



U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

Trafficking in Persons Report 2012

SENEGAL (Tier 2 Watch List)

Senegal is a source, transit, and destination country for children and women who are subjected to forced labor, forced begging, and sex trafficking. NGOs estimate that more than 50,000 children, most of whom are talibes – students attending daaras (Koranic schools) run by teachers known as marabouts – are forced to beg and that in Dakar alone there are 8,000 talibes begging in the streets. Senegalese boys and girls are also subjected to domestic servitude, forced labor in gold mines, and exploitation in the sex trade. Trafficking within the country is more prevalent than transnational trafficking, although boys from The Gambia, Mali, Guinea-Bissau, and Guinea have been identified in forced begging and forced labor in artisanal gold mines in Senegal. Senegalese women and girls are transported to neighboring countries, Europe, and the Middle East for domestic servitude. NGO observers believe most women and girls exploited in prostitution, however, remain in Senegal. Women and girls from other West African countries, particularly Liberia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria, may be subjected to domestic servitude and commercial sexual exploitation in Senegal, including for sex tourism.

The Government of Senegal does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. Despite these modest efforts, the government did not demonstrate evidence of overall increasing efforts to address human trafficking, particularly to prosecute and punish trafficking offenders and protect trafficking victims. Therefore, Senegal is placed on Tier 2 Watch List. During the reporting period, the government made some efforts to expand its capacity to combat trafficking, including training 96 judges and law enforcement officials on treatment and processing of child trafficking victims within the Senegalese system. The government also continued to fund the Ginndi Center, which provides child abuse victims with shelter, food, education, and medical and psychological care. The government did not compile data on the number of trafficking cases investigated and prosecuted, and it did not appear that the government prosecuted or convicted any trafficking cases during the reporting period. Furthermore, the government did not formally identify a single trafficking victim in 2011, although a government-funded shelter assisted, as during the previous reporting period, child trafficking victims. The apparent lack of prosecutions and convictions of trafficking offenders and identification of trafficking victims stands in contrast to the previous reporting period, during which the government prosecuted 10 cases of trafficking, secured nine convictions, and identified as many as 795 victims. During the reporting period, however, the government took initial steps to track its identification of and assistance to trafficking victims through the development of a database. In 2010, local observers believed the government was making positive

strides in combating trafficking, given the conviction of nine marabouts for forcing children to beg. However, following these convictions, Koranic teacher associations lobbied the government to cease prosecuting marabouts, and the government succumbed to political pressure. In 2011, the former president publicly denounced the prosecution of marabouts in Cabinet meetings. Over the reporting period, the prevalence of human trafficking in Senegal rapidly increased. According to several organizations, the number of children begging in the streets of Dakar is higher than at any other point in Senegal's history. Women were increasingly identified in forced prostitution in the southeast gold mining region of Kedougou, but police did not investigate any such cases.

Recommendations for Senegal: Prosecute, convict, and punish trafficking offenders for subjecting victims to involuntary servitude; train police and magistrates to recognize indicators of trafficking and investigate trafficking crimes under the country's anti-trafficking law; begin proactive victim identification programs, including screening vulnerable populations, such as women in prostitution and children begging in the streets; expand government-funded shelters or partner with international organizations to establish wider sheltering options for trafficking victims; appoint an agency to lead the government's anti-trafficking efforts and clarify the specific roles of the Ministry of Family and the Ministry of Justice in those efforts; develop appropriate referral pathways for victim care; expand labor investigations in the informal sector of the economy; and allocate funding to the National Task Force for the implementation of the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking.

Prosecution

The Government of Senegal's anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts worsened during the reporting period. Senegal's 2005 Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Related Practices and to Protect Victims prohibits all forms of trafficking and prescribes penalties of five to 10 years' imprisonment for violations, which are sufficiently stringent and commensurate with those prescribed for other serious crimes, such as rape. In 2011, the government charged three defendants for trafficking in conjunction with charges for other crimes. However, the charges were eventually dropped at trial. These numbers constitute a substantial decline from the previous reporting period, during which the government secured 10 prosecutions and nine convictions in 2010. The government does not maintain or publish statistics relating to human trafficking investigations. During the reporting period, there were no prosecutions based solely on the 2005 anti-trafficking law. Instead, when the law is enforced, it is always in conjunction with other charges, such as child abuse. Many law enforcement and judicial personnel remained unaware of the anti-trafficking law's existence and may have used other statutes to investigate and prosecute trafficking cases. This lack of awareness continued to hinder efforts to collect data on human trafficking prosecutions.

During the reporting period, police in Kaolack reportedly arrested two Koranic teachers for allegedly brutally beating students who they had forced to beg for money in the street. While local observers had hoped prosecutors would bring trafficking and labor law charges against the teachers, court officials charged the teachers with child abuse and did not view the case as involving child trafficking or treat the children as trafficking victims. The Office for the Protection of the Rights of Children in the Ministry of Family conducted training for 96 judges and law enforcement officials on the treatment and processing of child trafficking victims within the Senegalese system. There were no investigations of government officials' involvement in human trafficking, but corruption is known to be pervasive throughout the government, notably in law enforcement.

Protection

The Government of Senegal made minimal efforts to identify trafficking victims and provide them with protective services during the last year. While the government identified 596 trafficking victims in the previous reporting year, it did not formally identify any victims over the last year. Referral to victim care services was undocumented. The government did not provide protective services to victims except at one shelter for child victims, the Ginndi Center. The government appropriated the equivalent of approximately \$150,000 to the center to provide child victims of abuse with shelter, food, education, medical and psychological care, family mediation and reconciliation services, and vocational training. During the year, the Ginndi Center's child protection hotline received 6,231 calls concerning children in distress or requesting information; an unknown but reportedly significant number of these calls concerned cases of human trafficking. When the Ginndi Center does return children to their families, 40 percent are subsequently found begging on the streets. The government did not report repatriating any Senegalese nationals who had been victims of trafficking in other countries, nor did it provide temporary or permanent residency status to foreign victims of human trafficking. The government did not encourage victims to participate in the investigation or prosecution of their traffickers.

Prevention

The Government of Senegal made limited efforts to prevent human trafficking during the reporting period. The National Task Force for the Struggle against Trafficking/Mistreatment Especially of Women and Children was inactive and, despite being created to implement the 2008 National Action Plan on Trafficking, took no action to implement the plan in 2011. Recognizing the high demand for religious education among Senegalese parents and the potential this creates for exploitation of talibes by abusive marabouts, the Ministries of Family and Education worked jointly to open 20 modern daaras in which children receive both standard, formal education and Koranic education. These daaras are free from

forced begging. The Ministry of Family ran an educational campaign, The Project for the Struggle against Trafficking, and conducted presentations and disseminated literature educating religious leaders that Islam does not sanction forced begging. The government did not launch educational campaigns on any other type of human trafficking. The government did not take steps to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts or forced labor in Senegal. It did not provide specific anti-trafficking training to Senegalese troops before their deployment abroad on international peacekeeping missions, although troops did receive training in general human rights, gender violence, and international rule of law.