



Combatting Human Trafficking in the UAE

**Annual Report
2013-2014**

**NATIONAL COMMITTEE
TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING**



www.nccht.gov.ae

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Foreword

As the UAE's official campaign against human trafficking enters its eighth year, the results so far have been encouraging. Simultaneously, the government is aware of the challenges of this constantly evolving crime and is determined to counter them firmly. A good indicator of the success in the fight against human trafficking is the registration of 19 cases in 2013 under Federal Law 51, compared to 10 in 2007, 58 cases in 2010 and 47 in 2012.

These numbers suggest both growing awareness about human trafficking among the public and intensifying counter-measures adopted by the government. More importantly, the government agencies are becoming increasingly successful in disrupting the activities of several criminals and groups involved in human trafficking.

In the framework of implementing the '5 Ps' strategy of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, the UAE took several significant steps during the last year. These include: amending Federal Law 51 to ensure better protection for victims; establishing a fund to support victims of human trafficking; proactively opening a new shelter in Abu Dhabi to deal with male victims of human trafficking; conducting a public awareness campaign at various terminals of the Dubai International Airport; forging international partnerships and enhancing cooperation to tackle the crime at source, which is the countries of origin, rather than deal with it only within the UAE's borders; participating in several regional and international efforts to counter this crime; and conducting regular workshops and training courses as part of the efforts to continuously improve the skills of law enforcement officials dealing with human trafficking.

During 2014, the UAE intends to extend the airport awareness programme to the other northern emirates; conduct a workshop to educate the private sector about what constitutes human trafficking and how to avoid the same during the process of hiring workers; apart from further enhancing international cooperation.

The UAE is committed to taking the lead in acknowledging the existence of human trafficking as an issue that afflicts the society, as it does in many other parts of the world. Combatting this crime is a goal the government shares with all nations and it will keep pace with international best practices in this endeavour.

Dr Anwar Mohammed Gargash

Chairman, National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking

Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, and Federal National Council Affairs

Introduction

The UAE launched its fight against human trafficking in 2006. Like every year since then, 2013 witnessed progress in dealing with this crime. As a committed and responsible member of the international community, the government will remain proactively engaged in the global anti-human trafficking campaign. Since the seeds of the criminal activity is often sowed in the source countries, creating partnerships with both source and transit countries is now of paramount importance to the national strategy of the UAE.

The government also recognizes the importance of addressing the commercial impetus behind human trafficking in any national legislation and policy. Trafficking is a thriving global business that generates billions of dollars and accounts for millions of victims every year. It is also linked to other organized crimes like human smuggling, drug trafficking and money laundering. The majority of transnational victims are trafficked into commercial sexual exploitation and the rest into forced exploitative labour.

The UAE receives large numbers of temporary contractual workers every year, who have made an important contribution to the development of the country. Unfortunately, criminals might engage in recruiting contractual workers and trafficking them illegally into the country. For the majority of such people, it is only when they arrive in the UAE that they may realize that the work they were promised does not exist and they may be forced instead to get employed in jobs or conditions to which they did not give their consent.

The implementation of the UAE's legal and social support mechanisms during the last seven years of its concerted fight against human trafficking has been recognized by the international community. Although the UAE welcomes constructive help and criticism from international partners and organizations, the anti-trafficking agenda will be determined by the government. The UAE appreciates that, like in many other countries, the challenges that the government agencies face in combatting human trafficking are numerous and complex. The government is committed to checking the exploitative and coercive abuse of any human life in the country and is making great strides in this regard.

Until recently, the UAE followed a four-pillar strategy – legislation; enforcement; victim support; and bilateral agreements and international cooperation. Since 2012, it has

adopted the new internationally-preferred '5 Ps' approach – prevention, prosecution, punishment, protection, and promotion (of international cooperation). For the sake of convenience in compiling the report, prosecution and punishment have been clubbed under one head.

This report is part of the attempt by the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking to share information with the general public and international community, and highlight the UAE's stance on this issue, record progress, identify obstacles and challenges encountered during the last year, and spell out future initiatives. The report also aims to measure the progress of the UAE in the long run and serve as a channel to promote dialogue and transparency in information exchange at the international level.

The government recognizes that the more informed it is about victims, source and transit countries and methodologies practiced by traffickers, the more it can do to prevent this crime. This report attempts to integrate the various processes involved in this effort.

Prevention

1. Federal Law 51

From 2007, the multi-disciplinary Federal Law 51 (2006) continues to provide the legal framework for handling human trafficking cases. Since the legislation was enacted, more and more people have become aware of the law.

Article One of this law defines trafficking as “recruiting, transporting, transferring, harbouring, or receiving persons by means of threat or use of force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of position, taking advantage of the vulnerability of the person, or, the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation, engaging others in prostitution, servitude, forced labour, enslavement, quasi-slavery practices, or the detachment of organs.”

Legally, this definition classifies an activity as human trafficking based on the following factors:

- a. Form of trafficking – recruiting, transporting, transferring and harbouring.
- b. Means of trafficking – by use of threat or force, or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of position, taking advantage of the vulnerability of the person.
- c. Examples of exploitation – engaging others in prostitution, servitude, forced labour, enslavement, quasi-slavery practices, or organ trade.

This definition is closely aligned with what is outlined in the Palermo Protocol and by other international legislations. It offers strong punitive measures, including maximum penalties of life imprisonment and covers all forms of human trafficking.

Under the law, a life sentence is applicable if the crime is committed through deceit, if it involves the use of force or threat of murder or bodily harm, or if it involves physical or psychological torture. Furthermore, the 16-article law prescribes stiff penalties against traffickers ranging from one year to life imprisonment and fines of 100,000 dirhams and one million dirhams (\$27,500 and \$275,000).

In addition, Article 364 of the UAE Penal Code protects against forced prostitution

and Article 365 lays out penalties for those establishing and managing places for prostitution. The UAE also issued Federal Law 39 (2006) on international judicial cooperation, which includes articles on the extradition of suspected or convicted criminals to judicial authorities to try them or execute the sentences given to them. It also provides for mutual judicial assistance in criminal cases, including human trafficking (Articles 6-37).

As part of its international commitment to combat human trafficking, the UAE ratified the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000) in May 2005. This includes provisions for international cooperation in anti-human trafficking efforts. More importantly, in February 2009, the UAE ratified the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol), which is one of the two protocols attached to the Organized Crime Convention.

Further, the NCCHT issued Resolution 7/18 (2010) concerning the regulatory procedures for dealing with human trafficking victims among the relevant authorities in the UAE. This resolution was issued to support and protect human trafficking victims, especially among police and public prosecution departments during the investigation stage and at the time the victims arrive at the shelters. These procedures particularly assist and protect victims of human trafficking by respecting their legal and human rights.

The Committee also issued Resolution 8/21 (2010) pertaining to ethical standards that the media needs to adhere to while conducting interviews with human trafficking victims. It sets out ethical standards that should be respected by various media outlets – television, radio, internet, newspapers and other publications – especially with regard to protecting the victims and ensuring their privacy.

In 2010, a sub-committee appointed by the NCCHT completed a study on the possibilities of amending Federal Law 51, particularly in order to emphasise the protection and repatriation of victims, thus bringing the law more in line with the Palermo Protocol to prevent, suppress and punish trafficking of humans, especially women and children, ratified by the UAE in 2009.

In January 2013, these recommendations were passed by the Cabinet. According to the amendments, victims of human trafficking in the UAE will now get more protection. They also lay out important provisions such as security protection to witnesses and lawyers, as well as psychotherapy to victims. Trafficking victims and witnesses can

also live in the country for as long as the legal proceedings require. The law also protects the privacy and identity of victims of trafficking by making legal proceedings confidential and penalising those who publish names or pictures of victims.

Further, bylaw 32/7 (2014) established a fund to financially assist the long-term rehabilitation of human trafficking victims.

2. Other relevant legislations

The UAE issued two bylaws in 2010 and 2011. The first regulated Federal Law 15 (1993), which deals with organ transplant, and aimed to achieve the following:

- Control the process of preserving and transplanting human organs, tissues and cells.
- Prevent trafficking in human organs, tissues and cells.
- Protect the rights of donors and recipients of human organs, tissues and cells.

In order to achieve these goals and avoid trafficking in human organs – a practice seen in many countries – current legislations include several punitive provisions. These address all cases of organ trafficking, including buying or selling – or offering to buy and sell – human organs from living or deceased persons by means of abduction, deception, coercion, abuse of power and exploiting vulnerability.

The second bylaw is a regulation on Federal Law 18 (2009). It modified the process of registration of births and deaths. This has been specifically developed so that parents can strictly confirm to birth and death registrations of children, which would help check human trafficking.

At another level, the Ministry of Labour is studying the development and amendment of Federal Law 8 (1980) concerning the Organisation of Labour Relations. The ministry is keen to be up-to-date with the latest labour legislations and consistent with the UAE's obligations to Arab and international labour conventions. With regard to protecting workers from exploitation, the legislation could include a definition of forced labour and an article on its criminal penalty.

3. National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking (NCCHT)

A Cabinet order established the NCCHT in 2007 to coordinate efforts and enforce plans at various levels in all the seven emirates of the federation. The Committee includes representatives from the federal ministries of Interior, Foreign Affairs, Labour, Health and Social Affairs, as well as State Security and the UAE Red Crescent Society. In February 2009, the Cabinet strengthened the Committee by adding to its membership public prosecutors, law enforcement officers, and representatives from the Emirates Human Rights Association, as well as victim shelters Dubai Foundation for Women and Children and Ewaa.

The responsibilities of the Committee include:

- Studying and revising human trafficking legislation with a view to enhancing and securing necessary protections in accordance with international standards.
- Preparing reports on efforts undertaken by the UAE to fight human trafficking, in coordination with other relevant authorities in the country.
- Studying reports related to human trafficking and taking relevant action towards realizing their recommendations.
- Coordinating efforts among government authorities concerned with the issue of human trafficking such as ministries, departments, corporations and organisations, as well as coordinating follow-up actions taken to achieve these objectives.
- Promoting public awareness on matters related to human trafficking through conferences, seminars, brochures, periodic newsletters, training and other means in order to achieve the Committee's goals.
- Participating in international conferences and forums related to combatting human trafficking.

The Committee, through its frequent meetings, is committed to encouraging additional progressive and forceful legislative efforts to assure country-wide compliance with international standards and implementation of the laws. The Committee has also been taking the lead in publishing annual reports on human trafficking since 2008 to ensure transparency and dissemination of information, as well as increasing awareness among the public and the international community. The UAE believes that data collection and analysis is important because the more information it has, the more proactive it can be in its attempt to improvise and tackle such crimes.

As part of a comprehensive awareness campaign to explore ways of limiting this crime, workshops and training sessions are conducted by the NCCHT in cooperation with various law enforcement agencies and ministries. These workshops are attended by relevant departments of naturalization and residency, police, public prosecution, as well as victim shelters. The primary purpose of such programmes is to ensure that those on the front-line of combatting trafficking match up to international standards. Specific departments in various ministries are also being encouraged to conduct their own specialized training programmes to acquire the required skills to better tackle the crime. Several ministries and departments have set up special units to tackle human trafficking crimes, both at the federal and local levels.

3.1. NCCHT activities

Domestic

- Bali Process on smuggling and trafficking in persons – Abu Dhabi, March 2013. This workshop was held in coordination with the Australian embassy, which briefed the NCCHT members and personnel from other related departments about the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime and the implications of the UAE formally becoming a member of the Bali Process and its Ad Hoc Group.
- E-learning tools on forced labour, in association with the International Labour Organization (ILO) – Dubai, October. The ILO Special Action Programme combatting Forced Labour has developed a new e-learning tool on how to identify and investigate forced labour offences and assist victims. The tool is intended to serve as an interactive, self-guided course for law enforcement (e.g. labour inspectors, police officers) but is also relevant to other practitioners likely to encounter forced labour in the course of their work.

International

- Third Forum to Combat Human Trafficking, organized by Qatar Foundation – Doha, January 2013
- Implementation mechanisms of Human Trafficking Act – Doha, March
- Fifth session of Bali Process on Smuggling Crimes and Human Trafficking issues –Indonesia, April
- Human Trafficking and the Media – Doha, April
- Second session of the Arab initiative to build national capacity to combat human trafficking – Abu Dhabi, April
- Meeting of the General Assembly of the United Nations on the Global Plan to

Combat Human Trafficking – New York, May

- Capacity building and organizational leadership in the fight against human trafficking – Doha, May
- Review of response to the report of the Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children – Geneva, May
- Law enforcement in the fight against human trafficking – May, Belarus
- Adoption meeting of Universal Periodic Review – Geneva, June
- Regional training in anti-human trafficking measures – Amman, September
- Capacity building to deal with human trafficking victims – Doha, September
- Improving international cooperation to fight human trafficking – Tajikistan, September
- Third Regional Workshop to Combat Human Trafficking – Jordan, October
- Meeting of experts on fighting human trafficking – Cairo, October
- Fifth session of the Working Group on Human Trafficking – Vienna, November
- First Emirates-Europe meeting on human rights – Brussels, November
- Discussion of anti-human trafficking reports at the Arab Commission for Human Rights – Cairo, December

4. Public awareness

Addressing human trafficking crimes is not the work of just one authority, but a combined institutional and community-based work. Various state establishments have exchanged information between officials and community members to bring about the desired results.

The Committee launched a pioneering human trafficking media campaign at the end of 2010 and early 2011 in the Abu Dhabi and Al Ain international airports. Apart from informative hoardings, the campaign included distribution of pamphlets in six languages (Arabic, English, Urdu, Hindi, Russian and Tagalog), with contact details of Ewaa shelters for women and children victims of human trafficking. The idea behind launching a media campaign at airports crystallised after the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking noticed that most of the cases, particularly those involving sexual exploitation, originate outside the country, and realized that prospective victims should become aware of the available anti-trafficking remedial mechanisms as soon as they arrive in the UAE.

Following positive feedback about the impact of the public awareness campaigns at the Abu Dhabi and Al Ain airports, this drive was expanded to include the Dubai International Airport terminals between June and December 2013. Led by the NCCHT, in cooperation with Dubai Police, the campaign message was propagated in 14 prominent languages, which represent the nationalities most vulnerable to human trafficking.

This campaign is now likely to expand to other airports in the northern emirates.

Further, the Committee's official website (www.nccht.gov.ae) is a valuable official source of information. The website plays an effective role in raising public awareness and serves as an active channel of communication between the Committee and general public.



* This multilingual poster was one of the anti-human trafficking messages displayed on the stairway leading up to the passport control section at Dubai International Airport.



* Wall poster at Dubai International Airport

Overall, these improving results have become possible following the UAE's massive efforts to gather information and deploy the necessary forces to efficiently combat human trafficking activities.

5. Ministry of Interior activities

The Ministry of Interior places great importance on organizational units concerned with protecting and promoting human rights, particularly combating human trafficking and issues related to women and children. As part of its institutionalised framework to combat this crime at the federal level, it has two departments:

- Centre for Statistics and Security Analysis
- Department to Combat Human Trafficking Crimes

The Department to Combat Human Trafficking Crimes conducted many activities to improve the skills of officials dealing with this crime and to ensure a victim-centred approach.

5.1. Security measures and procedures

- Cooperation with Interpol through the following procedures:
 - a) Exchange of information on human trafficking crimes, especially those related to women and children, as well as commercial websites that are used for sexual exploitation of children;
 - b) Monitor individuals involved or suspected of being involved in such crimes and circulate their information internationally;
 - c) Assist in prosecution of persons wanted in connection with crimes of human

trafficking and child abuse or sexual exploitation;

- d) Form a specialized team to enhance the process of investigation of sexual crimes against children.
- Tighter control at entry points through the following measures:
 - a) use unified criminal justice and Interpol systems to verify individuals at entry points;
 - b) Use iris and fingerprint recognition technologies to identify wanted people or stop those prohibited from entering or leaving the country. In addition, use face recognition technologies to ensure that travellers and their passport photos match;
 - c) Use modern equipment to detect visa or passport fraud at entry points;
 - d) Develop stricter regulations and standards to check entry permits and establish a linkage between accompanying passengers, especially when it involves children, as well as verify the purpose for which the visitor is travelling to the country;
 - e) coordinate with the naturalization, residency and ports affairs and police departments to follow up on legal procedures and victim assistance in human trafficking cases;
 - f) employ and train qualified professional Emiratis to handle increasing workload;
 - g) develop training curriculum drawn from national and international best practices and experiences;
 - h) the Directorate of Residency and Ports strengthened its partnership with many countries, including United Kingdom, United States of America, Australia, India, Pakistan, some Arab countries and the Gulf Cooperation Council states in particular;
 - i) agreements and memoranda of cooperation in the field of security cooperation and training and capacity building were signed with the US Department of Homeland Security, Department of Australian Citizenship and Immigration and United Nations Regional Office in Abu Dhabi.

5.2. Promoting anti-human trafficking culture

- Study case-by-case the conditions of human trafficking victims and evaluate the nature of exploitation so that necessary preventive measures could be taken to avoid its recurrence.
- Provide appropriate environments in police departments to conduct interviews

with human trafficking victims.

- Include details of other forms of organized crime, including human trafficking, in training courses organized by the Ministry.
- Develop a cyber-based training programme to deal with this crime.
- Develop programmes to assist victims according to human rights conventions.
- Provide assistance and protection to victims of human trafficking in coordination with the shelters in the UAE.
- Sign memorandum of understanding between the shelters and police departments, with the aim of developing effective mechanisms and adopting legal measures to protect victims.
- Organize rewards for confidential sources helping fight human trafficking.
- Prepare details of victims and traffickers and centralize data collection methods.
- Developed an electronic training programme to combat human trafficking in collaboration with the United Nations Regional Office and the Abu Dhabi Council for Higher Education.
- Issue toolkits on law enforcement in Arabic, English and French to workers to combat human trafficking.
- In the realm of training, education and awareness about human rights and anti-human trafficking crimes, the Ministry of Interior undertook the following initiatives:
 - a) Human rights-related subjects were taught in the curriculum of police academies, institutes and schools.
 - b) In order to disseminate information and create awareness about human trafficking and ways to combat the crime, the Ministry conducted research and published and distributed several brochures. These included:
 - I. brochures on Federal Law 51;
 - II. guides in English, Arabic and French listing names of institutions and officials in charge of enforcing the law against human trafficking;
 - III. study on tourism security and its link to human trafficking;
 - IV. guide on dealing with victims of human trafficking, which lists responsibilities of police stations, shelters and other law enforcement institutions, embassies, and places of worship.

The training plan includes various courses that aim to sharpen the skills of police officers.

During 2013, 34 anti-human trafficking lectures, meetings, workshops and courses were organized in the UAE, which benefitted 835 personnel. These included:

- Human rights and human trafficking – Al Ain, January 2013
- Human trafficking: meaning and identification – Fujairah, January
- First meeting of the members of the Committee to Combat Human Trafficking (CCHT) – Abu Dhabi, January
- Training workers on human rights and fighting human trafficking – Dubai Police Academy, January
- Combatting human trafficking and victim support – Sharjah, February
- Combatting human trafficking crimes – Abu Dhabi, February
- Combatting human Trafficking (in cooperation with German police officials) – Abu Dhabi, February
- Mechanisms to deal with labour strikes – Dubai Police Academy, February
- Prevention of human trafficking – Ras Al Khaimah, March
- Human rights and human trafficking – Emirates Institute for Residency and Foreigners' Affairs, March
- Second CCHT members meeting – Abu Dhabi, March
- Third CCHT members meeting – Umm Al Quwain, March
- Pillars of prevention of human trafficking – Abu Dhabi, April
- Labour complaints – Dubai, April
- Investigating human trafficking and smuggling crimes – General Directorate of Residency and Foreigners' Affairs, Dubai, April
- Human rights and human trafficking – Sharjah, April-May
- Common mistakes in reporting human trafficking and functions of law enforcement officers during information gathering stage – Dubai Police Academy, April-May
- Advanced legal techniques to investigate human trafficking crimes (in partnership with the United Nations Office for Crime and Drugs) – Abu Dhabi, May
- Combatting human trafficking crimes and smuggling – General Directorate of Security and Ports Affairs – Abu Dhabi, May
- Fourth CCHT members meeting – Abu Dhabi, June
- Indicators of human trafficking – Dubai, June

- Spreading awareness about human trafficking – Abu Dhabi, June
- Fifth CCHT members meeting – Ras Al Khaimah, June
- Identifying victims of human trafficking – Emirates Institute for Residency and Foreigners' Affairs, June-July
- Training law enforcement officers anti-human trafficking measures – Umm Al Quwain, July
- Human trafficking: meaning and identification – Fujairah, August
- Human rights and human trafficking – Sharjah, August
- Sixth CCHT members meeting – Abu Dhabi, September
- Combatting human trafficking crimes – Ras Al Khaimah, September
- Seventh CCHT members meeting – Abu Dhabi, October
- Employees of ports and aviation security: first line of defence against human trafficking – Dubai Judicial Institute, October
- Eighth CCHT members meeting – Dubai Police Academy, October
- Identifying human trafficking victims – Sharjah, October
- Combatting human trafficking crimes – Fujairah, December.

Further, 44 ministry personnel participated in at least 15 regional and international workshops. They were:

- Third Doha Forum to Fight Human Trafficking – January 2013
- Operational mechanisms to activate anti-trafficking laws – Doha, March
- Bali System to tackle smuggling immigrants – Abu Dhabi, March
- Third regional workshop to combat human trafficking – Jordan, April
- Capacity building for officials in labour sector – Abu Dhabi, April
- Capacity building of law enforcement officers to tackle human trafficking and criminal investigation of human trafficking crimes – Abu Dhabi, April
- Determining responsibility of law enforcement officers, enhancing awareness about protection and maintaining security in labour disputes – Kuwait, May
- Training the trainers of combatting human trafficking – Doha, May
- Advanced training in combatting human trafficking – Kuwait, July
- Building capacity of agencies referring victims of human trafficking – Doha, September
- Building capacity of personnel in information management information and

preparation of reports on combatting human trafficking – Doha, September

- Ways to counter money-laundering and human trafficking crimes in the Gulf – Doha, October
- Regional Conference to improve international cooperation between institutions and training centres in the fight against human trafficking –Tajikistan, October
- Best practices in combatting human trafficking – France, November
- World Conference to Combat Human Trafficking – France, November.

6. Activities of Human Trafficking Crimes Control Centre, Dubai Police

Since its establishment in 2009, the Centre has been providing strategic solutions to combatting this transnational crime. It organized a number of training courses and meetings, in coordination with the Criminal Records Department. It printed and distributed information brochures and prepared a reference guide for all concerned officials and parties with details of various anti-human trafficking methods and regulations that need to be applied while dealing with victims. It also continued to establish cooperative partnerships with local government institutions, as well as civil society organizations and regional and international organizations to raise the efficiency of law enforcement officials dealing with human trafficking.

Some of the activities and achievements of the Centre during 2013 include:

- *A significant decrease in human trafficking crimes in Dubai* – from 35 in 2012 to 11 cases in 2013.
- *Fewer labour strikes in Dubai* – 34 in 2013 compared to 45 in 2012.
- *We are all Ears* – This programme encourages telephone complaints from workers regarding violations of labour laws through a toll-free line (800 5005) that is operational 24 hours.
- *Suitable Housing* – This programme seeks to communicate directly with workers to identify their housing problems and settle their complaints at their place of residence. About 1700 cases were attended to through this mechanism.
- *Monitoring conditions of temporary workers* – The programme monitors labour law violations by visiting work places, interacting with workers and addressing the legitimate demands of their rights. Officials document abuses and incidence of injustice, propose solutions to labour problems and crises and combat security risks resulting from labour strikes. The department recovered nearly 30 million dirhams related to delayed payment of wages and settled the same with the workers. It also

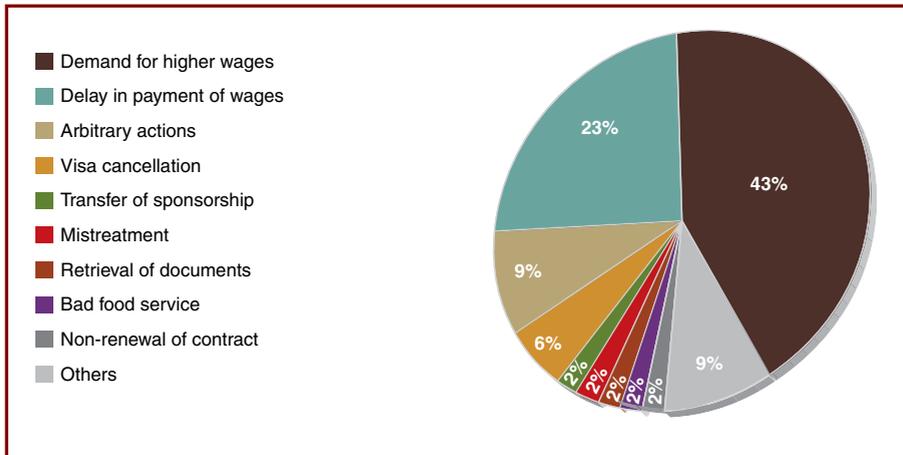
launched an electronic system to monitor the conditions of temporary workers, to help facilitate the process of documenting and following up with their complaints.

- *Workshops and training*
 - Promoting human rights – January, 2013
 - Mechanisms to deal with labour strikes – February
 - Errors in reporting human trafficking cases and responsibilities of law enforcement officials during information gathering stage – March
 - Dealing with labour complaints – April
 - Identification of human trafficking cases – June
 - First line of defence against human trafficking – security at air and sea ports – October
 - Policy making to combat human trafficking – October
 - Nearly 200 staff members benefitted from these training programmes
 - In addition, the centre organized seven educational lectures entitled ‘Know Your Rights’, which benefitted 1,582 workers in Dubai.
- Under the ‘We take care of victims’ programme, the centre provided over 10,000 dirhams in material support to victims of human trafficking.
- Signed a memorandum of understanding with the AI Maktoum Foundation, which will provide financial support of 150,000 dirham to victims of human trafficking.
- In collaboration with the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, a public awareness campaign – ‘Stop Human Trafficking’ – was conducted at various terminals of the Dubai International Airport. This was along similar lines of the campaign conducted in the Abu Dhabi and Al Ain airports a few years ago.

7. Ministry of Labour

The UAE is aware that in order to intensify its anti-human trafficking drive, labour mobility needs to be more effectively managed through the formulation of appropriate legal and policy frameworks, development of administrative structures and increased capacity building. The UAE has introduced several changes to its labour policies to protect the expatriate workforce, which is having a positive impact. It must be stressed, however, that the UAE – with expatriates making up about 85 per cent of its population – believes that labour issues should not be linked to human trafficking, and should be treated separately.

Reasons for complaints in Dubai (2013)



* There were 1,005 labour complaints during 2013

Source: Dubai Police

Workers strikes in Dubai (2013)

Reason for strike	# of Stikes
Delay in payment of wages	20
Demand for higher wages	11
Unlawful deduction from wages	4
End of service claims	3
Not accounting overtime hours	1
Poor medical and first aid service	1
Air ticket after end of contract	1
Food	1
Non-renewal of business contract	1
Others	4
Total	47

In the past, progress towards these objectives was hampered because of differences in the approaches taken by the countries of origin and destination. However, the UAE has been attaching greater importance to improving dialogue with individual countries of origin and seeking to establish multilateral consultation.

As part of the UAE's efforts to create specialised institutions, the Ministry of Labour established a separate department in 2009 to combat human trafficking, which monitors against the possibility of workers falling prey to such crimes. It also monitors the activities of recruitment agencies to ensure that proper measures are taken ahead of employing workers, especially with regard to protecting them against exploitation.

The Ministry realized that planning a strategy based only on prosecution is insufficient to eradicate human trafficking, especially labour exploitation. This was inferred after reviewing successful stories in combatting human trafficking in other nations and studying their best practices. Consequently, the Ministry launched awareness programmes that communicated directly with workers and employers alike, in addition to providing them with training services.

Despite the challenges, the UAE aims to manage and govern the working environment in line with international laws and best international labour practices in key areas such as highly regulated standards of labour accommodation, payment of wages on time and mechanisms to justly address workers' complaints.

Some of the measures undertaken by the Department to Combat Human Trafficking in the Ministry during 2012 include:

7.1. Wage Protection System

The Ministry intensified the Wage Protection System (WPS), which was introduced in 2009. An electronic system launched in cooperation with the UAE Central Bank, WPS is considered a positive step towards protecting the workers' rights and promoting trust between them and their employers. Under this system, the UAE-based companies transfer the wages of their workers through banks, money transfer companies and other service providers, rather than make cash payments. The Ministry constantly reviews the electronic system and its operations. All companies that employ 100 workers or more are expected to adhere to WPS guidelines. By the end of 2013, 252,000 companies, involving about 3.6 million workers, received wages through this system.

Workers who do not receive their salaries or wish to report delayed salaries or unwarranted deductions in salaries can lodge their grievance either through the ministry website (callcenter@mol.gov.ae) or by contacting the ministry's call centre (800 665). The complaints are kept confidential while the labour inspectors visit the concerned facilities to verify the details. During 2013, the ministry received 3811 wages-related complaints. In case of employers delaying or failing to pay wages, Article 181 of the Labour Code is applied which could lead to a fine of 10,000 dirhams for each worker and a maximum of 5 million dirhams. Labour inspectors transferred 188 wage dispute cases to the public prosecution for legal remedy.

7.2 Inspections

- To monitor general irregularities in the application of labour law, especially in terms of working hours, vacation, health and safety standards, and calculating overtime, officials carried out regular inspections during the year. These included inspections to ensure compliance with the ban on midday work from 12.30 pm to 3 pm during the summer months (15 June to 15 August).
- Inspections revealed that 316 establishments had employed workers who were neither sponsored by them nor registered under WPS.
- About 200 companies did not report cases of their employees quitting jobs without notice and 'absconding'. The ministry takes serious note of such cases because it is such 'illegal' workers who are most susceptible to trafficking and exploitation.
- The ministry also took action against 1,022 establishments that were not operational but permitted workers under its sponsorship to be employed elsewhere, thus excluding them from the protection of labour laws.

7.3. Training and awareness

Deriving from its belief that the provisions of the decent work programme protects individuals from being exploited, the Ministry implemented a number of initiatives to protect their wages and provide them with decent accommodation, in line with international standards. It also facilitated the submission of workers' complaints to the concerned authorities and resolution of labour disputes. Moreover, a number of initiatives were implemented to increase the awareness about workers' rights, mechanisms that provide them with protection and the procedures they must follow when these rights are not honoured. During 2013:

- The ministry organized 334 awareness workshops for workers. These dealt with human trafficking, sexual exploitation and forced labour issues.
- At least four specialized workshops were organized for employers to help them understand the crime and how to promptly deal with it when they become aware of such cases.
- The ministry's anti-human trafficking cell inspectors undertook 5018 field visits and conducted awareness programmes to educate workers.
- About 105 staff from the inspection departments of various management service centres was trained in human trafficking issues, monitoring, investigation and preparation of legal paperwork.
- In order to raise the awareness of the community about the seriousness of the human trafficking and forced labour crimes, the ministry involved the media during regional and international conferences.
- In January 2013, the ministry organized a regional conference on 'Combatting human trafficking from a labour market perspective'.

Further, as part of the efforts to combat forced labour and human trafficking, the Ministry has established a number of mechanisms by which workers can communicate with the labour officials and submit their complaints. Moreover, the Ministry has stressed on quick intervention to avoid escalation of labour problems. Some of the mechanisms are listed below.

Labour dispute departments

The Ministry has several departments with qualified staff to look into the complaints of workers across the country. These employees receive complaints from workers and attempt to settle disputes quickly. If the settlement is rejected by the worker or the employer, the dispute is referred to a court of law, which issues a summary verdict without levying the worker any fees, irrespective of the nature of litigation or damage involved in the complaint.

Labour care units

These units in labour-intensive areas provide care and protection for workers and raise awareness about their rights. Such units are currently operational in Yas Island and AI

Raha Village in Al Wathba, Abu Dhabi, Al Muhaisna and Al Quoz in Dubai, Sharjah Industrial Area, Ras Al Khaimah, Fujairah and Al Ain. These units are designed to receive complaints, comments and suggestions of workers and provide suitable responses. In addition, these units visit labour sites and study the prevalent negative labour phenomena. Thereafter, they determine the type of awareness required to educate workers about their rights and duties, as well as plan lectures, seminars and training programmes. These units also make orientation visits to the owners of the companies. Such visits also help relevant officials to monitor the existence of any phenomena that could be considered as forced labour or human trafficking.

8. Department of Human Rights, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

- *Voluntary contribution of about 90,000 dirhams (\$25,000) to the United Nations Trust Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking*
- *Facilitated the visit of the Tajikistan delegation to learn from the UAE's experience to fight human trafficking*
- *Participated in various workshops and training programmes, including:*
 - Arab expert meeting on preparation of national reports about anti-trafficking efforts in the region – Cairo, October.
 - Meeting to review the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) strategy for 2012-2014. It is noteworthy that the UAE made a significant multi-year commitment to the United Nations for the establishment of this initiative in 2007
 - Bali system to tackle smuggling immigrants – Abu Dhabi, March
 - E-learning tools to counter forced labour – Dubai, August.

Prosecution and Punishment

The government institutions have focused on increasing awareness for the enforcement of anti-human trafficking laws. According to statistics compiled from information released by official agencies, 27 human trafficking-related cases were registered by the police/Ministry of Interior under Federal Law 51 in 2013, but the Public Prosecution treated only 19 of these as human trafficking cases (Table 1). These involved 24 victims and led to the arrest of 50 traffickers.

Notably, there were convictions in 12 cases (Table 2), which reflects positively on the robustness of the judicial system in the UAE. These convictions involved stiff penalties ranging from one year to life imprisonment and fines.

A measure of the UAE's performance in tackling this crime is evident in the number of registered cases. While only 10 cases were recorded in 2007, it increased to 58 cases in 2010, declined to 47 in 2012 and further declined in 2013 (Graph 1).

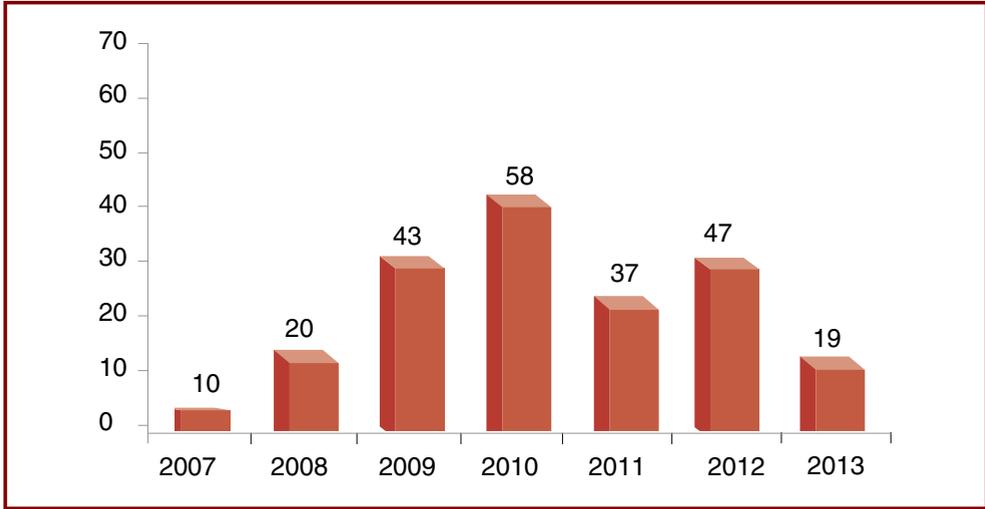
On another note, a change is also being observed in the nature of human trafficking crimes that are being recorded in the country. While all cases in the past pertained to sexual exploitation, there have been cases in the recent past that fall outside the scope of this form of abuse – labour exploitation, forced labour and, in even fewer instances, sale of children.

Table 1

Human Trafficking Cases (2013)			
Emirate	Cases	Traffickers	Victims
Abu Dhabi	3	9	5
Dubai	8	26	10
Sharjah	6	11	7
Ajman	2	4	2
Total	19	50	24

Source: Public Prosecution of respective emirates

Graph 1
Human Trafficking Cases (2007-2013)



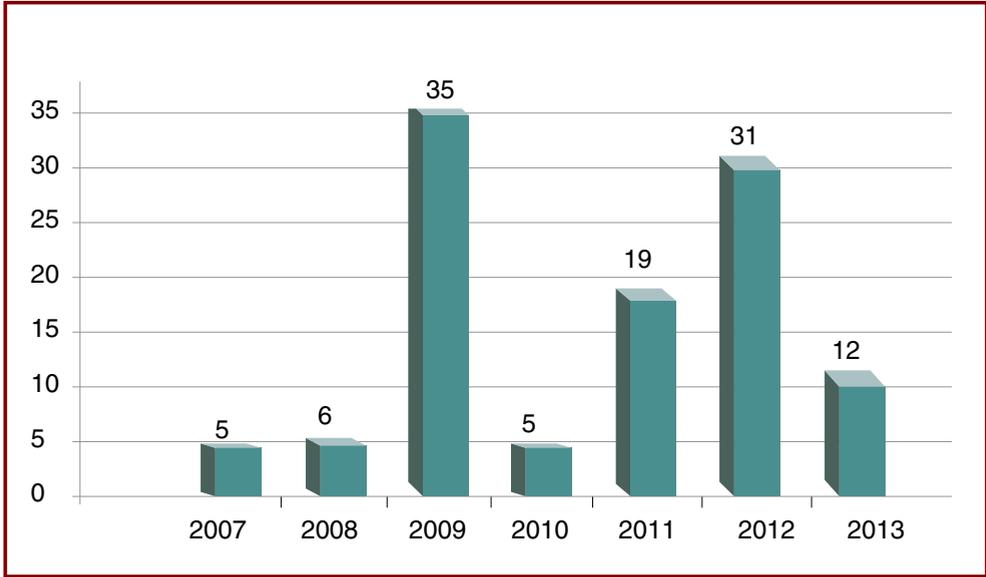
Source: National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, UAE

Table 2

Convictions (2013)			
Emirate	Cases	Final verdicts	Case under progress
Abu Dhabi	3	2	1
Dubai	8	6	2
Sharjah	6	4	2
Ajman	2	0	2
Total	19	12	7

Source: Public Prosecution of respective emirates

Graph 2
Number of Convicted Cases (2007-2013)



Source: National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, UAE

Protection

The UAE's holistic approach to combat human trafficking includes significant initiatives that determine how victims are treated by law enforcement officials, as well as expanding the help and welfare programmes available to them. These are designed to be prompt and just. The government firmly believes that those who are sexually exploited must be treated as victims, protected and supported through counseling and rehabilitation programmes. At the same time, those responsible for trafficking individuals into prostitution or forced labour will be punished according to the UAE law.

The government has a growing track record of providing assistance and protection to victims of sexual abuse. It provides shelter and counselling for these victims. The government works with foreign governments and NGOs when cases are brought to its attention. Victims have been given protection and shelter while their paperwork is processed, and are then repatriated based on their consent and at the government's expense under the 'Crime Victim Assistance Programme.'

Aside from government-headed initiatives, charitable and social networks are also active in the UAE.

1. Ewaa – shelter for victims of human trafficking, Abu Dhabi

This victim support facility, operating under the umbrella of the UAE Red Crescent Authority, began its activities in 2008. It can accommodate 60 victims, who are provided with rehabilitation programmes, as well as medical, psychological and legal support. In 2011, Ewaa opened two more shelters for victims of human trafficking in Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah. Together, these two shelters can accommodate 70 victims.

In two important developments, the NCCHT adopted a decision in 2013 to establish a fund to support victims of human trafficking, which will be a cooperative effort with Ewaa; and in a proactive step, Ewaa opened its first shelter for male victims of human trafficking in Abu Dhabi in January 2014 to deal with any such case in future.

As part of its outreach, Ewaa has a website (www.shwc.ae), Facebook account (Ewaa shelters for women and child victims of human trafficking), Twitter account (@Ewaa Shelters), hotline service (800-7283) and a crew of women staff trained to

communicate round the clock in several languages with human trafficking victims. These initiatives aim to encourage more victims to escape from the clutches of exploitation and get relief at the shelter. In the past, Ewaa also used the hotline service as part of a media campaign carried out in collaboration with the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking and in cooperation with Abu Dhabi and Al Ain international airports.

- *Relief* – In collaboration with concerned parties, Ewaa provides victims with necessary care before helping them return to their home countries. This is done in a friendly, warm and humane way, following medical, psychological and legal assistance.
- *Health, psychological and legal care* – Given the sensitive nature of human trafficking victims, all medical, psychological and legal services are provided by specialists. As part of the rehabilitation programme, these facilities – including physical and mental relaxation therapy – are provided till the victims are designated as fully stable.
- *Rehabilitation* – Along with the continued psychological support for victims, educational, handicraft and recreational activities are organised to help overcome their experiences of abuse and prepare them to resume normal routines in their home countries. Some of these programmes include computer courses, English and Arabic language classes, sewing and embroidery training, as well as painting and flower arrangement. Further, as part of the rehabilitation process, Ewaa signed a memorandum of understanding with Hyatt Capital Gate hotel in 2012 to provide victims vocational training in hotel management. This was done to help the victims gain the required skills and confidence to take up jobs and sustain themselves when they are reintegrated into the society.
- *Financial aid* – Essential items, such as clothing, is provided to victims immediately upon arrival at the shelter. A weekly allowance is provided to enable the victims to make telephone calls to their loved ones. The financial status and living standards in the victims' home countries is taken into consideration before a lump sum aid is granted. In case it is anticipated that a victim is likely to experience harsh conditions in her home country, a committee would assist the victim with additional funds, disbursement of which is supervised by the shelter. Such a decision is based on a follow-up report prepared by the psychologist during the victim's stay at the shelter. Further, in case a victim suffers from financial problems after she returns home, the shelter communicates and disburses additional funds.
- *Return and follow-up* – After ensuring the health and safety of the victim, following a sufficient period of rehabilitation and training, Ewaa coordinates

with the concerned authorities in the victim's home country and takes legal measures to repatriate them. In addition, it also coordinates with like-minded foundations to ensure that the victim does not fall prey to traffickers once again. In the event of the victim refusing to return to her home country because of extreme situation such as war or personal reasons, Ewaa transfers such cases to the office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Abu Dhabi due to the absence of the asylum system in the UAE.

Ewaa provided assistance to 25 victims of human trafficking in its three shelters for women during 2013.

Origin of victims (2013)

Region	# of victims
South Asia	9
Southeast Asia	2
Central Asia	1
Africa	3
Middle East	10
Total	25

Shelter

Emirate	# of victims
Abu Dhabi	10
Sharjah	6
Ras Al Khaimah	9
Total	25

Age of victims

Region	# of victims
0-18	7
19-25	8
26-35	8
36-45	2
Total	25

Referrals

Referral of victims	Abu Dhabi	Sharjah	Ras Al Khaimah	# of victims
Churches	1	1	-	2
Police	7	5	-	12
Embassies	2	-	-	2
Criminal Investigation Department	-	-	9	9
Total	10	6	9	25

Marital status

Marital status	Abu Dhabi	Sharjah	Ras Al Khaimah	# of victims
Single	2	4	3	9
Married	5	1	1	7
Child	1	1	4	6
Widow	-	-	-	-
Divorced	2	-	1	3
Total	10	6	9	25

Victim's visa type

Marital status	Abu Dhabi	Sharjah	Ras Al Khaimah	# of victims
Residence	-	1	7	8
Tourist	6	3	1	10
Work	3	1	-	4
Visit	1	1	1	3
Total	10	6	9	25

1.1. Workshops

- Third Forum on Combatting Human Trafficking – Doha, January 2013
- Workshop for specialist and psychologist social workers– Abu Dhabi, January
- Universal Periodic Review of human rights – Geneva, January-February
- Introductory lecture on Ewaa shelters – Federal Police School, Sharjah, February
- Human rights mechanisms for government officials – Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Abu Dhabi, March
- Capacity building of organizational leadership to combat human trafficking (Arab Initiative) – Doha, May
- Dissemination of information on anti-human trafficking culture – Abu Dhabi, June
- E-learning tools to counter forced labour – Dubai, August
- Building capacity of relevant agencies in combatting human trafficking – Doha, September
- Identifying victims of human trafficking – Sharjah, October
- Evaluation of humanitarian assistance – Abu Dhabi, October
- Cognitive behavioural therapy – Dubai, November
- Capacity building of civil society organisations to fight human trafficking – Kuwait, December.

2. Dubai Foundation for Women and Children (DFWAC)

This Foundation was established in 2007 to provide support and psychological care to women, both nationals and expatriates, who are victims of violence, particularly human trafficking, domestic violence, and child abuse. These services are free of charge and non-discriminatory.

Setting up DFWAC was the first step towards institutionalizing victim support in line with international standards. It is supervised by an independent board and is constantly in contact with similar shelters in other countries to introduce best practices in shelter management and administration. The Foundation plays a vital role in improving social services for victims by providing a refuge to overcome psychological and physical effects of violence, oppression and neglect.

DFWAC's facilities can accommodate up to 250 people and include a school that can accommodate up to 300 people. Victims are provided with comprehensive services, including immediate medical and psychological care, case management, in addition to consular, immigration and legal support, as well as educational and vocational training. The Foundation also provides psychological counselling to individuals and groups. It works in collaboration with national and international partners to ensure that victims receive a quality continuum of care.

A hotline (800-111) is in operation to receive calls round the clock in various languages, which facilitates the process of helping and protecting victims.

The Care and Rehabilitation Department provides social, psychological and intensive medical services to the inmates of the Foundation. In addition, education and training opportunities are given through:

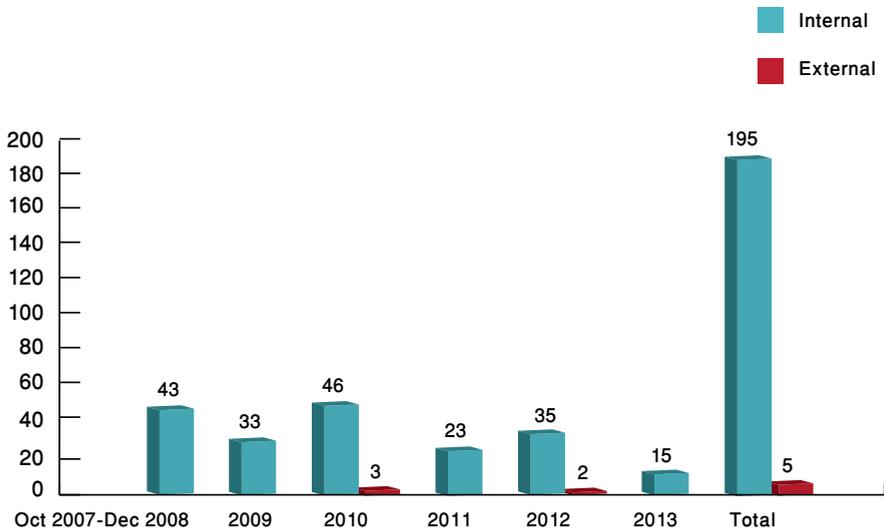
- a) *Case management* – A case manager deals with each victim in order to assess the general condition. These managers prepare an integrated plan that includes health, psychological and social support for the victims.
- b) *Health services* – Victims undergo full medical check-up on arrival at the Foundation to determine if they suffer from any infectious disease that needs healthcare in collaboration with the Dubai Health Authority.
- c) *Social services* – Facilitated by the Foundation's communication with all concerned authorities, victims receive full social support services. Social workers accompany the victims to sessions involving recording of statements at the public prosecution or courts.
- d) *Psychological help* – The Foundation's psychologists provide support services either individually or conduct group sessions. They also prepare the victims before they testify at the public prosecution, and before they are repatriated to their home countries.
- e) *Legal assistance* – The Foundation provides legal support by following up the cases of victims at the public prosecution and courts.
- f) *Education and training* – Victims attend many courses in the Dubai Women's Association and participate in several sport activities and artistic workshops and training, in addition to leisure trips outside the Foundation environment.
- g) *Financial aid* – Apart from all the services received by the victims during their stay in the Foundation being free, financial support and gifts are also offered to victims when they leave the Foundation.

During 2013, DFWAC provided shelter to 15 victims, all referred by Dubai Police – 11 adults and four children. Majority of the victims were from Asia. The age of the victims ranged from 6 months to 33 years. Their educational levels varied from

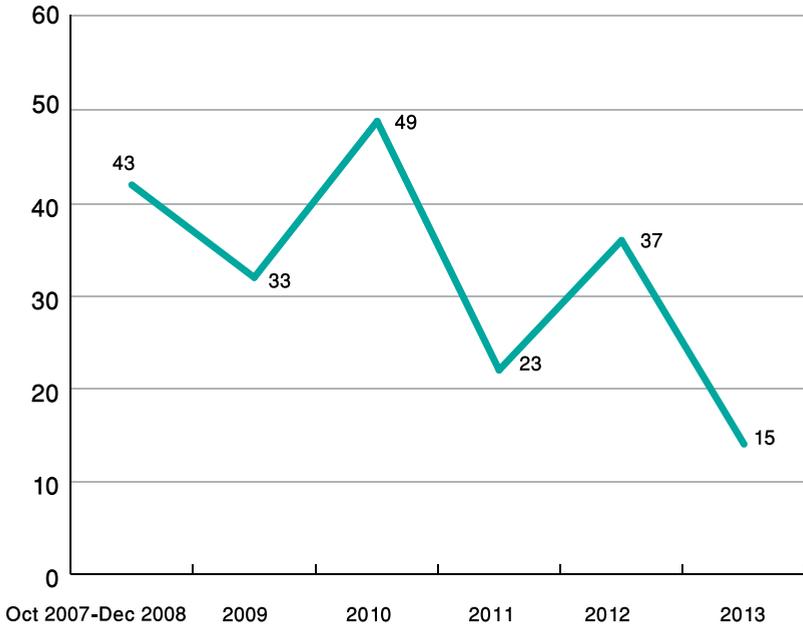
illiteracy to university level, with majority not even clearing secondary school. Of the four children, two were 16 years old; one six-month child was sold by her mother, and one other seven-year-old was trafficked for exploitation through begging. Among the four children was a boy.

More details about the victims could be ascertained from the following statistics compiled by DFWAC.

Number of trafficking victims at DFWAC (2007-2013)

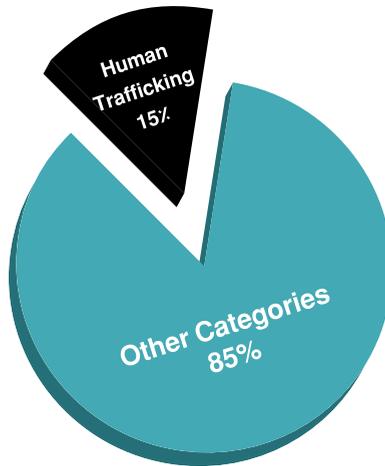


Internal and external victims



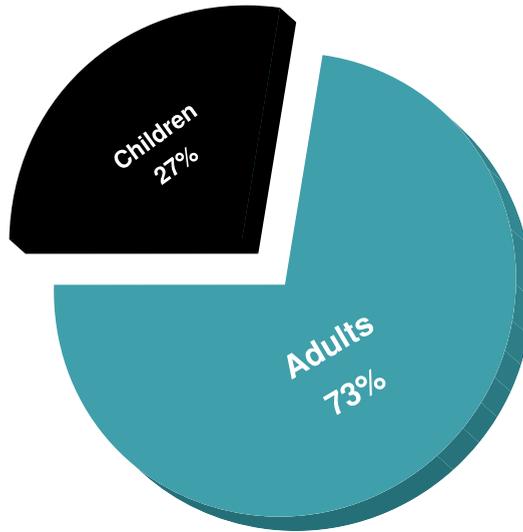
** Reduction in number of DFWAC victims due to increase in number of shelters in the UAE from one to five and decline in number of trafficking cases due to strict implementation of laws and increased awareness about human trafficking.*

Trafficking victims versus other categories



** Victims of other categories include cases of domestic violence, child abuse and other humanitarian grounds.*

Children versus adults



Origin of victims

Region	# of cases	%
Asia	11	74%
Africa	2	13%
Europe	2	13%
Total	15	100%

Educational status

Level attended	# of cases	%
Not applicable	1	7%
No education	6	40%
Primary school	2	13%
Secondary/high school	3	20%
Some college-incomplete	1	7%
Bachelor/College - completed	2	13%
Total	15	100%

Marital Status

Marital status	# of cases	%
Not applicable	2	13%
Single	3	20%
Married	6	40%
Divorced	4	27%
Total	15	100%

Monthly income

Monthly income*	# of cases	%
Not Applicable	1	7%
No income	11	73%
Less than 1000 dirhams	2	13%
Irregular income	1	7%
Total	15	100%

* Income reported by victims.

Visa type

Visa type	# of cases	%
Work	5	13%
Visit	4	20%
Dependent residence	2	40%
Tourist	1	27%
Unknown	3	20%
Total	15	100%

Validity of visa

Validity of visa	# of cases	%
Valid	7	47%
Expired	3	20%
Did not know	5	33%
Total	15	100%

Origin of crime

Origin of crime	# of cases	%
Within the UAE	2	13%
Outside the UAE	12	80%
Unknown	1	7%
Total	15	100%

How they got trafficked

How they got trafficked	# of cases	%
Promised to get a job/money earning activity	8	53%
Threatened	5	33%
Unknown	1	7%
Not applicable	1	7%
Total	15	100%

Work that victims thought they would do

Nature of work/activity	# of cases	%
Not Applicable	2	13.3%
Housemaid	4	26.6%
Tourist	3	20%
Receptionist	1	6.6%
Waitress	1	6.6%
Nurse	1	6.6%
Beautician	1	6.6%
As a 'wife'	1	6.6%
Cleaner	1	6.6%
Total	15	100%

Status of victims at the time of admission

Status	# of cases	%
Lady alone	6	40%
Mother alone	4	27%
Mother with child/children	1	6%
Child alone	4	27%
Total	15	100%

When victims knew they were trafficked

When the victims knew	# of cases	%
On the day of arrival	7	47%
Few days later	5	33%
After more than a month	1	7%
Not applicable	2	13%
Total	15	100%

How victims knew they were trafficked

How they knew	# of cases	%
Told about It	10	13%
Got Beaten	4	80%
Got Raped	1	7%
Total	15	100%

Relationship of victims with traffickers

Perpetrator	# of cases	%
Employer	5	33%
Spouse	1	7%
Father	1	7%
Mother	2	13%
Family friend	3	20%
Friend	2	13%
Unknown	1	7%
Total	15	100%

Duration of victims' stay at DFWAC (12 cases)

Duration of stay at DFWAC	# of cases	%
30 Days	2	17%
30-90 Days	3	25%
91-180 Days	7	58%
Total	12	100%

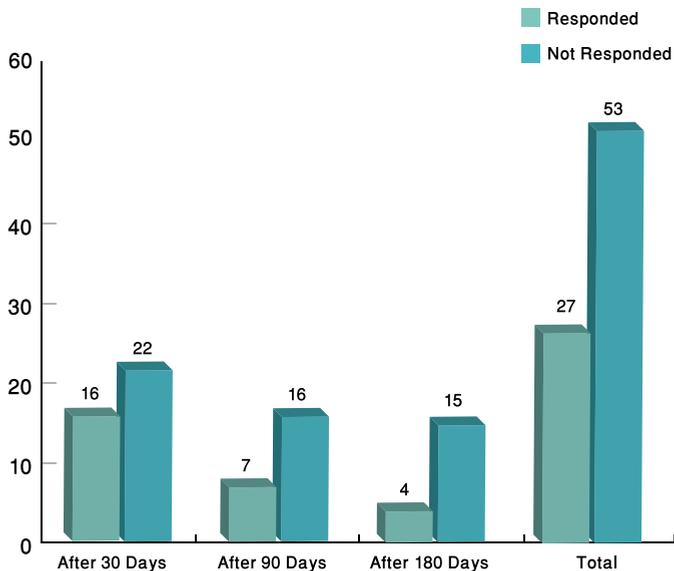
* Four other victims stayed for more than six months

Discharge and follow-up

Dubai Police helped send all the victims back to their home countries. They were sent to their family homes after giving them a list with names and contact details of resourceful persons in their countries. DFWAC also keeps in direct contact with national and international organizations to follow up on the victims after they return home and ensure that the victims are not trafficked again.

A 30-90-180-day follow-up is conducted after the victims leave the DFWAC shelter. This comprehensive aftercare service includes details about their safety, housing, basic necessities, medical care, children, and education/work, among others. A total of 80 follow-ups were conducted in 2013 for victims in 2013.

Response to follow-up for victims (2013)



Programmes and activities for victims

Type of activity	Number of Sessions
Computer and internet	177
Art classes	50
Empowerment group	40
Health lectures	35
English classes	18
Arabic classes	14
Aerobics	7
Self-defence and sports	3
Islamic classes	3
'A touch on mud'	4
Occasions, parties and trips	7
Total	358

The following are some of the highlights of the Foundation's activities during 2013:

2.1. Public awareness

The Foundation raised awareness about human trafficking crimes through lectures and workshops. It interacted with people through various media outlets, including print, online, broadcast (TV and radio) and social communication networks (Facebook and Twitter) to emphasize the message that human trafficking is a crime against humanity. DFWAC staff also participates in investigative journalism on human trafficking and ascertain the negative effects of the crime. The knowledge acquired from such activities would be used to raise community awareness.

2.2. Research, studies and reports

DFWAC also conducted research and compiled statistics on human trafficking victims and published quarterly and annual reports. Further, it published a book titled: "Features and efforts to combat human trafficking" that deals with the efforts of and challenges for the UAE, Gulf Cooperation Council countries and others; and conducted a field study titled "Characteristics of victims of human trafficking in the Dubai Foundation for Women and Children."

2.3. Other activities

As part of the cooperation and coordination strategy with the social and business

sectors to prevent human trafficking and protect victims, DFWAC designed educational and recreation programmes, fitness and sports events for training in self defence, aimed at empowering victims and raise their level of self esteem. During 2013, this was done in collaboration with a variety of institutes and centres such as Optimal Fitness, My Vision Centre, the Royal Institute for Languages and Tech Woco Boxing (Ko boxing).

Promotion

As part of its international commitment to combat human trafficking, the UAE ratified the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000) in May 2005. This includes provisions for international cooperation in anti-human trafficking efforts. More importantly, in February 2009, the UAE ratified the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children (Palermo Protocol), which is one of the two protocols attached to the Organized Crime Convention.

1. Bilateral cooperation

The UAE government and the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking has deciphered that traffickers and victims often originate from the same country, making it more difficult for authorities in the UAE to uncover such crimes – a challenge that has been tackled through greater bilateral and multilateral cooperation.

Over the last few years, the UAE has signed labour agreements with several countries to regulate the flow of workforce and deny unscrupulous private recruitment agencies the chance to cheat and traffic workers. In some cases, labour contract transactions are required to be processed by labour ministries or offices in the sending countries.

As part of its efforts to promote international cooperation to combat human trafficking and promote human rights issues, the Ministry of Interior has signed cooperation agreements with at least 26 countries, including Russia, Italy, Germany, France, Canada, South Africa, Belarus, Poland, Austria, China, Kazakhstan, India, Bahrain, Jordan, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan, Spain, Qatar, Britain, Sudan and Lebanon.

In addition, 29 draft agreements were signed for collaboration in anti-human trafficking projects between the Ministry of Interior and Thailand, Romania, Afghanistan, Tunisia, Finland, Hungary, Spain, the Netherlands, Bangladesh, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Palestine, Syria, Hungary, Ukraine, Algeria, Cyprus, Armenia, South Korea, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Australia, Mauritania, Egypt, United States, Poland, and Britain.

During 2013, the Directorate of Residency and Ports, Ministry of Interior, strengthened its partnership with many relevant departments in various countries, including United Kingdom, United States of America, Australia, India, Pakistan, some Arab countries

and the Gulf Cooperation Council states in particular.

The Ministry of Interior also signed agreements and MoUs in the field of security cooperation and training and capacity building were signed with the US Department of Homeland Security, Department of Australian Citizenship and Immigration and United Nations Regional Office in Abu Dhabi.

Similarly, the Ministry of Labour also signed agreements with 18 countries and protocols with three countries. Two of these relating to work and social affairs were signed with Yemen and Morocco in 2005 and 2007 respectively. The third protocol, signed in April 2012 in Abu Dhabi, pertains to running an accreditation system and electronically recording and reviewing contracts of workers, within the work of a Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Ministry of Labour, UAE, and the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs in the field of manpower. This Web-based system aims to streamline attestations of papers related to labour contracts of Indian workers, which was launched in August 2011. The system enables all attestation services required by potential employers and workers to be centralized, linking the Indian missions with the UAE Ministry of Labour and the Protector General of Emigrants in India. The system, which can be accessed by the labour authorities in both India and the UAE, seeks to check discrepancies in contracts and provide a valuable record of not just recruitments, but also any violations that employers may commit.

The National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking signed memorandum of understanding on countering human trafficking with Armenia in 2009 and Azerbaijan in 2011. While a similar MoU was signed with Australia during 2013, negotiations are under way with Indonesia and Thailand.

The government's efforts to forge international partnerships and enhance cooperation are beginning to bear fruit, especially in the realm of tackling the crime at source, which is the countries of origin, rather than only dealing with it within its own borders.

2. Cooperation with international organisations

Further, the NCCHT and its affiliates maintain continuous contact with the International Labour Organization (ILO), International Organization for Migration and United Nations Office against Drugs and Crime to both share and learn from their experiences. As part of the cooperation with ILO, the UAE conducted a workshop on 'E-learning tools on forced labour' in Dubai in October 2013, in which various law enforcement agencies dealing with human trafficking participated.

The NCCHT is also part of the comprehensive Arab strategy to build national capacity to combat human trafficking, which is spearheaded by the Arab League, and cooperates on other initiatives undertaken by the Qatar Foundation for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings. The UAE participated in several related meetings and workshops during 2013.

The UAE also hosted one such event – the Arab Initiative to Build National Capacities to Combat Human Trafficking, organized by Qatar Foundation for Combating Human Trafficking and United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. The Abu Dhabi event ended with a call to enlarge the initiative to include more Arab countries and empower workers in this field by enhancing their capabilities to prevent such crimes.

Some of the other events in which the UAE participated are listed under the session subtitled ‘NCCHT activities (international)’.

It is equally important to note that as part of the voluntary commitment made at the country’s Universal Periodic Review, before the Human Rights Council in Geneva in 2009, the UAE has facilitated the visit of the UN Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children in 2012. This followed the visits of the Rapporteur on Contemporary Forms of Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance and Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography in 2009 and 2010 respectively. During 2013, the UAE attended the review meeting to discuss the UN rapporteur’s report in Geneva. These are further evidence of the government’s attempt to become a part of the collective international mechanism to fulfil Universal Declaration of Human Rights principles.

Further, like in 2009, the UAE presented its human rights-related developments, including its track record in combatting human trafficking, before the Human Rights Council’s Working Group of the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) in Geneva in January 2013. Later in the year, the United Nations Human Rights Council successfully adopted the UPR report, marking the conclusion of the UAE’s participation in the current cycle of the UPR. The UAE accepted 100 recommendations, partially accepted or noted 61 recommendations and rejected 19 recommendations made by United Nations member states during the UPR session in January. Among the accepted recommendations is the decision by the UAE to establish a national human rights institution.

Following up on the 24th meeting of the Steering Group of the Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime decision in 2012 to extend membership of the Bali Process and its Ad Hoc Group to the UAE, the Cabinet formally accepted this membership in March 2013.

The UAE also facilitated the visit of the Tajikistan delegation to learn firsthand the country's experience in combatting human trafficking. In addition, a voluntary contribution of about 90,000 dirhams (\$25,000) was made to the United Nations Trust Fund for Victims of Human Trafficking.

Conclusion

The UAE is approaching the human trafficking problem not just as a domestic problem, but coordinating much more effectively at the international level. More importantly, it considers human trafficking to be wrong and unacceptable to Islam, Arab culture and the UAE value system. The government believes that human trafficking is a despicable crime and is committed to working to combat this practice in any form.

The government is working hard on every element in its Five Ps strategy – Prevention, Prosecution, Punishment, Protection and Promotion (of international cooperation). Since the government first officially acknowledged this problem, it has consistently and continuously improved its efforts to limit the crime, as well as adhered to international standards, wherever possible.

It has made significant progress in a short period of time, but realises that much more needs to be done, and is ready to move ahead constructively and systematically. It will continue to demonstrate resolve and acknowledge where it needs to improve. Simultaneously, the UAE will continue to cooperate with all appropriate regional and international law enforcement officials to apprehend, prosecute and punish those violating the UAE's human trafficking law and those attempting to use the country as a channel to violate anti-trafficking laws of other countries.

Among the plans that the UAE hopes to pursue during the course of 2014 are expanding the airport awareness campaign against human trafficking to the other northern emirates; hosting a awareness workshop to educate the private sector about what constitutes human trafficking and how to avoid its pitfalls during the process of hiring workers; and further enhancing anti-trafficking cooperation with the international community and organizations.

All these indicate that the UAE is committed to becoming a model for change in the region and an active member of the international community. It continues to welcome direct discussion and collaboration with other governments, public or private sector groups, or international organisations that share the vision of stemming the tide of human trafficking.

**NATIONAL COMMITTEE
TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

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