during the reporting period. Prior to the memorandum of understanding, the government also provided 10 million GYD (\$49,500) to another NGO that provided housing and counseling services to victims of crimes, including 17 trafficking victims referred by the government. There were no public or private shelters dedicated to male or child trafficking victims; however, the government announced plans to open and partially fund a shelter for male victims. Child trafficking victims were placed in government-run shelters with child victims of other crimes. Male victims were offered voluntary placement in homeless shelters. Resources devoted to victim protection remained inadequate; authorities did not consistently refer trafficking victims to services; and shelter and services for victims outside the capital, including in mining areas, remained nonexistent. One victim reported sleeping on the floor of a police station because shelter and services were unavailable. Longer-term shelter and protection were not available in Guyana, and reports indicated some identified victims were subjected to additional trafficking after identification or became homeless due to inadequate protective services. Donor-funded organizations continued to provide some victim services, including in dangerous areas outside of the capital.

The government continued to develop standard operating procedures to guide officials in identifying trafficking victims, but the procedures remained informal and were not widely implemented during the reporting period. As a result, victims did not always receive proper care or referrals to services. Government officials continued to work with NGOs to develop child-sensitive investigation and prosecution procedures; the lack of such procedures put children at risk of reprisal from traffickers. In one case, government officials identified two girls as labor trafficking victims in a bar and, disregarding protocol, returned the girls to their mother, whom the girls had identified as their trafficker.

The government did not effectively encourage victims to assist in the investigation and prosecution of their traffickers. Victims often did not testify in court, as officials failed to locate and inform them of court dates. Victims also did not testify when they had no transportation to court or could not afford residency in Guyana in the months before their court date. Guyanese law protects victims from punishment for crimes committed as a result of being subjected to trafficking and provides foreign victims with relief from deportation. However, the government did not report extending deportation relief to foreign victims during the reporting period and in June deported 11 potential trafficking victims, six charged with illegal entry into Guyana, and five charged with overstaying their time in Guyana. The victims were discovered during a raid and were not properly screened for indicators of trafficking. These factors generally contributed to the relatively low conviction rate for trafficking crimes.

PREVENTION

The government maintained efforts to prevent trafficking. Guyana's newly elected government reformed the anti-trafficking inter-ministerial taskforce in January 2016; before the reformation, however, the taskforce was inactive for eight months and did not make efforts to implement the 2014-2015 national action plan. Like previous taskforces, the reconstituted taskforce included representatives from several government agencies and NGOs but, for the first time, also included the lead anti-trafficking NGO in Guyana. The government drafted but did not finalize an action plan to combat trafficking. It conducted a variety of awareness-raising activities, including campaigns to sensitize civilians and law enforcement in the mining and logging sectors outside the capital. The government operated a trafficking hotline but did not report how many calls it received. The government did not make efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts or forced labor. While the government significantly increased its number of labor inspections, the number of labor trafficking investigations did not significantly increase. The government did not provide anti-trafficking training for its diplomatic personnel.

HAITI: Tier 3

Haiti is a source, transit, and destination country for men, women, and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Most of Haiti's trafficking cases involve children in domestic servitude who often are physically abused, receive no payment for services rendered, and may be kept from school. A significant number of children flee employers' homes or abusive families and become street children. A May 2015 UN report documented members of its peacekeeping mission in Haiti sexually exploited more than 225 Haitian women in exchange for food, medication, and household items between 2008 and 2014. Female foreign nationals, particularly citizens of the Dominican Republic, are particularly vulnerable to sex trafficking and forced labor in Haiti. Other vulnerable populations include Haitian children working in construction, agriculture, fisheries, domestic work, and street vending in Haiti and the Dominican Republic; women and children living in camps for internally displaced persons set up as a result of the 2010 earthquake; members of female-headed or other single-parent families; children in private and NGO-sponsored residential care centers; and Haitians without documentation, including those returning from the Dominican Republic or The Bahamas. Haitian adults and children are vulnerable to fraudulent labor recruitment and are subject to forced labor, primarily in the Dominican Republic, other Caribbean countries, South America, and the United States.

The Government of Haiti does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and did not demonstrate overall increasing efforts compared to the previous reporting period. Having been placed on Tier 2 Watch List in the preceding four years, Haiti is not making significant efforts to meet the minimum standards and is therefore placed on Tier 3. In December 2015, the government inaugurated the inter-ministerial anti-trafficking committee. The government also finalized its action plan, and investigated and prosecuted trafficking cases during the reporting period. However, the systemic weaknesses of the justice system in disposing of cases and the lack of funding for, and coordination among, government agencies impair efforts to prosecute traffickers. The government's interagency effort to formalize victim identification and referral guidelines, like other priorities,