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**A Survey of Human Trafficking in the Spokane Region:  
Conducted by the Inland Northwest Task Force on  
Human Trafficking**

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**Human Trafficking in the Spokane Region  
Inland Northwest Task Force on Human Trafficking**

**OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY**

The objective of this survey was to obtain information about the prevalence and range of trafficking in Spokane, Washington and the vicinity. This work is part of a larger project of the Western Regional Institute for Community Oriented Public Safety at Washington State University, Spokane and supported by Washington State University Extension.

This survey was conducted during the period June-October of 2007. Representatives were interviewed from 25 service agencies. Some of these interviews were one-on-one, and at other times groups of employees were interviewed collectively. Agencies were selected because they were identified by the task force as being possible points of contact for trafficking victims and would therefore be more likely to have witnessed behaviors indicative of trafficking activities. The questions used in this survey can be found in **Appendix i** of this document.

The agencies contacted included health district programs, social service agencies, youth services, tribal services, shelters, needle exchange programs, mental health agencies, health clinics, language schools, and organizations serving ethnic minorities. A complete listing of the agencies involved can be found in **Appendix ii** of this document.

The interview instrument and methodology were not quantitative in nature, and therefore a formal numerical estimate of trafficking victims in the Spokane region is not included in this report. The data obtained in the survey is subjective and based on the interpretation of the interviewees, reflecting how they extract meaning from the definition posed and apply it to their interactions with the individuals they serve. However, all of the interviewees were professionals trained in working with vulnerable populations. It is assumed that their subjective interpretations have merit for the purposes of this survey. Interviewees were asked to consider only the past three years; therefore, it is believed that this report contains only recent trafficking activities

It is hoped that these survey data will be used to gauge trafficking trends in the region and will inform us as we seek to assess the need for additional, in-depth surveys and research. In addition, the information obtained will guide us as we determine the future direction of the Inland Northwest Task Force on Human Trafficking including the need for public education and enhancement of services to better serve the needs of trafficking victims in our region.

For purposes of this survey, we utilized the definition specified by the Trafficking Victims Protection ACT (TVPA) of 2000. It is defined below:

[United States Code, Public Law 106-386; the definition below is of 'severe forms of trafficking in persons', for which there are criminal penalties in the United States. The Revised Code of Washington RCW 9.94A.515 also makes these acts a felony under Washington State law.

- 1) Sex trafficking in which a commercial sex act is induced by force, fraud, or coercion or in which the person induced to perform such an act is under 18, or
- 2) The recruitment, harboring, transportation, provision, or obtaining of a person for labor or services, through the use of force, fraud, or coercion, for the purpose of subjecting that person to involuntary servitude, peonage, debt bondage, or slavery.

## **PREVALENCE AND RANGE OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE SPOKANE REGION**

Twenty-five agencies participated in the 2007 survey. Nineteen of these agencies provided information that aligned with what are understood to be “red-flag” indicators of trafficking situations. From the interviews conducted, it can be extrapolated that this form of victimization, human trafficking, is of considerable concern for this region and there is a wide spectrum of trafficking activities that include sex slavery, forced prostitution, forced pan-handling, farm labor, janitorial work, and domestic servitude. Most of the information provided concerned adult and child prostitution and “mail order brides.” There was one incident reported of a trafficking situation related to gangs and/or organized crime. In addition, there were some incidents of foreign-born people being held in virtual absolute captivity for labor or sex in which the person who trafficked them shared the same country of origin and had a relationship with the victim prior to them coming to the United States.

## **TRENDS IN HUMAN TRAFFICKING IN THE SPOKANE REGION**

The information collected in the survey is organized into six categories related to trafficking trends in the region. This section includes quotes from interviewees when their statements express the nature of their general observations. Specific situations are listed as “incidents.” Primary components of the victimizations are presented in abstract. When available, information is provided related to any known vulnerabilities of the victims (e.g., drug addiction, questionable legal status, homelessness, etc.) and the means by which the believed perpetrator maintained control over their victim.

Below is the list of categories by which the survey data are organized.

### **I. Gang and Organized Crime Related**

### **II. Prostitution Industry**

### **III. Minors in the Prostitution Industry**

#### **IV. “Mail Order” Brides**

#### **V. Labor Exploitation**

#### **VI. Other Trafficking Situations**

### **I. Gang and Organized Crime Related**

It is suspected that there is some gang related pimping and prostitution occurring in Spokane (*Spokane Regional Health, Needle Exchange*). However, there was only one situation where it was suspected that gangs or organized crime syndicates were involved in a known incident. Information regarding this one specific situation came via a service provider. However, her contact with the victim was personal and not professional. The victim did not seek assistance through law enforcement, NGOS, or community-based or faith-based organizations. The interviewee, along with friends and family of the victim, assisted the individual in escaping from her captors. She did not contact law enforcement for fear of reprisal.

**Incident 1:** Female traded to gang member by boyfriend for drugs. Gang members forced her to prostitute in multiple Western states for approximately two weeks. There was at least one other known victim. One of the men associated with the gang members helped her get to the bus station where she could contact her family.

**Vulnerabilities:** Unknown.

**Methods of Control:** Weapons and intimidation; geographic isolation, fraud (betrayal by intimate partner).

### **II. Prostitution and the Sex Industry**

There are an estimated 500 adult women involved in prostitution in Spokane (*Spokane Regional Health, Needle Exchange*). This figure includes women working in escort services, massage parlors, drug houses, and on the streets. In addition, there is an unknown number of males and minors involved in the sex industry in Spokane (*Interviews with Crosswalk, Goodwill Industries and Lutheran Community Services Northwest.*)

*“Male prostitution is much hidden, and they are especially vulnerable.”* **Goodwill Industries**

Those working in service to this population, including the needle exchange, adult shelters and homeless services, indicate that the use of “force, fraud and coercion” are common between pimps and their prostitutes in order to control their work and personal life.

*“We see the prostitutes who are being beat up by pimps on a daily basis.” **House of Charity***

Many of the city’s homeless women engage in prostitution in exchange for shelter, food and drugs.

*“I’m sure we have some of the women here. A boyfriend or a friend takes them in. They need a place to stay. They’re very vulnerable and they’re trying to trust someone. They feel forced to do it. (Work in pornographic films, strip clubs, massage parlors or other sexually oriented businesses against their will.)” **Hope House***

It was reported that drug addiction is a common component of the lives of street prostitutes.

*“80% of prostitutes are doing it for drugs and are manipulated with drugs...a lot of our clients are forced to have sex in exchange for drugs.” **House of Charity***

Mental health issues and childhood traumas also were noted as being key components of the prostitution scene.

*“Prostitutes are universally abused as children. I’d say 1/3 were sold (in childhood) by their mothers.” **Goodwill Industries***

The combination of these factors of disadvantaged backgrounds makes these populations especially vulnerable to individuals willing to exploit this vulnerability for their own personal gain.

Service providers consistently provided information that suggests that physical abuse, threats related to family members, and withholding basic needs are common methods that pimps use to control their prostitutes. Prostitutes often want to leave prostitution, but are not permitted to do so because of the behaviors of their pimps. In addition, their pimps often change their geographic location, moving them from city to city, making it impossible for the victims to form relationships with people who may assist them in escaping their bondage to prostitution. (*Spokane Regional Health Needle Exchange Interview*).

*“I used to work downtown with the street and homeless women. Some of the women didn’t want to go back out, but they were beat up if they didn’t.” **SNAP***

In many of the situations below, no known vulnerabilities are cited, but as was defined earlier, many are known to be addicted to drugs and are homeless.

### **Specific Situations:**

**Incident 1:** Two different prostitutes recently called a crises line and revealed that they wanted to leave prostitution but couldn't.

**Vulnerability:** Unknown.

**Means of Control:** Unknown.

**Incident 2:**

Prostitute whose pimp took all her money, beat her up and forced her to engage in sexual activities with clients that she did not want to do. He forced her into drug addiction and then forced her to have sex with him in exchange for drugs. Situation continued for 10 years.

**Vulnerabilities:** Drug addiction.

**Means of Control:** Physical violence, threats, forced drug use.

**Incident 3:**

Five or six prostitutes in the area are known to be moved by their pimp from state to state, including destinations in the Mid-west and the South.

**Vulnerabilities:** Unknown.

**Means of Control:** Unknown.

**Incident 4:**

Pregnant woman forced to turn a certain number of "tricks" each day before her pimp would give her food. She usually worked about 12 hours before this was achieved.

**Vulnerabilities:** Pregnancy

**Means of Control:** Withholding food.

**Incident 5:**

Pimp would not give a woman her coat during winter until she made a certain amount of money.

**Vulnerabilities:** Unknown.

**Means of Control:** Withholding basic needs.

**Incident 6:**

Woman forced to strip four days a week, prostitute two days a week. If she did this her pimp/boyfriend would allow her to see her son for one day.

**Vulnerabilities:** Unknown.

**Means of Control:** Threats to her life. Threats of never being able to see her son.

**Incident 7:**

One prostitute was drugged and videotaped. There was physical violence involved in the sexual tape and the prostitute suspected they were making a "snuff" film. She managed to escape.

**Vulnerabilities:** Unknown.

**Means of Control:** Physical violence, drugs.

**Incident 8:**

Multiple prostitutes in the area have been videotaped while performing sex acts with clients without their consent.

**Vulnerabilities:** Unknown.

**Means of Control:** Fraud.

**Incident 9:**

Two groups of women are circulated by their pimps between Spokane, Seattle, Portland, Salt Lake City and Phoenix.

**Vulnerabilities:** Unknown.

**Means of Control:** Unknown.

**Incident 10**

Female left home when 12-years old because of sexual abuse by stepfather. She survived by working as a prostitute. When she was 20-years old, she decided to get out but her pimp hired someone to assault her. Her skull was cracked as a result of the assault. After the assault, she returned to her pimp.

**Vulnerabilities:** Pregnancy, teen runaway

**Means of Control:** Physical abuse.

**II. Minors in Prostitution and sex industry:**

Service agencies indicated they had “frequently” encountered individuals who met the criteria for human trafficking, and that most of these were children. According to the agencies interviewed, Spokane has a significant teen prostitution problem and “*is considered an entry area for child prostitutes. They are initiated here and then moved into larger metro areas.*” **Goodwill Industries**

These agencies frequently came into contact with minors forced to have sex in exchange for basic necessities, and oftentimes these sexual encounters were organized by adults.

*“Boys and girls are pimped out. We see it on a daily basis. They’re just trying to get their needs met. ‘Survival Sex’ is very common in the adolescent population.”* **Crosswalk**

Some social structures unique to homeless populations provide the context for this type of exploitation in certain instances.

*“At Crosswalk they create street families. Different combinations of adults and kids and the adults will pimp out the kids. It is also common for young men who run away to get hooked up with an adult who is pimping him out. The adult is getting “dates” for him.* **Hope House**

*The vulnerability of their situation makes them targets for sexual predators.*

*“Many runaways get involved with the pedophile community. After being violated, they try to make it okay by doing it more”. YWCA-Alternatives to Domestic Violence. (Employee who previously worked with Crosswalk)*

**Incident 1:**

Female minor whose parents forced her to have sex with adults in exchange for drugs.

**Vulnerabilities:** Minor.

**Means of Control:** Abuse of parental authority.

**Incident 2:**

Fifteen-year old female teenage runaway. She became involved in prostitution on her own, but later became involved with a pimp.

**Vulnerabilities:** Minor, drug addict, homeless.

**Means of Control:** Physical force and violence, drugs.

**Incident 3:**

Woman sold four-year old son to a pedophile for unknown reasons.

**Vulnerabilities:** Minor, parental abandonment.

**Means of Control:** Abuse of adult authority.

**Incident 4:**

Minor used in sexually-oriented video designed for Internet distribution.

**Vulnerabilities:** Minor.

**Means of Control:** Manipulation and coercion, abuse of adult authority.

**Incident 5:**

Adult arranged minor to have sex with an older adult.

**Vulnerabilities:** Minor.

**Means of Control:** Abuse of adult authority.

**Incident 6:**

Young boy sold by his father to a “chicken farm” (brothel specializing in young boys).

**Vulnerabilities:** Minor.

**Means of Control:** Abuse of adult authority.

**IV. “Mail Order Brides”**

The Institute of Extended Learning estimates that up to 10 “mail order brides” seek language services through their English as a Second Language Program each year. About six of the “mail order brides” that have entered their program in the past three years had some of the indicators of human trafficking. Of the “mail order” brides who come into the area, there are some common threads. They usually are in some manner significantly “compromised” in the context of the culture of their country of origin; for instance, many are divorced with children. There is generally a large age difference of 20-30 years or more between the woman and the man. It is common that they do not speak the same language. *(ESL Program-Institute for Extended Learning)*

Based on the information provided, there were few commonalities between the males in these arrangements. The males included farmers, doctors, businessmen and both retired and active military personnel. There is at least one man in our region who allegedly has had five or six “mail order brides.” Service providers from multiple agencies have sited the area north of Spokane as having a higher representation of this type of marital situation than other areas. Service providers believe that isolation in rural areas enhances the ability of the husband to control and abuse the victim. The Family Crisis Center in Newport, Washington has assisted three “mail order brides” in the past two years, and six in the past five.

*“We see them pretty often. These are usually adult women, usually with a teenager. They’re divorced and disowned by their family. They experience a lot of shame. The women are from all over the world—Peru, China, Russia. Many are making an adult decision for the benefit of their children, but it often doesn’t turn out well for them. For many it begins with going through a broker, via the Internet. Broker gets money. The man comes over with money and gifts for the family.”* **ESL Program – Institute for Extended Learning**

*“I’ve seen three-four in the last couple of years. There’s always a big age difference - at least 10-15 years and up to 40 years difference. As soon as they come over their documents are taken away they can’t get any benefits or services. There are threats of sending them home.”* **YWCA, Alternatives to Domestic Violence**

*“I know of “mail order brides” who are not allowed outside of their home. They are Slavic with American husbands. The husbands picked them out of the Internet and paid to have them come here. They cook and clean and go to language school. There is at least 20 years age difference. The life they had in Russia was not that great. They have shelter and food. If she calls home, she can only speak in English but her family doesn’t speak English.”* **LCSNW, SAFeT Response center- Advocacy and Russian community liaison**

*“I have taken care of some clients brought here and married in their country. They talk about how their husband has changed and begins beating them after they are here. ‘When we’re dating everything was nice and beautiful, now I have to clean all day and he can jump on me whenever he wants.’ In Latin America we don’t believe in justice system and police; when we encounter any kind of problems we go to church, family or very close friends so maybe they can help them out.”* **LCSNW, SAFeT Response Center- Advocate and Hispanic community liaison**

#### **Incident 1:**

One woman came as a “mail-order bride.” The two parties met on-line. Both were well-educated. It developed into a DV situation:

**Vulnerabilities:** Legal status dependent on visa related to relationship with partner.

**Means of Control:** Physical abuse, threats of deportation, fraud prior to immigration (American way of life) and coercion.

**Incident 2:**

Ukrainian woman with adolescent daughter. She met man on the Internet. After they married, she and her daughter were forced into domestic servitude in his rural hospitality business.

**Vulnerabilities:** Non-English speaking, legal status dependent on visa related to relationship with partner, isolation, fraud (lifestyle promised different than delivered).

**Means of Control:** Isolation, threat of deportation.

**Incident 3:**

“Mail order bride” with a child. Husband would not allow her to leave the house.

**Vulnerabilities:** Non-English speaking, legal status dependent on visa related to relationship with partner, isolation.

**Means of Control:** Isolation, fear of abuse.

**Incident 4:**

Three women in rural Northeast Washington came as “mail order brides” and were used as sex slaves.

**Vulnerabilities:** Legal status dependent on visa related to relationship with partner, isolation.

**Means of Control:** Isolation, withholding documents

**Incident 5:**

Russian woman who had documents held by her husband.

**Vulnerabilities:** Limited English, legal status dependent on visa related to relationship with partner.

**Means of Control:** Withholding documents.

**Incident 6:**

Columbian woman whose husband kept all her documents and threatened to have her sent back to country of origin.

**Vulnerabilities:** Legal status dependent on visa related to relationship with partner.

**Means of Control:** Withholding documents, threats of deportation.

**Incident 7:**

Russian woman used as sex slave whose husband threatened to have her deported.

**Vulnerabilities:** Rural isolation, legal status dependent on visa related to relationship with partner.

**Means of Control:** Threats of deportation.

**Incident 8:**

Mexican woman with a teenage son, suspected DV. Husband kept her documents.

**Vulnerabilities:** Legal status dependent on relationship with partner.

**Means of Control:** Withholding documents, possible physical and emotional abuse.

**Incident 9:**

Woman (country of origin unknown) married to ex-law enforcement officer. She had to obey husband in order to get son into the United States. Husband used guns to intimate victim.

**Vulnerabilities:** Legal status dependent on relationship with partner.

**Means of Control:** Manipulation by denying access to child, intimidation with weapons.

**Incident 10:**

Philippine woman with two-year old daughter, married to an ex-military man. They were married in the Philippines, but he brought her back to a small rural community in Eastern Washington. He locked her in the home when he left town for work, refused to let her speak in native language, intimidated her with multiple weapons.

**Vulnerabilities:** Legal status dependent on relationship with partner, limited English language ability, isolation.

**Means of Control:** Imprisonment, intimidation with weapons.

**Incident 11:**

Philippine woman married to an American man who took her to a rural area in Idaho and locked her in the house. DV was involved. The situation lasted for eight months.

**Vulnerabilities:** Legal status dependent on relationship with partner.

**Means of Control:** Imprisonment, isolation, possible physical and emotional abuse.

**Incident 12:**

Philippine woman married to an American man who took her to a small community in South-eastern Washington. He was physically abusive to her.

**Vulnerabilities:** Legal status dependent on relationship with partner

**Means of Control:** Isolation, physical abuse

**V. Labor Exploitation**

Information obtained from the survey indicates that labor exploitation occurs in both child and adult population in the Spokane region, especially with individuals with heightened vulnerability because they either do not have a stable home environment or because they are experiencing homelessness. The greatest prevalence, however, appeared to be in adult and teen homeless populations. Most of the information involved individuals who are believed to be U.S. citizens. There were a few situations involving both legal immigrants and undocumented laborers from other countries.

*“Foreign work visas almost always create a trafficking situation. They are promised 2-3 years of farm work. But it’s not given to them. Then they were in debt (because of fees and transportation costs) paid to get and unable to repay it. Some employers “held on” to documents (visas, passports) for their employees.” Center for Justice*

**Situation 1:**

Approximately 10-12 men. They had paid for work visas and were employed in an Eastern Washington orchard. The workers were not paid for their services.

**Vulnerabilities:** Possible limited English, lack of understanding of US laws.

**Method of Control:** Unknown.

**Situation 2:**

Multiple homeless women have been hired for babysitting or to do housework under the table but end up not being compensated.

**Vulnerabilities:** Homelessness, possible mental health issues, and drug addiction.

**Method of Control:** Unknown.

**Situation 3:**

Multiple Hispanic people in the Tri-cities and Yakima are working in the fields and living in substandard housing. They are working for room and board.

**Vulnerabilities:** Questionable legal status, limited English language ability.

**Method of Control:** Unknown.

**Situation 4:**

People on work release who are threatened with having to go back to jail when attempting to apply for LNI.

**Vulnerabilities:** At risk of imprisonment.

**Method of Control:** Threats of imprisonment.

**Situation 5:**

There is a known large rural family where children are kept in servitude.

**Vulnerabilities:** Minor, isolation.

**Method of Control:** Withholding food.

**Situation 6:**

Organizations who sell magazines around the nation have a reputation for not paying their youth workers (commonly runaways) and abandoning them in random cities. Some of these young people have ended up in Spokane. The organizers have attempted to recruit from the runaway population locally.

**Vulnerabilities:** Minors, homeless youth and runaways.

**Method of Control:** Fraud.

**Situation 7:**

Homeless youth have been employed to sell street vendor food, working 12-13 hours a day and getting paid in cigarettes and beer.

**Vulnerabilities:** Minors, Homeless youth and runaways.

**Method of Control:** Unknown

**Situation 8:**

Members of the homeless population have been forced to panhandle.

**Vulnerabilities:** Homelessness.

**Method of Control:** Unknown.

**Situation 9:**

Two or three individuals doing agricultural work in North Idaho and receiving only housing, no food or money.

**Vulnerabilities:** Questionable legal status, non-English speaking.

**Method of Control:** Unknown.

**Situation 10:**

Homeless families working in hotel as cleaning staff. Originally hired based on a set salary, but then switched to a per unit rate.

**Vulnerabilities:** Homelessness.

**Method of Control:** Possible fraud.

**Situation 11:**

Male adult was working under the table. Employee provided drugs and told the person that if he quit he'd turn him in to authorities for the drug use.

**Vulnerabilities:** Drug use and possible homelessness.

**Method of Control:** Threats, drug addiction.

**Situation 12:**

Undocumented workers from a South American country were working as janitorial staff through a subcontractor from Florida. They worked for three large corporations with outlets in the Spokane community. Subcontractors arranged for them to have education visas, but they were not attending, nor could afford to attend, area universities or colleges. Two of these corporations were chain department stores and one was a national hotel. The workers were limited in their movements and were not paid.

**Vulnerabilities:** Questionable legal status, limited English language ability, fraud.

**Method of Control:** Unknown.

**Situation 13:**

Children in abusive homes who must do all the housework and are virtual slaves within their family structure.

**Vulnerabilities:** Minors.

**Method of Control:** Possibly physical or emotional abuse, abuse of parental authority.

**Situation 14:**

Children in Slavic community who are forced to deliver newspapers early in the morning and are unable to complete their school work because of lack of sleep and time. Children are not allowed to keep the money, or are given only a small portion of their earnings.

**Vulnerabilities:** Minors.

**Method of Control:** Abuse of parental authority.

**VI. Other Trafficking Situations**

The following situations all have clear indicators of trafficking, i.e., holding a person against their will; use of force; fraud; and/or use of coercion to obtain labor or sex.

Primarily, these are trafficking acts involving one or a few perpetrators and one or two individual victims. They are put together in this section because they all have somewhat unique elements, and they do not fit clearly into any of the trafficking trends categories above. Some victims are drug addicts, others are undocumented illegals, some are homeless and some we know little about except that they were exploited by another human being to that person's benefit. They provide provocative illustrations of the range of trafficking possibilities present in our region.

**Situation 1:**

Undocumented Mexican girl, 14 years old who was sold by her parents in Mexico to a Mexican man. The man procured a fake birth certificate so he could legally marry her in Mexico. This man smuggled her to North Central Washington where he kept her as a sex slave between one and two years. Perpetrator was also undocumented.

**Vulnerabilities:** Minor, limited English, questionable legal status.

**Method of Control:** Isolation, sexual abuse.

**Situation 2.**

An adult woman, an active drug addict, was released from jail. Her family coerced her to provide them with drugs. They held her against her will until she got drugs for them. They forced her to drink alcohol and then threatened to turn her in. She was also trying to obtain custody of her kids.

**Vulnerabilities:** Criminal history, drug addiction.

**Method of Control:** Drugs, threats of incarceration.

**Situation 3.**

A male and female adult couple living in drug house. The male was suffering from cancer. The other residents raped the woman and kept the man from getting medical care. They threatened that if the woman attempted to get help, they would come after her and him.

**Vulnerabilities:** Drug addiction, medical condition.

**Method of Control:** Withholding medical care, possibly drugs, threats of harm.

**Situation 4:**

A woman was locked in a hotel storage closet by a man, possibly a boyfriend. The man demanded sex and sometimes gave her drugs.

**Vulnerabilities:** Unknown.

**Method Control:** Imprisonment, drugs.

**Situation 5:**

A homeless woman held in a boarded up hole by a homeless man who was sexually abusing her.

**Vulnerabilities:** Homelessness.

**Method of Control:** Imprisonment.

**Situation 6:**

Sixteen-year old pregnant female was kept in trailer in rural area by her 27-year old boyfriend. He denied her medical care and then threatened to take her kids away because she didn't take care of them.

**Vulnerabilities:** Minor, pregnancy.

**Method of Control:** Isolation, threats, denial of medical care.

**Situation 7:**

Man forced his wife to sell drugs. He lit her on fire on one occasion, knocked her teeth out on another. Perpetrator followed her around constantly.

**Vulnerabilities:** Unknown.

**Method of Control:** Physical assaults and surveillance.

**Situation 8:**

Chinese woman forced to be domestic servant to daughter-in-law, with the victim's Chinese husband's cooperation. Victim had a relationship with her Chinese husband while still in China and came to U.S. upon his request after his initial arrival. Victim held in basement and was unable to leave. Victim's adolescent daughter was not allowed to attend school. Daughter-in-law took the money the victim brought with her from China.

**Vulnerabilities:** Questionable legal status, non-English speaking.

**Method of Control:** Imprisonment, fraud.

**Situation 9:**

Refugee family which came from Burma to Spokane was offered private employment in Montana. They were given substandard housing. Employer withheld food and housing utilities. The employee wanted them to collect state subsidies while being paid "under-the-table."

**Vulnerabilities:** Possible limited English, limited knowledge of U.S. laws.

**Method of Control:** Isolation, withholding basic needs, manipulation

**SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the many conversations that occurred over the course of this survey process, it is clear that human trafficking is a real concern in the Inland Northwest. Trafficking victims work on our streets, are often held captive in residents' homes and hotels, and travel over our highways to other destinations where they will experience further exploitation and abuse.

This is a new issue for our region, and we are only beginning to assess the nature and extent of the problem. As our community becomes more adept at recognizing the indicators and service agencies succeed in documenting their encounters, we may discover that the trafficking situation in this region is even greater than we suspect. It is important that as a responsible community we are able to cope with the complexity of needs each trafficking victim is likely to require.

Because of the rise of gang activity in the Spokane region, and especially since many gang-operated drug houses are associated with prostitution (*Spokane Regional Health Needle Exchange Interview*), this may be an area to pay increased attention in the future. It is possible that extreme fear and intimidation are keeping victims from seeking services in our region, and that more trafficking is occurring in our community in relationship to other gang activity than we suspect.

Considering the findings of this survey, as well as the recommendations of the service providers who participated in this survey, the following “next steps” are recommended:

- I. Continue the work of the Inland Northwest Task Force on Human Trafficking in expanding its community awareness campaign and promoting the coordination of community services.
- II. Develop resources specific for the populations most vulnerable, including homeless, teen and immigrant populations as well as individuals and groups working in prostitution. Currently, posters and brochures primarily target service providers and the greater community.
- III. Provide training to law enforcement, especially those working in Domestic Violence, Prostitution, and Gang Units so they can better discern victims from criminals and know the appropriate response.
- IV. Provide training in immigrant communities, with a special emphasis on outreach to the faith communities that serve immigrant populations.
- V. Create screening tools for service providers, shelter staff, medical personnel and law enforcement.
- VI. Add trafficking indicators on intake forms utilized by service providers so that we can better calculate the number of victims in this area.
- VII. Create a needs assessment to determine what short and long-term services must be developed in our community to meet the psychological, social, medical, employment, legal and housing needs of trafficking victims.

Special thanks to all the individuals and agencies that participated in this survey and shared their expertise, experience and time. A very special thanks to John Goldman, Director of the Western Regional Institute for Community Oriented Public Safety at Washington State University Spokane whose leadership guided the Task Force Development and made this survey possible.

## **Appendix i.**

The following questions framed the conversations conducted with the interviewees:

*For Professions- social workers, law enforcement, medical:*

- 1. Have you encountered anyone who met the criteria for human trafficking such as people forced to have sex against their will to the benefit of another? For example, given money, drugs, or favors in exchange for sex with this person?*
- 2. Do you know of anyone who was forced to work in pornographic films, strip clubs, massage parlors or other sexually oriented businesses against their will?*
- 3. Have you encountered pimps who have used force, fraud or coercion to control their prostitutes?*
- 4. Have you encountered prostitutes who wanted to leave prostitution but were not allowed to?*
- 5. Do you know of any minors (under the age of 18) who have been involved in the sex industry? Were they independent in their activities or was it organized through an adult?*
- 6. Have you encountered people with untreated medical conditions or who seemed malnourished? Was someone keeping them from getting the medical care they needed?*
- 7. Have you encountered individuals who were paid below minimum wage for their work or had part or all of their pay withheld?*
- 8. Do you know of any children who have been forced to work beyond what you would consider within the normal framework in a family?*
- 9. Have you encountered individuals who were not able to leave their work because of fear, debt, drugs, intimidation? For example, someone cannot quit because they owe their boss money?*
- 10. Do you know of anyone who could not travel because someone took their documents, such as ID, visas or passport?*
- 11. Have you known of someone from another country who was forced to live with, marry or work for another person because they were afraid if they didn't they would be sent back to their country of origin; or that someone else (such as a friend or family member) would be harmed if they didn't comply? Or was unable to leave because of threats of violence or threats of harm of any kind?*

12. *Have you visited homes that had devices that looked like they were meant to keep people from leaving, such as locks on the outside of windows?*
13. *Have you visited homes where there was something out of the ordinary or suspicious about the manner the house was organized? For example, many woman living in the house; rooms created by hanging blankets between beds; no personal items associated with the people living there, such as photos or decorations.*

**Appendix ii.**

**List of Agencies which participated in the survey**

**AHANA Business and Professional Association**

823 W. 7<sup>th</sup> Ave  
Suite 102  
Spokane, WA 99201  
509-838-1881

**American Indian Community Center**

905 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave  
509-535-0886

**Catholic Charities of Spokane, Refugee and Immigration Services**

820 N. Summit Blvd. #100  
509-455-6190

**CHAS Medical Clinics**

509-444-8200

**Center for Justice**

35 West Main Suite 300  
Spokane, WA 99201  
509-835-5211

**Crosswalk**

525 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave  
Spokane, WA 99201  
509-838-6596

**Easter Seals**

SPOC ( Support for Parents Overcoming Challenges)  
509-482-7762

**English as a Second Language**

2310 N. Monroe  
Spokane, WA 99205  
509-533-4612

**Family Crises Network**

Newport, WA  
509-477-5483

**Goodwill Industries of the Inland Northwest**

130 E. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave.  
Spokane, WA 99202  
509-344-0163

**Hope House**

111 W. 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave.  
Spokane, WA 99201  
509-455-2886

**House of Charity**

32 West Pacific  
Spokane, WA 99210  
509-624-7821

**Interfaith Hospitality Network of Spokane**

509-747-5487

**Lutheran Communities Services Northwest**

210 W. Sprague Ave.  
Suite 1000  
Spokane, WA 99201  
509-747-8224

**New Hope Resource Center**

4211 E. Colbert Road  
Spokane, WA 99005  
509-467-2900

**Odyssey Youth Center**

1314 S. Grand Blvd  
Spokane, WA  
509-325-3637

**Salvation Army Family Emergency (SAFE Center)**

1403 W. Broadway  
Spokane, WA 99201

**Spokane A.R.M.S (Abuse Recovery Ministry and Services)**

509-484-0600

**Spokane Mental Health**

107 S. Division  
Spokane, WA 99202  
509-838-4651

**SNAP**

2116 E. 1<sup>st</sup> Ave.  
Spokane, WA 99202  
609-232-1380

**Spokane Regional Health District**

Environmental Health  
1101 W. College  
Spokane, WA  
509-323-1500

**Spokane Regional Health District**

Needle Exchange

**YWCA Domestic Violence Program**

509-326-1190

**Women's Hearth**

920 W. 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave.  
Spokane, WA 99201  
509-455-4249

**World Relief**

1522 N. Washington #204  
Spokane, WA 99201