



Nigeria - Researched and compiled by the Refugee Documentation Centre of Ireland on 20 August 2013

General reports on human trafficking

In June 2013 a report issued by the *United States Department of State* notes:

“Nigeria is a source, transit, and destination country for women and children subjected to forced labor and sex trafficking. Trafficked Nigerians are recruited from rural and, to a lesser extent, urban areas within the country; women and girls for domestic servitude and sex trafficking, and boys for forced labor in street vending, domestic service, mining, stone quarrying, agriculture, and begging. Nigerian women and children are taken from Nigeria to other West and Central African countries, as well as to South Africa, where they are exploited for the same purposes. Children from West African countries – primarily Benin, Ghana, and Togo – are forced to work in Nigeria, and many are subjected to hazardous labor in Nigeria's granite mines. Nigerian women and girls – primarily from Benin City in Edo State – are subjected to forced prostitution in Italy, while Nigerian women and girls from other states are subjected to forced prostitution in Spain, Scotland, the Netherlands, Germany, Turkey, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Sweden, Switzerland, Norway, Ireland, Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Greece, and Russia. Nigerian women and children are also recruited and transported to destinations in North Africa, the Middle East, and Central Asia, where they are held captive in the sex trade or in forced labor. Nigerian women are trafficked to Malaysia, where they are forced into prostitution and to work as drug mules for their traffickers. Nigerian traffickers rely on threats of voodoo curses to control Nigerian victims and force them into situations of prostitution or labor. Nigerian gangs traffic large numbers of Nigerian women into forced prostitution in the Czech Republic and Italy, and the European Police Organization (EUROPOL) has identified Nigerian organized crime related to trafficking in persons as one of the largest law enforcement challenges to European governments” (United States Department of State (19 June 2013) *2013 Trafficking in Persons Report - Nigeria*).

This report also states:

“The Government of Nigeria does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking, but is making significant efforts to do so. During the reporting period, the government demonstrated a modest increase in anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts through the conviction of 25 traffickers and the provision of specialized anti-trafficking training to officials by various government ministries and agencies. The National Agency for the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons and Other Related Matters (NAPTIP) received a slight increase in funding in 2012. Despite these efforts, the government has yet to pass draft legislation that would restrict the ability of judges to offer fines in lieu of prison time during sentencing and the Nigerian Police Force (NPF) continued to experience difficulty identifying trafficking victims. The Ministry of Labor did not make any new efforts to address labor trafficking during the reporting period.” (ibid)

This report states under the heading 'Prosecution':

'The Government of Nigeria demonstrated modest progress in its anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts during the year. The 2003 Trafficking in Persons Law Enforcement and Administration Act, amended in 2005 to increase the penalties for trafficking offenders, prohibits all forms of human trafficking. The law prescribes penalties of five years' imprisonment or a fine not to exceed the equivalent of approximately \$645 or both for labor trafficking offenses; these are sufficiently stringent, but the law allows convicted offenders to pay a fine in lieu of prison time for labor trafficking or attempted trafficking offenses, resulting in penalties not proportionate to the crimes committed.' (ibid)

This report states under the heading 'Protection':

"The Government of Nigeria made slightly increased efforts to protect trafficking victims during the year. The government and NGOs identified 480 trafficking victims within the country, including 303 victims of sex trafficking and 177 victims of labor trafficking. Another 92 individuals were identified as victims of trafficking-related crimes. All victims identified by NAPTIP received initial screening and assistance by NAPTIP, after which 250 victims were referred to government-run care facilities for further medical care, vocational training, education, and shelter. In 2012, the Government of Nigeria allocated the equivalent of approximately \$11.9 million to NAPTIP, a slight increase from the 2011 budget, and an additional equivalent of approximately \$160,000 to help evacuate Nigerian victims of trafficking who were stranded in Cote d'Ivoire. State governments also contributed the equivalent of approximately \$15,900 in additional funds to support NAPTIP efforts during the reporting period." (ibid)

A report published in March 2013 by the *UNHCR* notes:

"The Committee remains concerned however at the widespread character of child trafficking and that the State party remains a source, transit and destination country for trafficking of children. It notes with particular concern that the overwhelming majority of rescued victims of trafficking is girls for purposes of sexual exploitation and that successful prosecutions remain low. The Committee is also concerned that the link between human trafficking and international protection obligations are inadequate, particularly concerning children trafficked over international borders" (UNHCR (March 2013) *Submission by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) For the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights' Compilation Report – Universal Periodic Review: Nigeria*, p.10).

In December 2012 the *Country of Origin Research and Information* issued a compilation COI report which includes references to trafficking (Country of Origin Research and Information (December 2012) *CORI Thematic Report, Nigeria: Gender and Age*, pp.83-121).

References

Country of Origin Research and Information (December 2012) *CORI Thematic Report, Nigeria: Gender and Age*

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This response was prepared after researching publicly accessible information currently available to the Refugee Documentation Centre within time constraints. This response is not and does not purport to be conclusive as to the merit of any particular claim to refugee status or asylum. Please read in full all documents referred to.

Sources Consulted

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