



United Arab Emirates

Combating Human Trafficking in the UAE

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**NATIONAL COMMITTEE
TO COMBAT HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

www.nccht.gov.ae

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Foreword

The UAE's official campaign against human trafficking has entered its fifth year. The process began with the enactment of Federal Law 51 in 2006 and the establishment of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking in 2007. The results of the last four years suggest that the government has made significant and rapid progress in a short time. Despite this encouraging outcome, the UAE is aware that multiple and interlinked challenges associated with such criminal behaviour requires sustained alert. In light of this realisation, the government is determined to not just thwart the prevailing means of exploitation, but also improve in future the detection and prosecution tools of this crime.

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, there were 58 cases in 2010. The increased number of cases indicates both growing awareness about the crime 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 organized crime syndicates involved in human trafficking.

In the framework of implementing the strategy of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking, the UAE took several significant steps during 2010. These include opening of new shelters for women and children victims in Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah under the umbrella of the UAE Red Crescent Authority; establishing a specialised department in the Ministry of Labour to tackle human trafficking crimes and exploitation of workers; approving the 'Global Plan to Combat Human Traffickers' and joining the 'Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking' during the 64th session of the Millennium Summit of the General Assembly Resolution of the United Nations; and conducting several workshops and training courses as part of the efforts to continuously improve the skills of law enforcement agencies.

More interestingly, a media campaign to increase awareness in the public realm was launched in the Abu Dhabi and Al Ain international airports. This visual medium drive prominently highlights the tools available in the UAE to address human trafficking offences, which is bound to have considerable impact on vulnerable people at their point of arrival into the UAE. Further, the website of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking has been revamped to maximise its goal of serving as an official source of information and communication between the government and community.

As part of the government's proactive efforts to prevent human trafficking crimes in the country, the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking aims to expand the media campaign to other airports in the UAE. Simultaneously, it will continue its endeavour to increase cooperation with like-minded countries and international agencies to deliver more effective results locally and internationally.

The government is committed to taking the lead in acknowledging the existence of human trafficking as an issue that afflicts the UAE society, as it does in many other parts of the world. Combating this crime is a goal the UAE shares with all nations. Despite achieving a number of its objectives in a short span, the government remains committed to improving its efforts to keep pace with international best practices in tackling human trafficking.

Dr Anwar Mohammed Gargash

Chairman, National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking

Introduction

In keeping with the trend since 2006, when the UAE launched its fight against human trafficking, 2010 saw encouraging progress. As a committed and responsible member of the international community, the UAE will remain proactively engaged in the global anti-human trafficking campaign.

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 have been engaged in recruiting contractual workers and trafficking them illegally into the country. For the majority of trafficked people, it is only when they arrive in the UAE that they realize that the work they were promised does not exist and they are forced instead to get employed in jobs or conditions to which they did not give their consent. Since the criminal activity begins from 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 recognises 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 organised 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 implementation of the UAE's legal and social support mechanisms during the last four years of its concerted fight against human trafficking has been recognised by the international community. Although the UAE welcomes constructive help and criticism from international partners and organisations, the anti-trafficking agenda will be determined by the government. The UAE appreciates that as in many other countries, the challenges that the government agencies face in combating 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 by pursuing its four-pillar action plan – legislation; enforcement; victim support; and bilateral agreements and international cooperation.

This report is part of the new approach of 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 recognises 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.

Pillar I – Legislation

Since 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:

1. Form of trafficking – recruiting, transporting, transferring and harbouring;
2. 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;
3. 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 legislation. 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 comprehensive national and international strategy to combat trafficking, the UAE ratified the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000) in May 2007. 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.

During 2010, a sub-committee appointed by the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking 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. These amendments have been forwarded to the government for consideration.

Further, the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking 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.

Other relevant legislations

The Ministry of Health enacted two legislations in 2010. The first is a federal law on regulating human organ transplant, which aims to achieve the following:

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

Pillar II – Enforcement

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 legislation is a regulation on Federal Law 18 (2009). It modifies 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 currently 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 be consistent with the UAE's obligations to Arab and international labour conventions. With regard to protecting workers from exploitation, the legislation would include a definition of forced labour and an article on its criminal penalty.

A Cabinet order established the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking in 2007 to coordinate efforts and enforce plans at various levels in 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 Ewaa and Dubai Foundation for Women and Children.

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 realising 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 combating 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

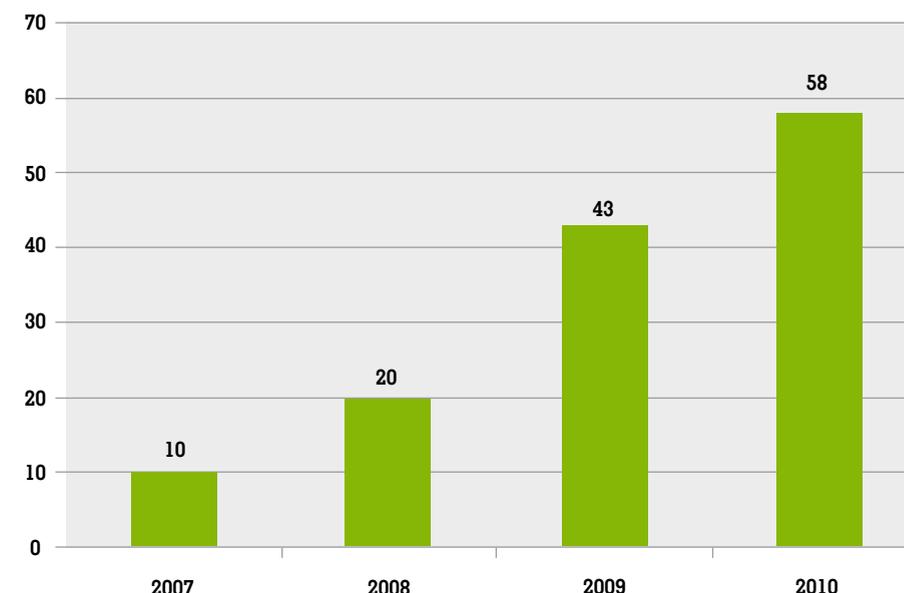
to ensure transparency and dissemination of information, as well as increase awareness among the public and the international community. The UAE believes that data collection and analysis is important because the more information it has, the more proactive it can be in its attempt to improvise and tackle such crimes.

Cases registered under Federal Law 51

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 agencies¹, 58 human trafficking-related cases were registered under Federal Law 51 in 2010.² This compares with 10 cases in 2007, 20 in 2008 and 43 cases in 2009. Along with increase in the number of cases, the number of the victims and accused is also intensifying with each passing year.

Human Trafficking Cases (2010)			
Emirate	No.		
	Cases	Victims	Accused
Abu Dhabi	7	46	19
Dubai	28	46	82
Sharjah	13	31	41
Ajman	4	12	10
Umm Al Quwain	3	6	8
Ras Al Khaimah	2	9	4
Fujairah	1	2	5
Total	58	152	169

Human Trafficking Cases (2007-2010)



The reason behind the increasing number of cases could be attributed to rising awareness of the crime among both the law enforcement agencies and public in general. On the other hand, 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 are now cases that fall outside the scope of this form of abuse. A few cases of labour exploitation, forced labour and, in even fewer instances, sale of children were also recorded.

(1) Source: Public Prosecution of each of seven emirates and federal courts in the UAE.

(2) This number represents the number of cases that were referred by the public prosecutor to the courts in the country after being designated as 'human trafficking crimes.' In all, 80 cases were referred to the Public Prosecution by the police during 2010 at the national level, but only 58 were treated as human trafficking cases, with the rest designated under other judicial classifications.

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 expects further progress after a pioneering human trafficking media campaign was launched 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.



Further, the official website of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking (www.nccht.gov.ae) was revamped to serve as an official source of information. The Committee expects the website to play an effective role in raising public awareness and serve as an active channel of communication between the Committee and general public.

These improving results in registered cases, prosecution and conviction have become possible following the UAE's massive efforts to gather information and deploy the necessary forces to efficiently combat human trafficking activities.

As part of a comprehensive awareness campaign to explore ways of limiting this crime, workshops and training sessions are conducted by the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking in cooperation with various law enforcement agencies and ministries. These workshops are attended by relevant departments of naturalisation 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 combating trafficking match up to international standards. Specific departments in various ministries are also being encouraged to conduct their own specialised 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.

Activities of National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking

- **January:** The delegation comprising of representatives from the ministries of interior and justice, as well as police, participated in the deliberations of the second meeting of the Interim Working Group on Trafficking in Persons at the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna. The meeting discussed and adopted amendments to the Palermo Protocol.
- **February:** At a workshop in Stockholm, the Committee's delegation was part of the discussion on defining anti-human trafficking concepts. In addition, the meeting discussed issues pertaining to standards of gender equality and the role of shelters and police departments in conducting investigation and research in Sweden.
- **March:** As part of the UAE's comprehensive support to victims, the Committee, in collaboration with the International Organization for Migration, organised a four-day workshop on victim identification at the Dubai Police Academy. The workshop was aimed at honing the skills of law enforcement officers, local and federal prosecutors, as well as specialists from the shelters. Further,

the Committee also participated in the ninth Doha Foundation Forum. Titled 'The Arab Initiative for Building National Capacities to Combat Human Trafficking,' the forum addressed important themes concerning international and regional efforts to combat human trafficking, as well as the challenges being encountered and means of addressing them. The forum also addressed victims' plight and the best strategies to protect them, as well as the role of media in spreading awareness about the crime.

- **April:** The Committee signed an agreement with the Dubai Judicial Institute to encourage cooperation in areas such as preparation and implementation of programmes and projects, conducting research and studies, exchanging experiences, organising conferences, seminars and training programmes for professionals in the field, spreading community awareness and preparing proposals to support victims on overcoming psychological and social effects resulting from human trafficking crimes.
- **June:** Represented by members of the judiciary, Ministry of Interior and Dubai Police, the Committee participated in the Interpol's First Global Trafficking in Persons Conference held in Damascus. The UAE delegation presented a report on the efforts of the country's security agencies in addressing human trafficking crimes and cooperation efforts with neighbouring countries and international organisations, especially Interpol, in monitoring and prosecuting human traffickers.
- **May:** In a regional conference, titled 'Trafficking in Girls and Women for Sexual Exploitation: Legal Aspects,' held in Egypt, with support from Sweden, the UAE delegation discussed human rights issues and best practices of participating countries in protecting women and children from trafficking.
- **June:** At the Bali Process workshop in Indonesia, the UAE delegation familiarised itself with the experiences of the participating states on challenges and practical measures taken by them to combat human trafficking and transnational crimes in the Asia-Pacific region.
- **October:** The Committee organised the 'Third Annual Inter-regional Workshop on Promoting Law Enforcement and Judicial Cooperation among Source, Transit and Destination Countries' in Abu Dhabi. It focused on human trafficking in Central Asia and was conducted in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. About 45 members from various authorities, including local and federal prosecutors, representatives from shelters, Ministry of Interior, Dubai Police, Ministry of Labour and delegates from Bahrain, Kazakhstan, Kirgizstan, Qatar, Tajikistan, Thailand, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, the United States, and Interpol, participated in the conference.

- **December:** A UAE delegation attended the Bali Process workshop in the Maldives on 'visa integrity.' The workshop discussed issues related to improving checks, strengthening border security, monitoring visa issuing process, as well as future steps towards improving immigration and border control. The discussions focused on the importance of information and data exchange with other border control agencies, regional partners and the international community. Further, the Committee participated in a forum titled 'Towards a Comprehensive Arab Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking,' in cooperation with the Secretariat of the Arab League in Cairo.

Activities of Ministry of Interior

The Ministry of Interior placed great importance on organisational units concerned with protecting and promoting human rights, particularly combating human trafficking and issues related to women, children and the physically challenged. The ministry approved many mechanisms and procedures to ensure a victim-centred approach.

■ Establishment of new administrative structures

The ministry placed great importance on its organisational units concerned with protecting human rights and promoting a culture of human rights, particularly issues related to combating human trafficking crimes, women, children and the physically challenged. It approved setting up of several mechanisms and procedures to ensure a victim-centred approach and respect for their human rights. The following are some of the measures:

- **Higher Committee for Child Protection:** The Committee was formed under Ministerial Decree 240 (2010). A chairman was appointed to oversee the tasks of this committee and represent the UAE in the Virtual Global Taskforce. Among the committee's responsibilities are studying the establishment of a child protection centre, which addresses crimes against children and the circumstances that encourage their exploitation. This committee will seek to evolve child-friendly solutions and initiatives, as well as raise awareness about best practices of internet usage among family members and the community. It will promote the role of parental supervision of children to guard against the risks and dangers of internet usage. The committee, along with relevant authorities, is responsible for preparing and executing media campaigns, as well as conducting specialised academic and training programmes to raise awareness about the dangers of cyber

crimes, especially sexual exploitation of children on the internet. It is also tasked with overseeing the creation of an integrated database on crimes related to sexual exploitation of children and the perpetrators of such crimes.

Further, this committee comprises of five sub-committees, including the Sub-committee on Awareness, Information and Research. It has the following responsibilities:

- a) Develop and conduct vocational and academic training to combat sexual exploitation of children.
 - b) Develop academic and public awareness programmes targeted at children and adopt such programmes in school curricula, as well as develop specialised programmes for parents and teachers.
 - c) Target all media channels to promote awareness among various segments of the society, especially parents, about the challenges and risks emanating from the internet.
 - d) Organise and conduct specialised conferences.
 - e) Provide support to conduct research and studies, in cooperation with relevant local and international research centres.
- o Centre for Statistics and Security Analysis:** This Centre, at the Federal Information Security Department, conducts surveys on registered human trafficking crimes using the latest software. It follows up on information related to complaints received and verdicts issued at various levels. In addition, it issues statistical reports with security indicators to measure various aspects of the crime. The centre also conducts security studies and analysis to help measure, monitor and collate data in order to build a knowledge base and provide decision-makers with warnings and forecasts, as well as help initiate proactive preventive steps.

■ Security measures and procedures

1) 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; monitor individuals involved or suspected of being involved in such crimes and circulate their information internationally.
- b) Pursue 'wanted' people for human trafficking crimes, and physical or sexual abuse of children.
- c) Form a specialised team to enhance the process of investigation of sexual crimes against children.

2) Tighter control at entry points through the following measures:

- a) Restructure naturalisation, residency and ports affairs, as well as create specialised administrative units for the security of the ports.
- b) Use unified criminal justice and Interpol systems to verify individuals at entry points.
- c) 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.
- d) Use modern equipment to detect visa or passport fraud at entry points.
- e) 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.
- f) Application of measures to ensure that children have independent passports to prove their identity both during the time of entry and exit, in order to prevent possible exploitation.
- g) Partner and coordinate with the naturalisation, residency and ports affairs and police departments to follow up on legal procedures and victim assistance in human trafficking cases.

- h) Employ and train qualified professional Emiratis to accommodate increase in workload.
 - i) Establish a specialised institute that handles capacity building for professionals at the naturalisation, residency and ports affairs, in addition to helping trainers and experts adhere to international standards.
 - j) Develop training curriculum drawn from national and international best practices and experiences.
 - k) Develop an e-training programme in cooperation with the United Nations, which could contribute to the development of the Emirates Institute for Naturalisation and Residency that has been approved by the Abu Dhabi Education Council to be a regional centre for training in this field.
- 3) 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.
 - 4) Provide appropriate environments in police departments to conduct interviews with human trafficking victims.
 - 5) Include details of other forms of organised crime, including human trafficking, in training courses organised by the ministry.
 - 6) The Sharjah Police Directorate-General formed a dedicated division to combat human trafficking, which is attached to the Department of Investigation.
 - 7) Develop a cyber-based training programme to deal with this crime.
 - 8) Support and promote the efforts of the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking.
 - 9) Develop programmes to assist the victims in line with human rights conventions.
 - 10) Provide assistance and protection to victims of human trafficking in coordination with the shelters in the UAE.

■ Promote anti-human trafficking culture

- 1) 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 included in the curriculum of police academies, institutes and schools. During 2010, these subjects were taught for 342 hours. This is aimed at introducing students to human rights issues, global and regional human rights systems, as well as collective individual rights, rights of prisoners, the UAE's human rights laws and the role of police agencies in protecting human rights. Further, human trafficking has been included in the curriculum in police schools and institutes to introduce students to the various dynamics of this crime, and the UAE's obligations under international conventions and laws.
 - b) The training plan includes various courses that aim to sharpen the skills of police officers. During 2010, 47 such anti-human trafficking courses were imparted among 1177 students.
 - c) The Ministry organised a number of forums, seminars and workshops for its employees:
 - **April:** First Forum for Supporting Organisations of Child and Women Protection.
 - **May:** Workshop on combating human trafficking in Abu Dhabi.
 - **July:** Workshop for children on promoting the culture of human trafficking through the internet at the Umm Al Quwain Cultural Centre.
 - **August:** Lectures, distribution of pamphlets and brochures in Ramadan tents, organised by the General Directorate of Abu Dhabi Police.
 - **November:** Workshop in collaboration with the Emirates Institute for Naturalisation and Residency on 'Combating Human Trafficking – The American Experience' in Abu Dhabi.
- 2) Within the framework of communicating with the public, media and other concerned parties, the ministry conducted the following activities:
 - a) Developed its own website to promote the human rights culture and receive complaints, reports and suggestions both in Arabic and English (www.moi.gov.ae).

- b) Measured the level of public satisfaction about police work and the services it provides. A scientific method was employed through the expert services of the Emirates Centre for Strategic Studies and Research in Abu Dhabi. The results showed that the public had an overall satisfaction rate of more than 85 percent.
- c) Held periodic communication meetings with the media.
- d) Developed and implemented media campaigns, as well as specialised academic and training programmes to raise awareness about the seriousness of cyber crimes, especially concerning online sexual exploitation of children.
- e) Provided diplomatic and consular missions with information about their imprisoned nationals.
- f) The Human Rights Department employed modern means of communication [short messaging service (SMS)] with its affiliated members to spread awareness about human trafficking crimes.
- g) Operationalised the 'Safety Operator' hotline numbers – 8002626, 5086888 – which allow the General Directorate of Abu Dhabi Police to directly receive complaints and suggestions in Arabic, English and Urdu.
- h) Delivered lectures on 'Know Your Rights and Duties' to 52,055 workers of private companies.
- i) Distributed newsletters on 'Workers' Rights and Duties' in seven languages to ensure that all workers in the country are aware of their rights and duties in accordance with the UAE laws, regardless of their nationalities and languages.

Activities of Dubai Police

The Human Trafficking Crimes Control Centre in Dubai Police organised a number of training courses and meetings, in coordination with the Criminal Records Department. It also printed and distributed information brochures and prepared a reference guide for all concerned parties with details of various anti-human trafficking methods and regulations that need to be applied while dealing with victims. The Centre also organised several training courses and seminars, which benefited 255 members. These events included the following:

- o **March:** A symposium titled 'The Role of Medical Sector in Supporting Anti-Human Trafficking Crimes and Identification of Victims' was conducted in cooperation with the Dubai Health Authority. Four experts presented papers on providing care and 71 medical staff participated in the event. In addition, 2000 brochures were printed and distributed in hospitals and clinics operating in Dubai to raise awareness about the crime. The phone numbers of the Centre were widely distributed and 500 brochures were handed out to various consulates that were targeted by the campaign.
- o **April:** A training course on combating human trafficking familiarised the participants about the linkage between the crime and national security and how it violates the UAE's Constitution and laws.
- o **May:** Organised a seminar titled 'The Reality of Labour Strikes – Between Legitimate Demands and Criminal Violation.' This event was attended by 61 law enforcement officers from all seven emirates. The participants discussed the impact of labour strikes on the country's economy and national security. The seminar also highlighted the confusion emanating from international reports that equate labour exploitation to human trafficking. It also demonstrated the real problems behind labour strikes and ways of dealing with them. Further, it educated officials about distinguishing between legitimate demands of the workers and those that amount to criminal violation.
- o **July:** A training course titled 'Principles of Dealing with Victims while Gathering Evidence,' involved 33 law enforcement officials. It introduced participants to mistakes committed by law enforcement officers during investigation and evidence-gathering. It also emphasised on the importance of sternly dealing with human trafficking crimes, but dealing humanely with victims.

- o **August:** A seminar on the relevant procedures to protect victims was attended by 12 representatives from Dubai Public Prosecution, Dubai Foundation for Women and Children and National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking. This event highlighted ways of promoting the values of partnership among various Dubai government institutions while dealing with victims and providing care to them, as well as finding the right solutions in accordance with international requirements, especially in the realm of challenges faced while following up on and completing various procedures associated with victim care.
- o **October:** A training course for law enforcement officers on stricter application of Federal Law 51 was attended by 45 participants.

Labour Reforms

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, the development of enhanced administrative structures and on-going 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 80 per cent of its population – believes that labour issues should not be linked to human trafficking, and should be treated separately.

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.

Despite the challenges, the UAE is aiming 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 grievances.

As part of the UAE's efforts to create specialised institutions, the Ministry of Labour has recently created a new division 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 realised 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 combating 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.

Phase II of Pilot Project

The UAE moved ahead with its proactive labour reform strategy by launching the second phase of its Pilot Project on management of contractual work cycle and workers' rights. This initiative aims to strengthen the ties with two important labour-sending countries – India and the Philippines. It seeks to create a multilateral framework determining the rights and duties of temporary contractual workers, which helps maximise the benefits of all partners of temporary employment. The project was conceived in 2009 after monitoring and documenting best practices during the implementation of the four stages of the project. Phase II of the project observes the ground realities from the period a worker applies for employment in his or her home country till he or she actually gets the opportunity to work in the UAE. A number of initiatives are being tested as part of the implementation process. These include:

1. Contract Validation System – development of an electronic system that links labour departments in sending and receiving countries. It aims to provide a more transparent recruitment and contracting system, especially when it comes to employment contracts.
2. Development of mechanisms in sending countries to facilitate financing travel expenses of workers through an easy loan system. This could be implemented through an easy banking system that ensures repayment of loans and protects workers from being exposed to exploitation and debt bondage.
3. Formulation and testing of training curricula to support and develop the financial management skills of workers travelling to the UAE, in order to protect them from falling into a debt trap due to irrational use of credit cards and loans.

In addition, the Ministry developed several administrative structures and initiatives. These include:

a) A decision concerning the amendment and implementation of the organisational structure has created a new Inspection Section. It will provide legal advice to actual or potential victims of human trafficking, in addition to preparing reports on the shortcomings in legislation or procedures for monitoring and following up on human trafficking cases that are not covered by existing legal provisions and submitting the same to the concerned authorities in the Ministry. Another function of this section is to coordinate with the police and judicial authorities and other concerned authorities to find appropriate mechanisms to monitor, detect and commence investigation into cases that could be classified as human trafficking.

b) A new department for labour guidance was created. Its main functions will be raising awareness about the labour law and its executive decisions, informing the workers and employers with the policies and procedures of the Ministry, in addition to improving and activating the relationship between all the involved entities.

Further, the Ministry has approved a work plan to combat forced labour and human trafficking. Its highlights include:

- Combating all forms of labour exploitation, forced labour and human trafficking.
- Creating more flexibility in the UAE labour market and achieving balance in the contractual relationship between the employer and the worker.
- Applying clear recruitment criteria to regulate the hiring process and providing mechanisms to control, follow up and resolve issues.
- Creating an inspection system that is capable of exercising a preventive role in addition to its supervisory role.

The Ministry applied the just-mentioned policies by issuing a number of ministerial decrees. These included:

1. Imposing high fees and fines on services provided by the Ministry to companies that are not committed to protecting the rights of the workers. Executing the provisions of national legislations, these fines are five times more than the fees paid by 'committed' companies. Moreover, strict administrative and financial penalties will be imposed on establishments found involved in the exploitation of workers or the exercise of any form of human trafficking. Further, a new classification system for companies will categorise establishments into groups in accordance with the degree of their compliance with labour legislations, systems and standards. Ministerial Decree 1187 (2010) – Guidelines and Criteria for Classifying Establishments

– stipulates that the minister of labour can issue a decree to demote any establishment to the third and last tier if it is proved to have committed a human trafficking crime. In addition, the establishment shall be fined 20,000 dirhams for each violation. Although the decree permits a company to return to its former tier six months after a labour law violation, any company involved in a human trafficking offence will be allowed to resume normal work only after the completion of one year.

2. Ministerial Decree 1186 (2010) was issued with the aim of reorganising the labour market in the UAE and achieving more flexibility and liberalisation, as well as a balance in the contractual relationship between the employer and the worker. This allows a foreign worker who has completed a two-year working period to change jobs if he or she chooses to. The employer cannot compel such an employee to stay on. More importantly, the 'no-objection certificate' (NOC) rule stands scrapped, which means workers no longer face a six-month ban. Previously, workers had to complete at least three years of service with their employers and had to obtain an NOC letter to change jobs. The new decree is consistent with International Labour Convention 143 (1975) concerning migrant workers.

Despite several challenges, the UAE aims to manage and organise the working environment in line with international labour laws and best practices in key areas such as labour accommodation, timely payment of wages and proper mechanisms to justly address workers complaints.

Some of the other labour-friendly measures undertaken by the Ministry during 2010 include:

Human rights 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.

■ Phase II of Wage Protection System

The Ministry started implementing Phase II of the Wage Protection System (WPS) in 2010. 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. About 3.18 million workers currently receive wages through this system, including 1.2 million who were targeted during Phase I. All companies that employ 100 workers or more are expected to adhere to WPS guidelines.

■ **Wage Protection Office**

One of the most important functions entrusted to the Wage Protection Office is to develop and implement an integrated system to monitor payment of wages, working hours and wage transfers through banks and financial institutions. This Office communicates with the companies and ensures that they pay the wages and corresponds with the workers to check if they have any complaints regarding non-payment of wages, either fully or partly, and that in a timely fashion. With 46 employees, it is also tasked with making random inspections.

■ **'My Salary' service**

The ministry continued to operate a hotline (800665) for workers to lodge complaints over unpaid salaries or illegal deductions. The new initiative also allowed workers to air their grievances online (www.mol.gov.ae) through the ministry's portal if their payments were delayed. Complaints can be filed in 12 languages, which are kept confidential by the labour inspectors.

■ **Protect workers' rights and provide decent life**

Failure to provide appropriate accommodation for workers, restricting their movement by housing them in distant and secluded places that do not meet the basic elements of decent life and providing inadequate transportation services are indications of potential exposure to forced labour, which may eventually lead to human trafficking. The Ministry has adopted general guidelines for labour accommodation and their supplementary services. It has emphasised the responsibility of the employers to provide labour accommodation in line with approved international standards. It has also focused on ensuring that all companies comply with these standards. This initiative showed positive results in

protecting the right to respectable accommodation for about 858,000 workers.

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. The most important mechanisms are:

■ **Labour dispute departments**

The Ministry has identified 10 departments and divisions consisting of 100 legal and administrative staff to look into the complaints of workers across the country. These employees receive complaints from workers and attempt to settle disputes within a period of two weeks. 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 Al Raha Village in Al Wathba, Abu Dhabi, Al Muhaisna in Dubai and Sharjah's industrial area. During 2011, the Ministry plans to open more such units in Al Quoz, Dubai, 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. About 150 lectures in seven languages were conducted at each labour care unit during 2010. These units also make orientation visits to the owners of the companies. An average of four visits per month was made, during which the rights and duties of the workers were highlighted. Such visits also help relevant officials to monitor the existence of any phenomena that could be considered as forced labour or human trafficking.

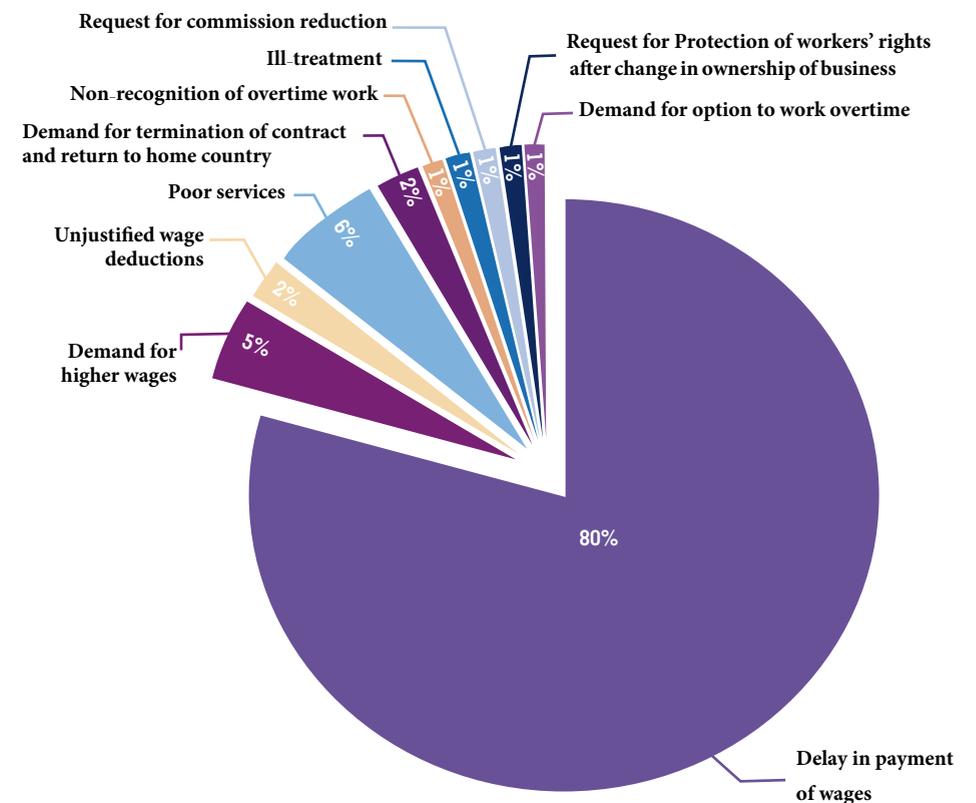
■ Monitoring conditions of temporary workers

Following up on the records of group complaints in the Centre for Monitoring Conditions of Temporary Workers in Dubai Police, which has shown an increase in the number of cases claiming outstanding payments, a new campaign – ‘Pay the employee his wages before his sweat dries’ – has been introduced. This drive is aimed at instilling in employers the values of timely payment of wages and respecting their rights. Since the beginning of this campaign in 2010, claims worth 69 million dirhams were settled, which benefitted about 15,000 workers, mostly from the construction sector. This initiative was accompanied by a media campaign that included printing and distribution of pamphlets with relevant details about the programme.

- Further, an awareness programme titled ‘Together against modern-day slavery’ was launched to bring together organisations interested in community development through courses, lectures and publications related to human trafficking.
- In addition, the ‘Caring Hand’ programme was initiated to monitor violations of workers’ rights through field visits to construction sites, labour camps, and sites of labour strikes. This programme monitors offences and addresses the legitimate demands of workers within 45 minutes.
- The team affiliated to the Human Trafficking Crimes Control Centre in Dubai Police dealt with 69 group complaint cases claiming outstanding salaries, five demanding better services, four demanding higher wages and two group complaints demanding cancellation of residence visas and facilitating departure to their home countries.
- The Hotline Programme was introduced to address the violations of workers’ rights. Telephonic complaints (8005005) are received in several languages, including Arabic, English, Hindi, Urdu and Russian. This programme aims to communicate with workers round the clock, look into the violations and provide appropriate relief thereafter. Under this programme, 574 complaints were handled in 2010.
- The Mobile Labour Complaints Office programme seeks to create a direct communication with the workers by identifying their labour conditions and addressing their complaints at their accommodation during inspection tours. This aims to highlight the workers’ living conditions and improve the same where possible. Last year, 1607 such inspection tours were conducted.

- Dubai Police initiated a programme titled ‘Know Your Rights,’ which introduces workers to legal rights and labour laws that are relevant to their work category. It also introduces them to official channels through which they can submit their complaints. Police officers specialised in labour issues delivered a number of awareness lectures in multiple languages. Twelve such lectures were given in 2010, which benefitted 2055 workers, mostly in the construction sector.

Reasons for group complaints⁽³⁾



(3) Source: Centre for Monitoring Conditions of Temporary Workers, Dubai Police.

Activities of Judicial Department, Abu Dhabi

- A workshop for members of the Public Prosecution in Abu Dhabi and Al Ain – titled ‘Investigating Human Trafficking Cases’ – was organised.
- Another workshop – titled ‘Money Laundering and Human Trafficking’ – was organised in collaboration with Scotland Yard. Together, 114 officials attended these two workshops.

Activities of Emirates Human Rights Association

- A seminar titled ‘Human Trafficking Crimes’ was attended by 50 participants from institutions concerned with human rights.
- A documentary film on human trafficking crimes and its reality in the UAE, prepared by Sharjah Police, was screened.
- About 35 participants took part in a panel discussion on human trafficking crimes.
- Five complaints related to human trafficking – sexual exploitation and forced labour – were received by the Association. Dubai Police, Ministry of Labour and Department of Naturalization and Residency cooperated by following up on these issues.

The UAE’s holistic approach to combating 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 counselling 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. Foremost among these is the Dubai Foundation for Women and Children, which was established in 2007 to provide support and psychological care to all 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.

Dubai Foundation for Women and Children

This was the first step towards institutionalising 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.

The foundation's facilities can accommodate up to 250 people and includes 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. The foundation works in collaboration with national and international partners to ensure that victims receive a quality continuum of care.

A hotline (800111) is in operation to receive calls round the clock in various languages, which facilitates the process of helping and protecting victims.

The following are some of the highlights of the Foundation and the socio-economic that victims received in the shelter during 2010:

■ Agreements, memorandum of understanding and conferences

- a) The partnership between the Foundation and Dubai Police signed in 2009 remained active in 2010 through periodic visits made by the Human Trafficking Crimes Control Centre in Dubai Police. Officials from the Centre conducted interviews with the victims in civilian attire in the presence of relevant case managers from the Foundation. In addition, information, correspondence and statistics concerning cases transferred by Dubai Police to the Foundation are exchanged on a quarterly basis.
- b) The partnership between the Foundation and Dubai Courts continued with efforts to speed up the judicial process of human trafficking cases and reduce the duration of stay of victims wanting to return to their home countries.

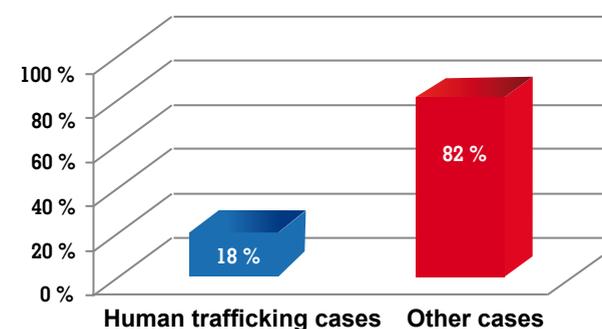
- c) The Foundation signed a cooperation agreement with Unilever, a multinational company, regarding provision of a professional programme for women's empowerment. It aims at training victims in professional work to enable them regain their self-confidence, effectiveness and productivity in society.
- d) A memorandum of understanding with Zayed University, in collaboration with the University of Texas, was signed to create academic programmes for a Master's of Science degree in social work, which will contribute significantly to producing qualified generations capable of dealing with cases and victims in various human rights entities.
- e) The Foundation interacted with several Arabic and foreign newspapers and magazines to clarify the concept of human trafficking and publicise its facilities and highlight its track record in victim support.
- f) Members of the Foundation participated in many interactive sessions revolving around human rights, violence and human trafficking, which were broadcast on several radio and television channels.

■ Relevant statistics

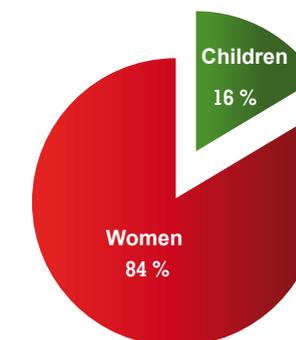
Forty-nine human trafficking victims were supported by the Foundation in 2010; 24 of these victims were discharged from the shelter by the end of 2010.

- a) 46 internal cases – victims who received shelter and in-house support services
- b) Three external cases – victims who received services outside the Foundation's premises

Percentage of trafficking victims versus victims of other abuses (1 January to 31 December, 2010)



Percentage of trafficking victims (women & children) (1 January to 31 December, 2010)



■ Social and psychological services

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

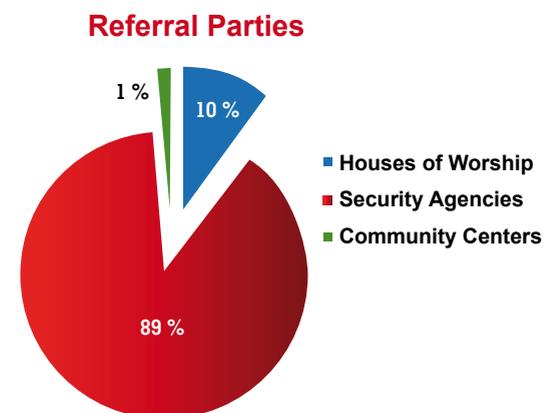
- a) Case management – A case manager was appointed for each victim in order to assess their general condition. These managers prepare an integrated plan that includes health, psychological and social support for the victims.
- b) Health services – Victims undergo full medical check-up on arrival at 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.

Ewaa – shelter for women and child 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 2010, Ewaa opened two new shelters for victims of human trafficking in Sharjah and Ras Al Khaimah. Together, these two shelters can accommodate 70 victims.

A hotline service (8007283) was approved and a crew of women staff has been trained to communicate round the clock in several languages with human trafficking victims. This initiative aims to encourage more victims to escape from the clutches of exploitation and get relief at the shelter. Ewaa also used the hotline service as part of a media campaign that was carried out in collaboration with the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking and in cooperation with Abu Dhabi and Al Ain international airports. Simultaneously, it is also working with the police departments in some of the emirates to develop a ‘humanitarian code’ that deals with victims.

Ewaa provided assistance to 71 victims in 2010. The details of their referrals are cited below.



Referral Parties	No.
Houses of Worship	7
Security Agencies	63
Community Centers	1
Total	71

Some of the other activities undertaken by Ewaa were:

- a) **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.
- b) **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.
- c) **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.
- d) **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.
- e) **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.

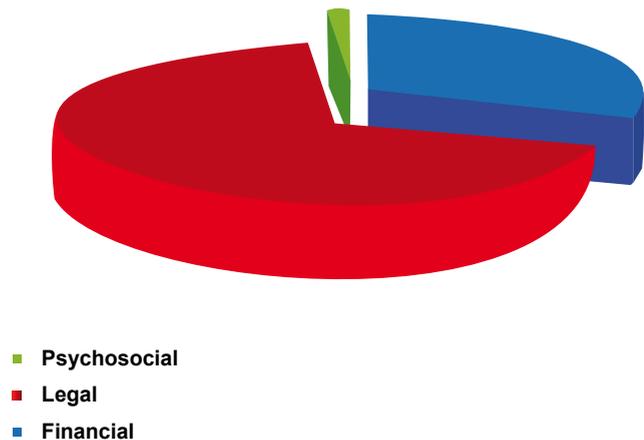
- f) **Administrative units** – An administrative building, separate from the main shelter premises, was opened in Abu Dhabi.
- g) Members of the Committee for Social Development met to discuss plans to construct a new Ewaa facility in Abu Dhabi.

Activities of other victim supporters

- 1) Apart from the earlier mentioned shelters, medical, psychological and legal services are offered to victims in a few other facilities, like the one operated by the Ministry of Interior. This facility assists human trafficking victims by providing them with shelter and moral support, as well as rehabilitation facilities. Such victims are exempted from fines accrued due to overstay without legal documents and through other forms of help provided by coordinating with social support centres in the home country of the victims.
- 2) Officers at the Human Trafficking Crimes Control Centre at Dubai Police visit Dubai Foundation for Women and Children frequently and interview the victims to learn more about their psychological state and the compatibility of psychotherapy with rehabilitation. After several interviews, it became clear that while such interaction was compatible in certain cases and with victims of some nationalities, it was incompatible with others, depending on cultural and social backgrounds. As a result, the shelter took corrective action and recommended that the victims be allowed to choose between staying in the foundation premises or outside. A follow-up programme – titled 'You are not Alone' – was launched for those victims choosing to stay outside the shelter. This mandated provision of necessary care and follow-up procedures even outside the shelter, as well as being in constant communication with them to ensure against re-victimisation. The shelter provides victims with 'To Whomsoever it may Concern' certificates, which certifies that the bearer is a human trafficking victim. Ten victims benefited from this unique programme in 2010.
- 3) Another programme, titled 'We Care for Victims of Human Trafficking,' is managed in collaboration with the Al Maktoum Charity and Humanitarian Foundation. Even cases of abuse of domestic workers, women and children are handled under this programme. In all, 51 cases were handled as part

of this programme. The Human Trafficking Crimes Control Centre, Dubai Police, also follows up on human trafficking reports and communicates with victims about updates of their cases and facilitates repatriation to their home countries.

Nature of support for trafficking victims in Dubai Police



Pillar IV – Bilateral Agreements and International Cooperation

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 cooperation.

During the last few years, the UAE has signed labour agreements with several countries, including Bangladesh, China, India, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Sri Lanka, and Thailand. These agreements are aimed at regulating the flow of the labour workforce and denying 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.

During 2010, bilateral agreements pertaining to cooperation on human trafficking issues were concluded with the Republics of Armenia and Azerbaijan. Similar agreements with the Republic of Belarus and the Kingdom of Thailand are in the pipeline.

Some of the international cooperation efforts in 2010 included the following:

- The UAE – as part of the 20-member Group of Friends United against Human Trafficking – signed the Declaration on the Global Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Persons in New York. The joint plan calls for the setting up of a United Nations voluntary trust fund for trafficking victims, especially women and children.
- The UAE donated nearly 200,000 dirhams to the United Nations Trust Fund as part of the Government’s global efforts to combat human trafficking.
- The government also makes annual donations of about 100,000 dirhams to the United Nations Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Fund and a similar contribution to the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund on Contemporary Forms of Slavery.
- The Ministry of Interior signed a number of conventions and memoranda of cooperation in the field of security, training and capacity-building with the US Department of Homeland Security, Australia Department of Immigration and Citizenship and the United Nations Regional Office in Abu Dhabi. The Ministry also signed 11 other agreements dealing with protection of human rights in general and combating human trafficking crimes in particular. These

were signed with: Austria, Belarus, Canada, China, France, Germany, Italy, Kazakhstan, Poland, Russia, and South Africa. Further, 15 draft agreements were signed with Afghanistan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Finland, Hungary, India, Netherlands, Pakistan, Romania, Singapore, Spain, Tajikistan, Thailand, Tunisia and Uzbekistan.

- The Naturalisation, Residency and Ports Affairs enhanced its partnerships with many countries, including Australia, India, Pakistan, the United Kingdom and the United States, in addition to several Arab and Gulf countries.

In order to exchange expertise with other organisations, as well as the international community, about anti-human trafficking measures, the National Committee to Combat Human Trafficking participated in the following multilateral international events:

1. Arab Initiative for Building National Capacities for Combating Human Trafficking in Qatar.
2. Workshop on combating human trafficking in Stockholm.
3. Second regional consultations on developing models for support and social reintegration of human trafficking victims in Azerbaijan.
4. 'Legal Mechanisms to Protect Women and Children from Trafficking' in Alexandria, Egypt.
5. Conference on 'Building Networks for Civil Society Organisations to Combat Human Trafficking in the Arab Region,' in Amman.
6. Fifth session of the Conference of Parties to the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime, in Vienna.
7. Conference on discrimination against women, Vienna.
8. Workshop on human trafficking, smuggling of migrants and judicial cooperation, in Kuala Lumpur.
9. Scientific Forum titled 'Toward a Comprehensive Arab Strategy to Combat Human Trafficking,' in Egypt.

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 four-pillar strategy: legislation, enforcement, victim support, as well as bilateral agreements and international cooperation. Since the government first 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.

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.

LAW 51

A HELPING HAND



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