



Trafficking in Persons in Times of Crises is a systemically interconnected phenomenon. Crisis situations, be it manmade or natural disasters, create vulnerability to human trafficking as people are desperate to leave crisis areas in search for safety or a better life.



[Why Libya is springboard for migrant exodus](#)

Source: BBC; April 20th, 2015

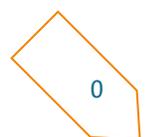


Photograph: Navesh Chitrakar / Reuters

[Nepal quake survivors face threat from human traffickers supplying sex trade](#)

Source: The Guardian; May 5th, 2015

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Why Libya is springboard for migrant exodus

Source: BBC; April 20th, 2015.



Unprecedented numbers of migrants are making the sea crossing from Libya

More and more migrants are dying on the sea-crossing from Libya to Italy, making the North African country a pivot in the biggest global refugee crisis since World War Two. How did Libya become a springboard for the EU?

What is the political situation there?

There has been no effective government since the 2011 uprising that drove out Col Muammar Gaddafi. Instead, there are hundreds of different armed groups fighting for territory and influence.

The groups are divided along ideological and regional lines, and have the support of competing foreign governments - a recipe for civil war.

Human trafficking has flowered in this climate. Smugglers, believed to have links to the militias, are making huge profits from packing desperate migrants into unsafe boats bound for Europe.

Libya has no central government and no shortage of feuding militias



What are the other factors?

Geography plays a part. Libya's porous land borders connect it to some of the world's poorest and most dangerous countries, and it has a long coastline a few hundred miles from the southern shores of Italy.

In November Tripoli's coast guard openly admitted to the BBC that it allowed migrants to set sail, only interfering if a boat runs into trouble - often too late to save lives.

Under Col Gaddafi's authoritarian rule, the flow of migrants was kept in check. But with a patchwork of militias now controlling Libya's ports, there are fewer curbs and no central authority for Europe to deal with. For migrants, Libya's destabilisation has made it the easiest way out of Africa.

Until recently, Libya was itself a destination for migrants from Africa and the Middle East, drawn to its relatively robust economy. However, the civil conflict has made it a very dangerous place for any foreigners to linger. Migrants who may once have been prepared to search for work there are now desperate to leave.



Spain has tried to tighten controls on migrants entering its territory

What about other routes?

Libya lies along the migrants' central Mediterranean route, which aims for the shores of Italy and Greece. Others include the Western Mediterranean route, aiming for Spanish territory, and the eastern land route, which goes up through the Balkans.

Both the other routes have been targeted by tighter EU controls. Along the Western route, the traffic has decreased.

Meanwhile, traffic along the central Mediterranean route - running through Libya - has increased dramatically. Are more migrants favouring this route because the other routes have become harder? Or is the burgeoning trade along this route drawing traffic away from the others? There are no clear answers to these questions.

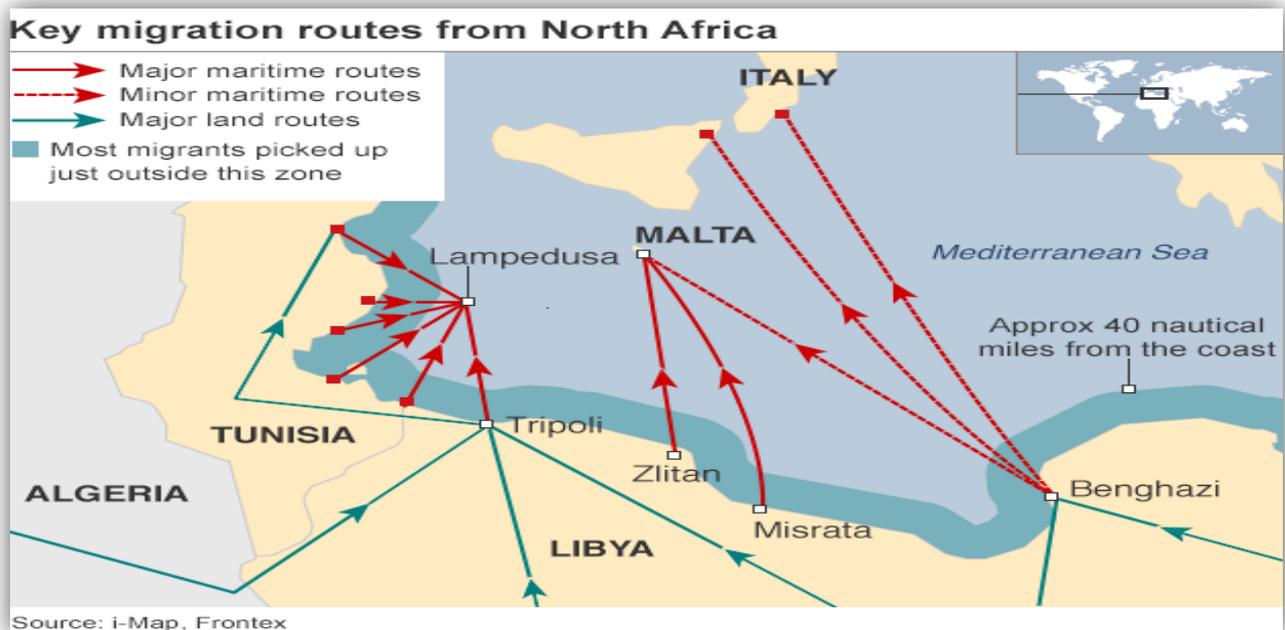


The conflict in Syria is driving migrants westward - including this family arriving in Greece

Who are the migrants?

There has been a recent surge in the number of Syrian migrants, fleeing the civil war in their country. The boats from Libya are also carrying Afghans, Somalis and Iraqis - again, fleeing conflict - as well as Eritreans, keen to escape their repressive government.

Most of the other migrants are from poor countries in west Africa. They are travelling in search of a better life in the EU.



What can be done?

The EU has considered a range of measures to cut migrant deaths at sea, from more aggressive coastal patrols to offshore processing centres. A potential Libyan solution is perhaps the least probable of these.

The country has had at least five governments since the 2011 revolution. It currently has two rival governments, one based in the capital, Tripoli, and the other based hundreds of miles away in the port of Tobruk.

Militias linked to the rival governments are fighting against each other, as well as against smaller groups, such as the local franchise of Islamic State.

As the economy collapses, the profits from the human trafficking trade are likely to prove ever more attractive.

Nepal quake survivors face threat from human traffickers supplying sex trade

Source: The Guardian; May 5th, 2015.

Criminal networks using cover of rescue effort to target poor rural communities in country from which an estimated 15,000 girls are trafficked a year, warn NGOs

Tens of thousands of young women from regions devastated by the earthquake in Nepal are being targeted by human traffickers supplying a network of brothels across south Asia, campaigners in Kathmandu and affected areas say.

The 7.8-magnitude quake, which killed more than 7,000 people, has devastated poor rural communities, with hundreds of thousands losing their homes and possessions. Girls and young women in these communities have long been targeted by traffickers, who abduct them and force them into sex work.

The UN and local NGOs estimate 12,000 to 15,000 girls a year are trafficked from Nepal. Some are taken overseas, to South Korea and as far as South Africa. But the majority end up in Indian brothels where tens of thousands are working in appalling conditions.

“This is the time when the brokers go in the name of relief to kidnap or lure women. We are distributing assistance to make people aware that someone might come to lure them,” said Sunita Danuwar, director of Shakti Samuha, an NGO in Kathmandu. “We are getting reports of [individuals] pretending to go for rescuing and looking at people.”

Senior western aid officials in the Nepalese capital are also concerned. “There is nothing like an emergency when there is chaos for opportunities to ... traffic more women. There is a great chance that everything that is bad happening in Nepal could scale up,” said one.

Armed Nepalese police help people in Sindhupalchok district board a helicopter to Kathmandu after last month's earthquake.



Photograph: Navesh Chitrakar/Reuters

Sita, 20, told the Guardian how she had been taken from her village in Sindhupalchok, the hill area north of Kathmandu, to the Indian border town of Siliguri where she was sold to a brothel owner, repeatedly beaten, systematically raped by hundreds of men and infected with HIV. “I do not have nightmares about my time there. I have erased it from my memory,” she said.

Last month's quake killed more than 3,000 people in Sindhupalchok, and left hundreds of thousands homeless.

“The earthquake will definitely increase the risk of abuse,” said Rashmita Shashtra, a local healthworker. “People here are now desperate and will take any chance. There are spotters in the villages who convince family members and local brokers who do the deal. We know who they are.”

Sita, who was rescued last year, was taken by an uncle “for a job” in India. Her parents, who are subsistence farmers and illiterate, believed assurances she would have a good job and be able to send back her wages.

In the brothel in Siliguri, Sita was forced to have unprotected sex with up to 20 or 30 men a day, seven days a week for a year. When the premises was raided by police, she told officials she wanted to return home and was handed over to an NGO.

“I am worried now for the other girls who might be taken away. They will need the money and be tempted if someone talks to them about a job. Then the same thing will happen to them as happened to me,” Sita said.

Nepal, one of the poorest countries in Asia, is the focal point of well organised smuggling networks dealing in everything from tiger skins to precious woods, from narcotics to people.

Danuwar said most of these criminal networks were based in India, which made identification of traffickers difficult. The gangs have representatives and agents looking for suitable women across Nepal, but particularly in deprived rural areas such as Sindhupalchowk.

Many local agents do not know the eventual destination of the women, with some genuinely believing they will find well-paid work in Kathmandu or India. Others are well aware of the real nature of their “jobs”. One ruse is to promise marriage to wealthy foreigners.

Kathmandu also has hundreds of bars and massage parlours where women work in poor conditions, with many compelled to have sex with clients. These women are recruited locally, again often in zones hit hard by the quake. “Now [after the earthquake] it is going to be easy for brokers,” said Danuwar.

The US State Department has said the Nepalese government does not comply “with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking” but “is making significant efforts to do so”.

The uncle who abducted Sita was murdered by a contract killer. Her parents remain unaware of exactly what happened to her, though her brothers have found out. They have now disowned her. Victims of sexual violence are frequently ostracised in south Asia, where they are seen as having brought shame on their community.

Sita lives in a secret shelter run by Shakti Samuha. She does not know what has happened to her parents in the earthquake. For many days, communications to her remote village were cut. When she managed to get a line through to a brother, he refused to acknowledge her. “He said he had no sister and I had called a wrong number,” Sita said.



Photograph: Manish Swarup/AP

People injured in last month's earthquake rest inside a tent at a makeshift hospital in Chautara, Sindhupalchok district.



MEDIA RELEASES

VIDEOS

[Human trafficking in crisis situations: raising awareness in Ukraine](#)

The OSCE's Special Representative and Co-ordinator for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings is working with the Special Monitoring Mission to Ukraine to raise awareness of trafficking in persons in crisis situations.

OSCE; June, 2015.

[The Journey](#)

This video and picture journal takes you through the journey of a Syrian refugee, Hashem Alsouki, who risks his life crossing the Mediterranean to reach Sweden and provide freedom for his family.

The Guardian; 2015.

PUBLICATIONS

[Addressing Human Trafficking and Exploitation in Times of Crisis: Evidence and recommendations for further action to protect vulnerable and mobile populations](#)

This briefing document provides a summary of key findings and recommendations to improve the response to human trafficking in the various phases of a crisis (before, during and after), with a focus on armed conflicts, natural disasters and protracted crises.

IOM; 2015.

[Trafficking in Human Beings In Conflict and Post-Conflict Situation](#)

This report presents findings of trafficking in human beings in conflict and post-conflict situations and provides a series of recommendations, based on local research and trials to address human trafficking in conflict and post-conflict situations.

Caritas; June 2015.

[Armed Conflict and Trafficking in Women](#)

This report examines the prevalent forms of trafficking during armed conflicts and in post-conflict situations. The report also discusses contributing factors to trafficking to provide an understanding of the links between trafficking in women and armed conflict.

Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit (GTZ) GmbH; January 2004.