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## **Impact of corruption on anti-human trafficking efforts in Nigeria**

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### **Abstract**

The fact that no country in the world is insulated from corruption and human trafficking is indubitable. Hence, states have been urged to adopt strategies- individually and collectively to tackle both phenomena. Collectively, states can combat corruption and human trafficking through the adoption of international legal instruments; and by increasing awareness of both concepts at international, regional and national levels. Adopting international legal instruments is particularly important as they often contain provisions that impose obligations on States Parties to adopt necessary measures to counter both phenomena, mostly through criminalization under national laws and other administrative, etc. efforts. Nigeria, which is particularly bedevilled by both phenomena, has ratified international anti-corruption and human trafficking instruments, enacted specific national laws and established institutional and administrative frameworks to grapple with these phenomena. These efforts have, however, not achieved the desired result in government's anti-trafficking efforts. This is evident in increased cases of human trafficking in the country; and criminal justice officials referencing corruption as a debilitating factor in their anti-trafficking effort. Using a non-doctrinal approach, this article interrogates the impact of corruption on anti-human trafficking efforts in Nigeria. To do this, the article examines the configurations that exist between both concepts, specifically in terms of how corruption lubricates human trafficking. Practical and overarching recommendations are also proffered based on identified challenges facing anti-trafficking efforts.

**Keywords:** trafficking in human beings, Nigeria, corruption, NAP TIP, TIPPEAA

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### **Introduction**

The audacity with which corruption has supplanted transparency, probity, honesty, accountability and purposefulness in Nigeria is worrying. It is worrying because the pervasive nature of corruption in the country has notably caused structural systems defects/failures; and entrenched other vices such as trafficking in human beings (THB) and other forms of human exploitation. The presence of corruption, and its effects on socio-political, economic and cultural structures in the country, has been so real that it feels almost tangible. According to scholars, corruption stares people in the face wherever they go, even as it continues to undermine democratic institutions, retard economic development, and contribute to government instability. Indeed, the practical implications of corruption have been overwhelming for law and policy makers not only with respect to anti-THB efforts but also in the area of upholding democratic institutions. In that regard, Adesoji observed that, corruption has attacked the foundation of democratic institutions by distorting electoral processes, perverting the rule of law, and creating bureaucratic quagmires that see public officials soliciting bribes openly in the country.

The devastating effects of corruption in Nigeria has led to questions being regularly asked as to how the country got to this point where (a) its spirit of cohesiveness, oneness, and shared democratic values to corruption is lost; and (b) corruption allowed to suffuse the entire fabric of the country. To find answers to these questions and also chart a course of national liberation, issues around corruption have been discussed and debated at different fora-conferences, seminars, roundtables, lectures, meetings, and workshops where proposals are made and

communiqués issued on how to tackle it and move the country forward. However, corruption remains steadily on the rise. For example, Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) ranked Nigeria 148 out of 180 and scored the country 25 points out of 100. Compared to the 2015 and 2017 CPI, which showed that Nigeria scored 26 points out of 100, and 28 out of 100 respectively, there is a clear indication of upward trend of corruption in the country, if the report is anything to go by. According to the organization, corruption index in Nigeria averaged 19.78 Points from 1996 until 2015, reaching an all-time high of 27 Points in 2008 and a record low of 6.90 Points in 1996. When in 2014, Nigeria moved eight places to 136 out of 176 countries ranked on the CPI, the government did not surprise anyone by interpreting this to mean that Nigeria is 'winning the war on corruption under President Goodluck Jonathan's watch'. Be that as it may, the present administration of President Muhammadu Buhari (PMB) is sternly focusing on combating corruption amid serious challenges. Commenting on corruption, the former United State Secretary of State, John Kerry in his speech at the January 2016 World Economic Forum, made reference to President Buhari's fight against corruption in Nigeria and how individuals kept money meant for arms deal, and noted that, 'it has been reported that over 50 people including government officials stole over \$9 billion in Nigeria'. He also re-echoed what everyone in Nigeria already knew-that corruption was already in Nigeria before PMB came.

Generally, corruption and THB are two concepts that have had a fair share of responses- legal, administrative, policy and preventive measures, at the international, regional and national

levels with the United Nations declaring 30 July of each year as World Day against Trafficking in Persons and celebrated as an annual event to stress the need for responses to be coherent, adequate, appropriate, integrated, and proactive; and in genuine pursuit of addressing the root causes of both concepts globally. Note that both phenomena have grown from being small and hidden and or secret conducts to become huge and over bearing conducts that are fast becoming recognisable, even though, THB is still more clandestinely operated than corruption in the country. That means while corruption is easily recognised in Nigeria, some forms of THB remain difficult to detect even when practiced in the open, as for example, child exploitation.

## **Conceptualizing Corruption and Trafficking in Human Beings**

### **Corruption**

The scale of the issue of corruption across the world is huge according to Transparency International, which estimated that sixty-eight percent of countries around the world have serious corruption problem. As a concept, corruption has been defined internationally, regionally, and nationally both from a narrow and broader perspective. At the international level, the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCC) as well as international organizations-World Bank and Amnesty International have either defined it or highlighted its prevalence and enjoin States to define, criminalize and or prevent it. At the international level, although the UNCC and United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (UNCTOC) left the term undefined, perhaps for the same reason, preferring instead to call on States to prevent and also criminalize it in their national laws, the World Bank-taking a narrower perspective, defines it as 'the abuse of public power for private gain', while the Transparency International-taking a broader perspective, defines corruption as 'the misuse of entrusted power for private gain'. The adoption of different approaches to understanding the nature of corruption was aptly explained by the United Nations (UN), thus:

There is no comprehensive, universally accepted definition of corruption (...) attempts to develop a more precise definition encountered legal, criminological, and in some states, political problems. When the negotiation of UNCTOC began in 2002, one option was to avoid the problem of defining corruption by simply listing a whole series of specific types of acts of corruption. After much discussion, corruption was not defined but examples of what is covered by the expression appear throughout the text.

The UNCC addresses issues such as preventive measures, criminalization and law enforcement, international cooperation and recovery of assets that are proceeds of crime, in relation to corruption, but focuses on grand corruption of political officials at the detriment of corruption at petty level even though petty corruption can cripple the larger system, and consequently entrench THB.

At regional level, the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (AUCPCC) referred to corruption as, 'acts and practices including related offences proscribed in this Convention; and listed 'acts and practices' which constitutes corruption as, the solicitation or acceptance of gratification, illicitly obtaining benefits for themselves while in office, diversion of public funds for personal use, amongst others. By and large, this regional anti-corruption initiative recognise corruption as a stratagem that is normally used to contrive a

detour from the right course of action, duty or conduct either in the performance of official duties or in activities relating to economic, political and social matters.

At national level, in Nigeria, corruption is recognised as a concept that is endemic, ubiquitous and strewn in the socio-economic and political fabric of the nation. Accordingly, the Nigerian Corrupt Practices and Other Related Offences (ICPC) Act, 2000, defines it broadly thus; 'corruption includes bribery, fraud and other related offences', in order to create a dragnet that can potentially capture as many offences as possible. The Money Laundering (Prohibition) Act, 2011, as amended, further enlists corruption, human trafficking and migrant smuggling as predicate crimes to the offence of Money Laundering. In terms of the very essence of corruption as 'insidious plague', the Nigerian courts have made far-reaching pronouncements. For example, in *Attorney General of Ondo State v Attorney General of the Federation and 35 others*, the court described corruption as a conduct, which is international; as a virus, which has landed Nigeria in the economic quagmire, which the country finds itself now; and makes those in position of responsibilities to lose the ability to implement policy in the country.

In terms of combating corruption, the Nigerian government, in line with its obligations under UNCC and UNCTOC as a State Party, has adopted a series of anti-corruption measures-legislative framework, institutional, policy and administrative, to tackle corruption even though these efforts seem very weak. Note that Nigeria even enacted its anti-corruption law in 2000 before it signed and ratified the UNCC.

### **Trafficking in Human beings**

THB is defined under Article 3 of the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (TIP) as a process consisting of three main elements- acts, means and purpose. While the acts comprise of transportation, transfer, harbouring and receipts of persons, the means constitutes fraud, deception, coercion, abuse of a position of vulnerability and others, while the purpose is exploitation, including sexual exploitation, labour exploitation and removal of organs. Note that the presence or absence of any of the constituents under means is immaterial in the case of children-acts and purpose, are sufficient. Further, existence of any of the items listed under means, that is, 'fraud, deception, coercion, abuse of a position of vulnerability' and others, is enough to vitiate consent under article 3 (b).

The Nigerian Trafficking in Persons (Prohibition) Enforcement and Administration Act, 2015 (TIPPEAA) adopted the TIP's definition of THB but broadens it by stretching 'involuntary servitude' to include 'domestic, sexual or reproductive' servitude. Importantly, the TIPPEAA in defining THB, took a step further to define related terms such as 'force or coercion', 'exploitation', 'exploitative labour', 'sexual exploitation', as well as 'position of vulnerability' that were left undefined in the TIP in order to avoid the confusion and debates that have characterized the TIP since its adoption. This is important because of the nature of trafficking- the non-organized domestic trafficking that is prevalent in the country. Preference for this type of trafficking arises from its simplistic nature and the ease with which it can be perpetrated without suspicion. In this trafficking pattern, recruiters are usually relatives of victims who, through fraud, deceit, coercion or false promise of education or better life

in the city easily convince parents to hand over their children only for these children to be exploited.

In 2015 for example, the National Agency for the Traffic in Persons and other Related Offences (NAPTIP) reported that it had successfully secured a conviction against a woman who trafficked two male children by promising their parents that the boys would be sent to school. On arrival at destination, the boys were instead, forced to hawk on the streets, while the woman (their trafficker) took all the profits. This is in addition to doing her domestic work, and poor feeding. The woman was convicted and handed a term of imprisonment of 2 years. Similarly, on 2 December 2015, a High Court sitting in Kano sentenced a trafficker, Zulai Garba to prison for one year, in a case involving the trafficking of girls, aged 8 and 13 for domestic work. On a promise of education and proper upbringing of the girls, the trafficker's relative had released his daughters to be taken from the village to Kano city for a better life. At the detriment of education however, the girls were sold to another family for domestic work. These incidences are replicated in several other cases where children are fraudulently taken from families for purposes of exploitation.

### Trafficking Tides in Nigeria

Like elsewhere, THB in Nigeria may be domestic or across border; and usually involves traffickers working individually or as organized group(s) even though the domestic type where traffickers work as individuals is more prevalent due to its simplicity arising from strong family affinities/ties. Generally, data on THB in Nigeria is scanty and not readily available even though reports suggest huge volume of trafficking into and out of the country every year due to the country's status as source, transit and destination country for THB. Increased THB incidents is also linked to a variety of factors such as poverty, deteriorating living conditions, persistent unemployment, human deprivation, and the feeling of a dreary future, all of which combine to foster an environment conducive for THB.

Added to these is the recent wave of insurgency in the northeast and devastating effects of floods across the country that gave rise to setting up camps for Internally Displaced Persons (IDP). These camps are reportedly unsafe, bedeviled with human rights concerns and make children more vulnerability trafficking and other forms of exploitation. Further, activities of Boko Haram members with regards to abduction and kidnapping of young children for use as child soldiers, and sexual exploitation as well as recruitment of children into the Civilian Joint Task Force (CJTF) usually through coercion, also contributes significantly to increase in the volume of THB in Nigeria.

In terms of cross border trafficking, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reported trafficking flows that indicate a well-structured and systematic operation in which Nigerian women and young girls are trafficked to virtually every country affected by THB; and a significant number into Europe with its attendant challenges. According to the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI), Italy, Spain and Netherlands that have served as destination countries for Nigerian trafficking victims-mostly for sexual exploitation, are among European countries that have experienced trafficking flows from Nigeria that are difficult to detect and pose serious challenges to anti-THB law enforcement. The UNODC also observed that, in the '2007-2012 period,

Nigerian victims constantly accounted for 10 percent of the total number of detected victims in western and central Europe'.

Evidence of trafficking or attempted trafficking of women and children into and out of Nigeria has actually led to convictions. For example, in a charge No/FHC/S/35c/2015, three persons were convicted of the crime of THB under sections 16 and 19 of the Trafficking in Persons Act, 2003 (this law was repealed in 2015 by the new TIPPEAA, 2015) and given sentences ranging between 4 and 6 years in 2015 for promoting foreign travels which 'promotes prostitution'; and also for deceitfully inducing the victims to move from place to another for sexual exploitation. Usually, the means that traffickers adopt in recruiting victims in Nigeria depends largely on the type of trafficking-whether domestic or transnational, the traffickers involved-whether as individuals or organized criminal groups or the purpose of trafficking-whether for sexual exploitation, forced labour, begging, organ harvesting or warfare. For example, recruitment for purposes of sexual exploitation, labour and or slavery is usually done by means of *fraud, coercion, deceit*, misrepresentation or false promise. Where the purpose for recruiting victims is organ harvesting or warfare, traffickers would more commonly recruit by means of *abduction or use of force or threat* because other tactics may not work.

The Boko Haram sect forcibly recruited and abducted women and children, including young girls in the north eastern part of Nigeria, some of whom are used as child soldiers while some are subjected to domestic servitude and other forms of forced labour and sexual exploitation through forced marriages to militants according to official report. There have also been reports of kidnapping and abduction of women and children, including young boys and girls for a type of trafficking that is usually associated with organ harvesting for rituals. The most recent trend in THB relates to the baby factory syndrome.

Aided by societal pressures that condemn families without children, amongst others, there has, recently, been a proliferation of baby factories in Nigeria that has seen many medical doctors, nurses and orphanage operators arrested for complicity in the crime. In December 2013 for example, police in Imo State, following a tipoff, raided a phony motherless baby's home where twenty odd teenage girls were rescued and the operator a 39-year-old woman arrested. During interrogations, it was discovered that the woman usually coerced young girls without families to her 'home' where she contracted a boy to impregnate them. As soon as the girls give birth, the babies are then sold off. In 2015, police carried out similar raids and rescued a number of pregnant girls at different locations in the country.

This practice of sales of babies simply defies the US Secretary of State John Kerry's words to the effect that 'money may be able to buy a lot of things, but it should never, ever be able to buy another human being' because money does, indeed buy human beings in Nigeria. Be that as it may, methods of recruitment listed here are exceptions rather than rule. The general rule is that traffickers would normally adopt tactic(s) that work for them in the circumstance. Recently in 2017, the CNN broke the news that shocked the international community when it reported the sale of African migrants as slaves in Libya most of who are citizens of Nigeria. Further investigation revealed that a good number of these migrants (who were eventually rescued and brought back to Nigeria by Nigerian government) were victims of THB. Highlighting the scale of the problem, the National Agency for

the Prohibition of Trafficking in Persons (NAPTIP), reported that the agency had about 3,500 rescued victims of cross border trafficking as at December 2017.

### **Relationship between Corruption and Trafficking in Human Beings**

Often times, corruption is characterized as a root cause that facilitates and sustains THB. As a factor that cuts across every fabric of society—from the border guard, to the law enforcement officials to top policy makers and even to the ordinary citizen, corruption could occur at any stage of THB- before, during and after. This means that it can occur in any country irrespective of its status, whether as a source, transit or destination country. Consequently, it facilitates the continued exploitation of THB victims. This, according to scholars, explains why so many laws and programmes against THB focus on movement involving official corruption, more than exploitation. This also speaks to the issue of linkage between both phenomena.

The link between THB and corruption is that both are not only complicated but also multifaceted. Likewise corruption and poverty are intertwined, and together, they reinforce THB. As such, measures against corruption must be taken at both policy and operational levels. At policy level, corruption must be recognised when dealing with THB for the purpose of formulating responses that remove causes of THB. At the operational level, interventions to deal with anti-corruption and anti-THB must be cohesive to succeed. This is important because identifying linkages between both phenomena is yet to engender legal framework that address both phenomena as concepts that mutually bolster each other.

### **Impact of Corruption on Anti-THB Efforts in Nigeria**

In terms of combating corruption and its impact on THB, Nigeria continue to sustain efforts in that direction even though anti-corruption efforts are usually undertaken independent of THB. From legislative measures, to policy, awareness and administrative, anti-THB efforts in Nigeria have been systematic but inadequate as reflected in the number of THB convictions secured so far. Highlighting the issues, the US Department of State, reported that NAPTIP ‘conducted 509 trafficking investigations, completed 56 prosecutions and secured 30 convictions’ in 2015, a figure which is not commensurate with the volume of trafficking that takes place and the number of arrests made each year.

Similarly, NAPTIP reported that, since inception in August 2004 until August 2015, it has only secured a total of 272 convictions. This clearly shows that there are impediments, which may not relate strictly to corruption; meaning there is need to, in addition to examining influences of corruption, examine other factors, which may include lack of capacity and or expertise of NAPTIP to meet the challenges of THB. Note that anti-THB efforts that engender strengthening existing legal provisions, cooperation with other countries, trainings of law enforcement officials and awareness creation, continue to be engaged by the government of Nigeria through NAPTIP. For example, in 2015 alone NAPTIP conducted series of extensive trainings-particularly specialized trainings on victim identification, investigation of THB cases and child protection, for law enforcement officials, government employees and media workers; and collaborated with international partners, such as Finland, Netherlands, United

Kingdom and countries in the Gulf of Guinea on counter-THB matters, in the areas of intelligence sharing, mutual legal assistance and victims protection.

This is to bring everyone up to speed on how to detect and fight THB. Despite all these, incidences of THB continue to rise steadily due to a number of factors one of which is corruption, which has often been cited as the bane of anti-THB efforts in Nigeria. At a recent campaign against irregular migration and human trafficking in Nigeria, corruption was highlighted as one of the major barriers to curbing the menace of THB among young people. Also, reports of law enforcement officials and prosecutors demanding sexual gratification, financial and other forms of payment from victims in exchange for pursuing their cases have been rife. Similarly, studies on THB often highlight evidence of corruption at one stage of the trafficking chain or the other, in the public and private sectors and in a broad range of areas.

Going by reports and allegations of bribery and corruption of public officials and private sector operators whose work border on anti-THB, it is easy to see that corruption does impede anti-THB efforts. However, specific data that measures impact of corruption on anti-THB efforts in Nigeria is nonexistent, and that is what is needed and urgently. Non-existence of such data in Nigeria is due to a number of factors highlighted below, one of which is the fact that anti-THB research and policy do not usually take into cognizance the role of corruption as a THB facilitator so as to focus on collecting data that show specific impact.

In conceptualizing corruption above, it was noted that corruption comprises a range of practices; and these practices manifest differently depending on whether it is a trafficking chain, victim’s support and protection chain or criminal justice chain. It also depends on the actors involved. This is against the backdrop that some actors may participate actively in corrupt practices, such as taking a bribe to subvert the course of justice while other actors may be passively involved, for example, looking the other way when corrupt practice is being perpetrated.

In the trafficking chain, corruption is noticeable during recruitment, transportation of victims, documentation and laundering proceeds of crime of THB. Perpetrators of corrupt practices in the trafficking chain includes, corrupt law enforcement officials such as the police, immigration officers, and also private sector operators such as transport owners, travel agencies, and financial institutions. In the victim support and protection chain, corrupt shelter operators, such as nongovernmental organizations or social service workers who are mandated to provide protection and support, may victimize victims. Corruption indicators in the criminal justice chain, is decipherable during the drafting and adoption of legal provisions, crime prevention, investigations, seizure and confiscation of proceeds of crime, prosecution, trial and enforcement actions. In all these situations, corruption may be active or passive; and involvement of these actors may vary in scale and gravity. Moreover, involvement of these actors may be random or solitary instance of corruption; and the likelihood exists that police and law enforcement operatives may engage in rent seeking or extortion on a systemic basis, accepting bribes and gifts from traffickers in exchange for permitting the operations to continue. In Nigeria, at the detriment of enforcing anti-THB and anti-corruption laws, criminal justice officials, especially the Nigerian Police—who are directly involved in the implementation of anti-

trafficking, have often been accused of compromising anti-THB efforts by colluding with traffickers to help them evade arrests, prosecution and possible conviction after extracting some kind of benefit in the course of official duty. There are allegations, arising from victims' testimony of how police comprise prosecutions after taking bribe; and of widespread acts of extortion, which has resulted in the loss of public confidence in the police. In the cases of baby factories referred to above, stories have, more often than not, remained at the level of arrest. Once suspects are taken to the police station, and granted bail, further investigations become jeopardized by activities of investigators; hence records of convictions remain scanty in that area.

Corruption in the criminal justice is particularly debilitating and constitutes a source of concern in the country mainly because; (a) the public has high expectation from police and other law enforcers to be highly moral and effective law enforcement agents; and (b) exercise of their powers has serious implications for the safety of lives, properties, and freedoms of citizens, especially vulnerable people. Corruption in criminal justice cuts across all criminal justice agencies-courts, police, immigration, and federal road safety, amongst others, leading to cynicism about chances of anti-THB efforts succeeding, as they continue on their collusion course with traffickers by forging documents and facilitating victim's movement, as well as reluctance to investigate allegations of THB crimes. This poses significant threat to anti-THB efforts; and accounts for lack of accurate data on THB.

With respect to the private sector, the TIPPEAA places a responsibility on airlines, commercial carriers, tour operators and travel agents not to aid, abet, facilitate or promote THB, pornography or exploitation in tourism. The private sector is further obliged to carry out awareness campaigns by sensitizing their staff and travellers of the dangers of THB and the need to be aware of the tactics of traffickers. But in practice, this is never done. It does not also help that policies on private sector relating to THB in the area of labour market operation and even prostitution have always been marginalized, and have not really been adequately addressed. For example, although unregistered agencies involved in recruiting young children for families, as domestics are everywhere, government has failed to come up with a deliberate policy to address this activity.

Unlike the public sector corruption that is visible, corruption in the private sector-especially travel agencies, marriage agencies, construction companies, job recruitment agencies, and non-governmental service providers is not so visible. That is why, law enforcers would normally go the extra mile to detect, by liaising with the public for tipoffs, as with cases of 'baby factories' type of trafficking discussed above. Obligation imposed on the private sector to do the needful is in line with article 12 of UNCC the outlines following recommendations as good practice: (a) synergy among law enforcers, private and corporate entities, (b) development of codes of conduct, and good commercials among business.

The article 12 also stipulates obligations to prevent private sector corruption- adopting measures to prevent corruption in the private sector, enhancing accountability and auditing standards in the private sector for transparency and ease of detecting malpractices, amongst others. To achieve this, however, government must establish effective, proportionate and dissuasive civil, administrative or criminal penalties for non-

compliance. Undoubtedly, with an unconfirmed population of about 167 million people and landmark covering 356,667 square miles, it would be daunting for law enforcement officials to successfully monitor the private sector in relation to corrupt practices involving THB, hence, citizens participation in anti-THB and anti-Corruption efforts is crucial.

Again, identifying links between corruption and THB, with regards to responsibilities of agencies is still uncoordinated leading to lack of awareness as to which agencies are de facto identifying links in THB and corruption in their daily work, i.e. persons that come into direct contact with victims of THB or with criminals; with regards to assigned mandates;(a) to provide assistance to victims, (b) to protect them and investigate cases, and (c) others to conduct research. Like anti-corruption enforcers and researchers investigating THB within anti-corruption framework, law enforcement officials may acquire significant intelligence on the extent of impact of corruption on anti-THB efforts in course of carrying out their functions, 'they often do not know each other or do not have the opportunity to share information, experiences and resources on this specific topic'. There is need therefore to identify possible agencies and actors who work with victims of THB as service providers who may also be law enforcement officials operating at the intersection of corruption and THB.

### Recommendations

- Imperatives for bridging the gap between corruption and THB become more obvious with lack of prosecution of public officials and private actors for their complicity in cases of THB. Anti-THB should therefore, be incorporated into anti-corruption agenda in order to end impunity.
- Most times, law enforcement officials are exonerated from corruption and THB, but there have been allegations of staff complicity in corruption during the process of THB, therefore, it is crucial to establish control mechanisms-supervision, accountability and supervision, to check law enforcement officials with responsibility to investigate, prosecute traffickers and protect victims; and who may be involved in the process of THB, noting also that special measures may be required in specific areas such as referral of THB victims.
- There is largely lack of referral of cases of THB where there are indicators for corruption simply because both concepts are often treated in isolation even though impact of corruption on THB is glaring. So, evolving indicators for anti-corruption officials to detect THB during investigation of corruption cases could go a long way. The same goes for persons investigating THB cases. Therefore, cooperation procedures, including information sharing that warrants coordinated actions through enhanced inter-agency training must be developed.
- Often times, law enforcement operatives in the area of THB cite corruption as an impediment to anti-THB efforts; however, corruption impact analysis in relation to anti-THB efforts is never undertaken. To successfully address the impact of corruption on THB, a critical and improved data collection and analysis that depicts impact of corruption on THB is crucial. This is to afford the government and stake holders better insight into the extent of the problem so as to

be able to formulate and implement targeted policies that are knowledge-based.

- Also during investigations, consideration is not usually given to THB victims who may be complacent in corrupt practices such as securing travel documents through bribe or holding false identity and travel documents; as well, criminal justice operatives prefer to hold victims liable for being in possession of counterfeit documents, without analyzing suspicious facts that may point at the involvement of corrupt officials; and victims detained without further investigation on either trafficking circumstances or corruption.
- Also, claims of corruption of victims and service providers are often ignored as a source of information and not acted upon during investigations. This may discourage reporting of cases. Victims may also be hesitant to report corruption for fear of reprisals from the corrupt officials involved and/or their exploiters. Therefore, there is need to enhance specific protection mechanisms for victims who would like to report corruption cases as it relates to THB.
- Nigeria is encouraged to develop strategies that jointly address trafficking in persons and corruption; and to start highlighting the role corruption on THB as a grave concern, which can and must be tackled systematically. The strategy is to respond to respond to corruption is THB. Strategies must be interconnected and reinforce each other. Punishing corruption severely could lead to an increased reporting of cases, which in turn would possibly allow a more realistic analysis of the phenomenon through better data collection.
- There should be a joint team of staff drawn from ICPC and NAPTIP who would be trained adequately and become aware of the risks and impact of corruption on THB. A strong team drawn from these agencies and adequately or specifically trained to handle THB situations may be better trusted by victims and service providers, and would readily volunteer information that will aid investigations and enhance institutional capacity to fight both corruption and THB.
- In Nigeria allegations of justice collusion of judicial officials with suspects; and justice going to “highest bidder” are not lacking. Therefore, specifically tailored remedial options must be adopted as part of effort to find solutions to the problem using an integrated reform plan. Although success of this approach cannot be guaranteed as past remedial efforts had failed, stakeholders must continue to try to embrace reform agenda that hinge on principles of transparency and accountability.
- Deliberate government policies that mainstreams the concepts of democracy, rule of law, protection of human rights, security, economic development and foreign investment, must form part of reform agenda.
- As already noted, targeted strategy that tackles corruption as it affects THB and seeks to integrate corruption and THB circles must begin to emerge from the criminal justice sector. This is to provide guidelines on how to collect and analyze data on corruption as it relates to THB. Doing this could be easier because indicators that corruption does play a fundamental role in sustaining THB already exists. What is required is for actors to bring together all information gathered through accounts of victims of THB and perpetrators indicating corrupt conducts of law enforcement

officials for analysis and review in a way that will enhance policy action that will address impediments associated with investigations and prosecution of corruption in the victims’ protection chain.

### Conclusion

It is unarguable that corruption plays a very crucial role in perpetuating THB in Nigeria. The fact that corruption is so entrenched in the society means that no aspect of the society is exonerated. Although corruption is prevalent in the country, official data that measures its impact on anti-THB efforts is lacking; hence the need to develop instruments that can determine Nigeria’s effort in understanding not only the relationship that exists between THB and corruption, but also the measurable impact that corruption has on THB. It is not enough to allege that corruption impedes anti-THB efforts in the country; there must be documentary evidence to that effect. Data on THB analyzed by NAPTIP in 2015 did not indicate influence of THB in their anti-THB efforts, which clearly shows one of two things- lack of available information or lack of expertise to carry out such analysis. Therefore NAPTIP should dialogue with stakeholders on how both issues can be treated as issues bearing the same characteristics, albeit with different working definitions.

Basically, THB can be linked to corruption through the activities or non-action of law enforcement agencies-customs, immigration, and police, amongst others; and the private sector operators- banking, recruitment agencies, travel agencies, transport operators, tourism and hospitality providers. The law also tacitly recognises that the private sector role in curbing THB is crucial; hence obligation to do the needful is imposed, in order to curb corruption involving these private sector operators, which if left unchecked can help to sustain THB in the country. Anticorruption measures that relate to various aspects of THB could possibly address the exploitation element of THB. Therefore, such measures must go beyond awareness raising to focus on development, and the incorporation of external factors that aid corruption and THB, such as poverty. This is fundamental because, apart from the fact that both issues have structural significance in the Nigerian society with extensive implications on social, political, economic and organizational levels, THB as a phenomenon represents a decisively significant factor that compromises the development of vulnerable people in the country. Right now, Nigeria must do all it takes to regain its sense of community, hospitality, good human relationship, religiosity, and respect for authority, elders and sacredness of human life by tackling corruption, and by extension, THB.

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