



U.S. DEPARTMENT of STATE

Trafficking in Persons Report 2010

SENEGAL (Tier 2 Watch List)

Senegal is a source, transit, and destination country for children and women subjected to trafficking in persons, specifically forced labor, forced begging, and commercial sexual exploitation. There are no reliable statistics for the total extent of human trafficking in Senegal. UNICEF estimates that 100,000 children in Senegal, most of whom are *talibes* – students attending Koranic schools run by teachers known as marabouts – are forced to beg, and that in Dakar alone there are 8,000 of these children begging in the streets. In addition to forced begging, Senegalese boys and girls are subjected to involuntary domestic servitude, forced labor in gold mines, and commercial sexual exploitation. Trafficking within the country is more prevalent than transnational trafficking, though children from neighboring countries have been found in forced begging and other forms of forced labor in Senegal. Transnationally, boys are also trafficked from The Gambia, Mali, Guinea Bissau, and Guinea to Senegal for forced begging by unscrupulous marabouts. In the past, reports indicated that adult women and girls in Senegal were frequently transported to neighboring countries, Europe, and the Middle East for involuntary domestic servitude and forced prostitution. However, NGO observers now believe that most local women in forced prostitution remain in Senegal. Women and girls from other West African countries, particularly Liberia, Ghana, Sierra Leone, and Nigeria, may be subjected to commercial sexual exploitation in Senegal, including for international sex tourism.

The Government of Senegal does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of human trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so, despite limited resources. The government continued its strong commitment to provide shelter, rehabilitation, and reintegration services to *talibe* boys. Despite these overall significant efforts, however, the government has not sufficiently addressed other forms of human trafficking through law enforcement action, victim care, or raising public awareness. Therefore, Senegal is placed on Tier 2 Watch List for the second consecutive year.

Recommendations for Senegal: With emphasis on trafficking cases rather than smuggling operations, increase prosecutions of suspected labor traffickers who subject children to conditions of forced labor; increase support for the work of anti-sex tourism police units in the Ministries of Interior and Tourism to identify potential sex tourists and rescue their child victims; while continuing to care for *tallies* victimized by forced begging; increase provision of protective services to other types of trafficking victims; establish a specialized unit whose officers are specifically trained to investigate suspected trafficking cases and interview potential victims; and implement the National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking.

Prosecution

The Government of Senegal continued to show significant political will to combat human trafficking; however, it demonstrated minimal progress in increasing anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts during the reporting period. Though Senegal has had an effective legal tool for fighting human trafficking since 2005, the Law to Combat Trafficking in Persons and Related Practices and to Protect Victims has primarily been used to combat alien smuggling from Senegal to Spain, as opposed to trafficking. Many law enforcement and judicial personnel were unaware the anti-trafficking law existed, and used other statutes to prosecute and convict traffickers. The 2005 law's prescribed penalties of five to 10 years' imprisonment for all forms of trafficking were sufficiently stringent and commensurate with penalties prescribed for rape.

The government did not provide data on its anti-trafficking law enforcement activities. In June 2009, a Nigerian man was convicted of trafficking, raping, and prostituting Senegalese girls from three countries and sentenced to two years' imprisonment. In May 2009, police arrested a Senegalese man after neighbors complained he was physically abusing and forcing *talibes* to beg. A subsequent investigation suggested he had trafficked children from Guinea-Bissau; he is awaiting trial. In March 2009, police dismantled a human trafficking network sending girls from Senegal to Morocco for forced domestic work, but the traffickers – highly placed and influential members of society – were released a few weeks after their arrest and no charges were brought. In the cases reported in the 2009 TIP Report of two Senegalese religious teachers arrested for physically abusing boys they had trafficked for forced begging, one teacher was remanded to jail in October 2009 and awaits trial. There was evidence of some government tolerance of trafficking for forced begging on a local or institutional level. The government reported that none of its employees were known to have been involved in trafficking.

Protection

The Government of Senegal sustained efforts to protect trafficking victims over the last year. It employed proactive victim identification procedures and referred all identified victims to the Ginndi Center, at which the government continued to provide services, such as medical treatment, family mediation and reconciliation, education, shelter, food, and repatriation, to at-risk children, including trafficking victims, regardless of their country of origin. During the reporting period, the center's child protection hotline received 9,545 calls from Koranic teachers, parents, children, and anonymous persons asking for information about the center; an unknown number of these calls concerned cases of human trafficking. In 2009, the Ginndi Center assisted 655 boys and 32 girls, some of whom were trafficking victims. IOM statistics indicated that 223 trafficking victims were identified in Senegal in 2009. The center reunified 593 boys and 27 girls, some of whom were trafficking victims, with their families in five countries. The center conducted vocational training, performed street interventions to convince children to join its programs, and distributed almost 15,000 meals. The Open Center for Education (AEMO), a judicial branch of the Ministry of Justice that assists only children, helped 108 street children in 2009, most of whom were returned to their families or received help from an NGO-run orphanage, Pouponniere Vivre Ensemble. The government provided \$24,000 in 2009, which covered most of AEMO's operations. Standard operating procedures for victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation called for

them to receive a compulsory HIV/AIDS screening at a hospital before interviewers began to question them, and providers were to offer all counseling behind closed doors to respect victims' privacy. The government ensured that identified victims of trafficking were not penalized for unlawful acts committed as a result of their being trafficked, and Senegalese law permitted closed-door testimony to encourage victims to serve as witnesses. Victims were able to remain in Senegal temporarily or permanently with resident refugee status; 43 boys and two girls were granted residency status during the year.

Prevention

The government sustained its modest efforts to prevent trafficking throughout the reporting period. Though it continued efforts to prevent the abuse of *talibes* during the year, it launched no anti-trafficking public awareness campaigns regarding other forms of human trafficking. In October 2009, the Prime Minister chaired a one-day workshop for government officials and NGOs that resulted in the creation of a National Action Plan to Combat Trafficking. The government's Assistance Committee for Child Protection (CAPE), located within the Office of the President and composed of the Ministries of Family, Health, Education, Interior, Foreign Affairs, and Justice, coordinates the work of all government institutions that combat trafficking in Senegal. In January 2010, CAPE transferred \$51,000 to a local NGO to fund a pilot project with other NGOs and associations that will provide shelter to 100 additional *tallies* and mediation between the Islamic schools and the families of 200 children already residing in shelters. Though the government has specialized anti-sex tourism units located within the Ministries of Interior and Tourism, no foreign pedophiles were arrested in 2009 for commercial sexual exploitation of children. The government did not take steps to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts or forced labor in Senegal. The government did not provide anti-trafficking training to Senegalese troops before deployment on international peacekeeping missions.