



International Labour Office

SURVEY OF CHILD TRAFFICKING IN ASEWELE, ONDO STATE NIGERIA

Research Report

International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC)



LUTRENA Project

Combating the Trafficking
of Children for Labour
Exploitation in West
and Central Africa

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IN ASEWELE, ONDO STATE
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NIGERIA*

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FOREWORD

The Survey of Child Trafficking in Asewele Community, of Ondo State, Nigeria, is one of the researches supported by the International Labour Organisation's-International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO/IPEC) under the Sub-Regional project on Combating Trafficking of Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa (LUTRENA).

Nigeria is a major source, destination and transit country for child trafficking in the West African sub-region. It is estimated that fifteen (15) million children are engaged in child labour in Nigeria with 40% of them at the risk of being trafficked both internally and externally for various purposes; including domestic labour, prostitution, pornography, armed conflict, farm work and even rituals.

Given the above scenario, the need to investigate the root causes and trafficking trends in the country cannot be over emphasised. This survey which was conducted by an experienced child care professional is by no means extensive and has obvious limitations. However, it has in many respects provided valuable information and insights to the pattern/trends as well as the purposes for which children are trafficked in this community of Nigeria.

The findings of the survey has no doubt contributed to the knowledge base on this contemporary subject and will prove useful to different categories of development workers and other professionals in the quest to initiate intervention policies, programmes and activities aimed at combating and eliminating child trafficking in Nigeria and the West African Sub-region.



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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

FGD	Focus Group Discussions
ILO	International Labour Organization, International Labour Office
IPEC	International Programme ion the Elimination of Child Labour
LUTRENA	French acronym for the ILO/IPEC project “Combating the Trafficking of Children for Labour Exploitation in West and Central Africa in French: «Projet sous-régional de lutte contre le trafic des enfants à des fins d’exploitation de leur travail en Afrique de l’Ouest et du Centre»
N	Naira
STD	Sexually Transmissible Disease
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
USDOL	United States Department of Labour
WFCL	Worst Forms of Child Labour
WOTCLEF	Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation (Nigeria)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The report describes the child trafficking phenomenon in Asewele, a transit labour camp that recruits children from Yakurr local government of Cross River State for labour activities in the Western states of Nigeria.

A hundred children who were newly recruited in January 2003 and ninety-seven children who were returning home in December 2003 after one-year labour engagement in the Western states were interviewed at Asewele.

Key informants interviews with selected community leaders, Focus Group Discussions with men, women and youths of Asewele as well as in-depth interviews of traffickers were also conducted. In general, it was found that the children arrive Asewele on Jan 10th of every year and commence their return journey to Cross River State anytime from 10th to 18th December of every year.

Our interviews with the new recruits show that a majority (76%) of the children were males. The youngest child was a 12-year-old girl but most of the others were in the 15 to 18-age category. Only a third of the children had completed primary school, eight were secondary school dropouts and fourteen had no formal education. All of them were from rural locations and from large sized, economically disadvantaged families. All had come to Asewele to get employment to make money to further their education, buy vocational tools or to assist parents. The recruitment of the children in the sending community is through local recruitment agents who are well known in the community and to whom parents turn for assistance in sourcing out-of town employment for their wards.

Our interviews with returning children reveal that the two predominant labour activities they engaged in during the year were as farm hands and as domestic servants. Their employers come from all segments of society. The domestics were placed in homes of traders, doctors, engineers, hoteliers, retired civil servants and university professors. Children who worked as farm assistants experienced less alienation from their work environment than children who worked as domestics. The former also earned higher wages than the latter. The range of wages for domestics was ₦ 20,000 to ₦ 35,000 whereas the range for the farm hands was ₦ 35,000 to ₦ 40,000 per annum.

The most often reported deleterious effect of the labour activities on the children was the sense of aloneness in their work places. Some however reported experiencing constant headaches and fevers, and some reported feeling incarcerated.

The Asewele community's reaction to the trafficking phenomenon is ambivalent. They decry the child trafficking but seem to benefit from some of its activities.

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The traffickers perceive the business as their own contribution to alleviating the youth unemployment and poverty in the sending communities

The estimated number of children who come through Asewele yearly is about 350 and the estimated net annual income of the traffickers from the agents' fees, commissions, levies and other spurious charges is ₦ 2,750,000.

The report concludes by highlighting four areas in which government policies and programmes should be directed in order to address the foundational problems, which has made child trafficking a multi-million Naira business.

INTRODUCTION

By the last decade of the last century, there has developed global consensus that child trafficking and all the slavery-like practices associated with it, represents one of the worst forms of child labour that nation states must take immediate measures to combat. Since that time, various efforts have been made by the ILO and other agencies to have better understanding of the phenomenon so that appropriate policy and programme responses to it can be developed. Among some of the insights generated include the fact that in most countries, trafficking of children occurs internally and externally. It has also been revealed that children may become victims of trafficking by force, persuasion, coercion, trickery, or through their own initiatives and ignorance about what awaits them at the destinations.

The exploitation of trafficked children may involve labour or commercial sexual exploitation. In addition the exploitation may be progressive in nature. It has also been shown that along the road from acquisition of the child to exploitation, there may be numerous persons that are directly or indirectly involved in the various transactions. Causative factors identified as implicated in the incidence of child trafficking include demand for cheap, malleable labour, poverty, ignorance, lack of education facilities, and cultural attitudes. The consequences of child trafficking are said to be many and deleterious. Child trafficking deprives children of their rights to education, and damages their physical and mental health. If trapped in commercial sexual exploitation, a child may suffer physical and emotional abuse and a high risk of exposure to STDs and HIV/AIDS.

In Nigeria specifically, an ILO supported study of child trafficking has confirmed the existence of internal and external child trafficking. It has also shown that children, as young as 8 year old, are being trafficked. It has also revealed that a principal sending area in the country are the South-South and Southeast geographical zones, which provide close to 80% of all children, trafficked internally or externally. The externally trafficked children end up in various countries of West and Central Africa, like Benin Republic, Togo, Cameroon and Gabon. The internally trafficked children are brought first to “labour transit camps” in various locations in the Southwestern part of the country where they are fanned out to various employers. This study focuses on one such transit camp, Asewele, in Ondo State of the South West.

1 DESCRIPTION OF THE SURVEY SITE

The research for this report was conducted in Asewele between January and December 2003. Asewele is a community in Odigbo Local Government Area of Ondo State consisting of two villages – Asewele Oja and Asewele Korede.

With a population of about 9,000 people, Asewele is located about 35 kilometres South-West of Ondo. Although Asewele has a Baale who is deceased, the village is under Lasia village, which is the seat of the king that controls the two Aseweles, Omifon and Agogbooro.

Asewele is a rural farming community. As is typical of most rural communities in Nigeria, Asewele has poor infrastructural facilities. There is no pipe borne water. The only UNICEF pump, which serves the entire community, becomes inadequate in the dry season. According to the women of the community, the women and children of the community to fetch water spend an appreciable length of time. The electricity supply is sporadic and many of the homes situated away from the main road are unconnected to electricity.

There is one primary school, which serves the community and a secondary school, which serves both Asewele and Ajue. Both of these institutions were in a state of disrepair at the time of the study. The roofs were falling off and some of the walls had collapsed. The teachers attached to the school come infrequently and the students, even less so. There is no formal market physical structure in Asewele. This is a big concern particularly to the women who complain of inability to display their products during rainy season.

One major advantage that Asewele seems to enjoy is its location on the very busy Ondo-Ore road. It is therefore easy for people in the community to travel out to other locations in and out of the state. However, according to the community members, this advantageous position has its dark sides. The verge of the main road has been eroded and the main road's width has decreased appreciably, posing immense danger to pedestrians who have to walk by the main road.

The original, indigenous owners of Asewele Korede community are the Ondos whose principal settlement is Ondo town. Historically Asewele was a homestead where Ondo farmers built temporary structures where they could stay overnight during active planting and harvesting periods. However beginning in 1964, there was a steady stream of migrants in search of farmland who began to settle in Asewele and who, though consider themselves strangers in the place, yet make up close to 99% of the towns population and are the predominant economic force of the town. They dominate the cultivation of cocoa, palm trees and other commercial agricultural products. These "strangers" are from Kwara, Osun and Ekiti States and speak Yoruba dialects quite different from the dialects of their landlords, the Ondos.

Politically, the Baale (chief) of Asewele is selected from among this group of strangers. The current Baale is Mr. Amos Akanbi from Kwara State. He receives his instrument of office from the Alara of Igunshin land, Prince Adejayan. The Baale is selected by the non-indigenes but he rules at the pleasure of the Olugushin an Oba of Ondo kingdom.

In addition to this group of strangers another group of strangers reside in Asewele. These are the people from Cross River State who engage principally in the business of bringing labourers from their state yearly to Asewele. According to information gathered in the course of this study the trade in human trafficking for labour is not limited to Asewele alone. There are seventeen similar camps that are operated under the umbrella of an association called “Employers Investment (Holdings) of Western Region (Annexe II). However, what is unique about Asewele is that the entire business of trafficking in the region originated there. The first entrepreneur in human trafficking started from Asewele and gradually recruited others into the business. He later left Asewele for Akure where he established another labour camp. Asewele remains however, the original camp and the most well known of other camps. Each camp goes to specific areas of Cross River State to draw its supply of labour. The Asewele camp, (also known as Babangida camp) draws its own supply from Ekorin in Yakurr Local Government of Cross Rivers State.

There is also a small group of dwellers from Ogoja who are in the community with their families and whose children attend the local schools.

2 THE PROBLEM

As yet, there are no reliable estimates of the number of child labourers in Nigeria. The current estimate of 12 million gives no information about the types / categories subsumed under that general category. With respect to child trafficking, there is actually no estimate of the number of children being trafficked annually. Furthermore, there is as yet no empirical study of specific cases of communities engaged in specific aspect of the child trafficking process in the country. This study therefore fills the gap by studying Asewele, one of the transit points in the child trafficking chain in the country.

3 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the study is to describe accurately the child trafficking phenomenon in Asewele. Specifically, the study aims at:

1. Analysing interrelatedness between the variety of factors culminating in the trafficking of children to Asewele;
2. Describe the relationship between the child’s characteristics (age, gender, health status, educational level and parents socio-economic background) and the types of experiences they are subjected to in the trafficking process;
3. Describe the perceptions of child trafficking in the receiving community and how the community economy depends, or benefits from child trafficking.
4. Provide estimates of the total number of children who come through the Asewele transit point per year.

5. Provide an estimate of the financial returns to the “managers” of the Asewele transit camp.
6. Provide information on the variety of labour activities that trafficked children engage in and the consequences of these on their psychosocial, physical, nutritional and spiritual life.
7. Examine the role of municipal and state authorities in the phenomenon of child trafficking.

4 JUSTIFICATION FOR THE RESEARCH

An earlier study by ILO on child trafficking in Nigeria provided a “bird’s eye view” of the situation of child trafficking in Nigeria. This study supplements that effort by focusing on a specific community that is engaged in procuring and distributing the trafficked children. It is therefore a “grassroots level” research and will not only describe what goes on in Asewele but may be illustrative of patterns and characteristics to be found elsewhere in the country.

The study identifies the various actors involved, movement patterns of the children, the types of exploitative labour the children engage in, the perceived push factors in the sending communities and the consequences of the phenomenon on the children’s well-being. Identifying and analysing these variables provides insight for the design of preventive measures, detection and identification of children at points of departure, transit and arrival, support to children trapped in exploitative work, and post-trafficking rehabilitation efforts.

Finally, the study provides empirical information to State Governments in areas where the labour camps are situated on the incidence of child trafficking in the state so that government can taken appropriate measures to counter it.

CHAPTER 1

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND RESULTS ¹

A descriptive research design was employed for the study. Four principal data collection strategies were used. These were structured interviews of the children, in-depth interviews of key informants, Focus Group Discussions of groups in the community and secondary analyses of available data on the community. The principal target group for the research are children under age 18 years who have been trafficked to Asewele for labour purposes.

The principal data collection method was the interview of the individual child. The interviews were conducted using a standardized questionnaire (*see annexe I*). There were two waves of interviews. The first wave was conducted early in the year when the child was newly brought to Asewele. We categorized this wave as the interviews of “Recruits”. In addition to collecting information on the socio-demographic background of these recruits, the interviews focused on such issues as how, what and where they learnt about Asewele, who their agents were, and the processes involved in being trafficked. The total number of children interviewed during this first wave was 100. The second wave of interviews was conducted with children who had spent 9 months to one year as labourers and who were returned to Asewele preparatory to their trip back to their villages. We labelled these children, “Returnees”. Their interviews focused on where they worked, their working conditions, how much they were paid and the effect of the work on their sense of well being. A total of 97 such children were interviewed. However, in order to contextualize the Asewele phenomenon, a number of supplementary data were also collected through key informants interviews, Focus Group Discussions and analysis of available secondary data.

Given the illegal nature of the phenomenon to be studied it was essential that the people of Asewele assist the research team. This cooperation was arranged with the assistance of one Prince A who is an indigene of Ajue (village close to Asewele) and also a local government official in charge of community development. He is well known and trusted by the community. He introduced the research team to the chief of the place and facilitated the acceptance of the research team. It was therefore easy to conduct key informants interviews with selected members of the Asewele community. These interviews provided insights into the history, economic and political organization of life in Asewele. It also provided vital information about the history of child trafficking in Asewele. Also important was information collected about the perceptions of Asewele people on the issue of child trafficking.

A third data collection strategy used was Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) Three groups of FGDs were held with males, females and youths of Asewele. The FGDs focused on understanding how the community feels about the reputation of Asewele as a Trafficking station, what the community is benefiting from the trade and what it is losing by hosting the trafficking camp.

Finally Local Government Officials of the Local Government office closest to Asewele, were interviewed to find out their level of awareness of the human trafficking at Asewele.

1.1 PROFILE OF TRAFFICKED CHILDREN (NEW RECRUITS)

One hundred new recruits aged 12 to 18 years were interviewed shortly upon their arrival in Asewele (see Table I). Seventy-six (76) were males. Seventeen were aged 12 to 14, 43 were aged 15 to 17 and 40 were 18 years old. The youngest person interviewed was a 12 years-old female. With regard to educational attainment, fourteen of the children had no formal education and could neither read nor write. They spoke their local language and a limited version of Pidgin English. Forty-five (45) were primary school dropouts, while eight (8) were dropouts from secondary school. The rest, 33, had their primary school certificate. While majority (68) of the children are from Cross Rivers State, twenty-three are from Akwa Ibom, six from Abia and three from Imo State.

Obviously, most of the children came from villages and not the towns in Cross River State. This is deduced from the fact that close to 80% of the children said their parents were in the village. The children are also products of large sized families as most of them have six or more siblings. Furthermore, for most of the children the principal bread earner in their family, and also the person responsible for their education is the father. It is informative to know that 66% of the fathers are subsistent farmers. The totality of the picture that thus emerge from the constellation of all these factors-rural location of parents, large family size and predominance of farming as the economic sustenance of the family-point to the high probability that the recruits are coming from families which may be resource deficient, i.e. poor families.

The recruits came from 23 different villages in the four states and results show that farming (59%), trading (35%), and fishing (6%) are the economic activities in these villages. However these villages are not totally lacking in social amenities as majority of the children claimed to have primary schools, secondary schools and health centres in their villages. The two major amenities to be found in urban centres but missing in most of the villages are pipe borne water and electricity.

1.2 JOURNEY TO ASEWELE

All the children were quite clear and articulate about their reason for coming to Asewele. All said they were there to make money needed either to support their further education, to assist their parents or to start a trade for themselves. In 55% of the cases, it was a relative who arranged for the child to come to Asewele.

Usually the relative (mainly brothers and fathers) are familiar with someone from some other family who had gone on such expedition and whose family had greatly benefited from the experience. In other cases (43%) it was friends who have gone before who provide information and links with the recruitment agents in the community. Thus the primary mode of recruitment is by community-based middlemen, working through relatives and friends. The children, particularly, the first timers, also revealed that their parents are given some amount of money as a form of inducement or advance to release them. The money is also given in lieu of the assistance the child would have given to the parents were he/she in the village. The average sum that was given was N 2,000

Apparently, there is a collection point, (usually a motor park or petrol station at the outskirts of the town) for the assemblage of the labourers to be taken out of the village. Here the children converge on the appointed day. For some of the children, this assemblage point is not directly in their own village but in an adjoining village. In this type of situation it is the community-based recruitment agent who will escort the child to the collection point for his outbound journey to Asewele. This situation was applicable to 32 of the children interviewed. The journey between Cross River State and Asewele normally takes one day. This year, it took two days because of the need to move at night to avoid harassment by law enforcement officials. The journey is made by road in large cargo lorries, called 9/11.

1.3 EXPECTATIONS OF THE CHILD

Ninety-eight of the hundred children had not been to Asewele before this trip, although ten mentioned knowing someone who had. All previous information the children heard about Asewele was very positive. The children had been told they would make a take-home of at least ₦ 20,000 for their one year of labour and some had been informed of higher figures. This expectation to make money also tallies with the child's conception of what people/family at home expect to gain from the child's trip. Eighty-five of the children clearly stated that their parents and relations expect that they will bring money home and another fifteen that their trip will result in the improvement of the living standard of their families.

Even though all the children were aware that their current engagement would be for one year, the majority of them (85%) indicated they expected to stay for two years. This can only mean that they expect to come back. When we review the result of interviews conducted among returning children we see that the story has changed. Only 15 of the 97 children interviewed in December expressed the desire to come back.

1.4 RECRUITS' RECEPTION AT ASEWELE

When the children get to Asewele, they are welcomed to the camp and will be taken to their rooms. The children are accommodated in the camp for as long as there is no one to employ them. The camp is a bungalow with a front office and five rooms. There are out houses for bathing and a pit toilet. It is here that the over 200 children are quartered before being given out. Therefore there is pressure on the camp manager to dispose of them as quickly as possible so as to cut down on accommodation problems and other health problems, which may arise. There is no special provision for treating anybody with health problems.

The children jostle among themselves to be selected so they can get to their “final employer” and escape from the rowdy environment. It is not uncommon for the girls among them to offer themselves to locals for cheap sexual liaisons during this period. We were also informed that some of the camp staff sometimes take sexual advantage of the girls as well.

1.5 AGREEMENT FORM-TERMS OF EMPLOYMENT

Before a prospective employer takes a child/labourer from the Camp, he is made to sign an agreement (A copy of one such agreement form is annexed as Annex III). The agreement specifies the type of labour the child is being contracted to undertake. It further specifies that the job must not expose the child to immoral, illegal or other unsuitable services. The agreement also specifies the fees payable by the employer. For each employee, the employer is charged ₦ 6.000 to cover Transportation, ₦ 2.000 to cover Registration, and ₦ 500 as Agency's Commission. All these fees are paid before the child can depart the Camp. The child's remuneration is also decided and entered into the Agreement but this becomes payable on December 10 of the year when the child returns to Asewele, en route Cross River State. A recent innovation in the employment process is the requirement that the prospective employer must take a picture with the prospective employee. This is to be part of the Camp's record of who has which of their wards.

Table 1: Profile of Recruits ($N = 100$)

Sex	
Male	76
Females	24
Total	100
Age	
12 – 14 years	17
15 – 17	43
18 years	40
Total	100
Level of Education	
Primary School Drop Out	45
Primary School Certificate	33
Secondary School Drop Out	8
No formal Education	14
Total	100
Location of Mother	
Village	78
Town	22
Total	100
Location of Father	
Village	79
Town	21
Total	100
Mother's Occupation	
Farming	38
Trading	46
Housewife	16
Total	100
Father's Occupation	
Farming	66
Trading	23
Artisan	11
Total	100
Number of Brother	
1 – 2 brothers	22
3 – 4 brothers	63
more than 4 brothers	15
Total	100
Number of Sisters	
1 – 2 sisters	42
3 – 4 sisters	54
more than 4 sisters	4
Total	100

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Table 2: Facilities in the village of origin of recruits

Facility	Yes %	No %	Total
Primary School	93.9	6.1	100
Secondary School	98.0	2.0	100
Health Centre	100.0	-	100
Pipe Borne Water	38.8	61.2	100
Electricity	73.5	26.5	100

Table 3: Most common occupation in the village

Farming	59
Trading	35
Fishing	6
Total	100

Table 4: Journey to Asewele: Procedures - a) Who arranged for your trip to Asewele ?

	%
Relative	55
Friend	43
Others	2
Total	100

b) Were your parents given any Money ?

Yes	92
No	8
Total	100

c) How much was your parent given ?

₦1,000	2
₦1,500	6
₦2,000	82
₦2,500	2
Total	100

d) Is it the person that took you from the village who actually brought you to Asewele ?

Yes	68
No	32
Total	100

e) How many days did you spend on the road ?

1 day	20
2 days	80
Total	100

Table 5: Child's expectations for the year - a) How did you learn about coming to Asewele ?

Through a Friend	45
Through a Relative	55
Total	100

b) How much were you told you would make in a year ?

₦ 20,000	33
₦ 25,000	5
₦ 30,000	60
₦ 2,500	2
Total	100

c) Do you know anybody who has been to Asewele before ?

Yes	10
No	90
Total	100

d) Is this your first time of coming to Asewele ?

Yes	98
No	2
Total	100

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e) Now that you are here, what is your feeling about Asewele ?

Very Good	98.0
Good	2.0
Indifferent	-
Negative	-
Total	100

f) Expected length of stay

One Year	12
Two Years	86
Three Years	2
Total	100

g) What will you do with your money when you get back home ?

Schooling	61
Trading	33
Give to Parents	4
Others	2
Total	100

h) Who was responsible for your education ?

Father	93
Mother	5
Brother	2
Total	100

(i) Expectation of people at home

Expect me to bring money	85
Expect improvement in living standard of our family	15
Total	100

CHAPTER 2

THE RETURN JOURNEY A YEAR AFTER

THE RETURN JOURNEY A YEAR AFTER

The return journey to Asewele started on the 10th of December for most of the children. The arrangement/agreement is that their employers will return the labourers on that date or by the 15th of the month and the journey home will occur in batches with the first batch leaving on 12th and the last batch on 18th December. This particular year, not too many had returned by 10th December. Some of them came on their own but their employers or their representatives dropped most.

When a returnee arrived, the Camp manager looked through the files and picked out the Agreement Form signed in respect to that child to cross check on the amount to be paid by the employer. This amount was then paid directly to the Camp Manager who immediately took out his own commission and passed the rest to the child. The returning children are then quartered in the bungalow until there are enough of them to fill a large lorry popularly called nine-eleven and then they are shipped back to the village.

By this arrangement, the longest a child could possibly stay at Asewele on the return journey is three days. During this period, they are responsible for their own feeding. They are also responsible for the cost of their transportation back to the village. In general, the period of waiting is a joyful one for returnees as they have opportunity for re-union with old friends, share stories about their experiences, purchase materials and gifts with their newly acquired money.

2.1 INTERVIEWS OF RETURNING CHILDREN

The interviews of returnees were conducted in the week of December 10 to 17, 2003 at the Asewele labour camp, popularly called “office”. The interviews sought to learn about where they worked during the one year, what type of work they did, how much they were paid, what their experiences were like and whether they intend to come back in January for another round of employment.

Prefatory to the presentation and discussion of the result, it must be noted that by the time this second wave of interviews were to be conducted, the camp managers had become highly uncomfortable with the research team and employed various strategies to obstruct the interview of the under-age returnees. We were to learn later that some law enforcement agents had in the week preceding our interview, harassed or arrested one of the camp managers, thus leading to their high level of suspicion and antagonism to the research team. It was clear that the camp managers made concerted efforts to hide from the researchers some of the underage returnees. Despite the adverse research situation the research team was able to successfully interview 97 returnees aged 18 years or younger. Table 2 presents the results of some items on the interview schedule.

2.2 CHARACTERISTICS OF RETURNEES

Thirty-two (40.5%) of the returnees were females. Eighteen of them were below 15 years, 32 were between 15-17 years and 45 were already 18 years during the year of their employment. All returnees were indigenes of Yakuur Local Government and had been in employment for between 9 months and one year.

2.3 LOCATION OF EMPLOYMENT

Of the 97 children interviewed, 38 of them were employed in villages and other agricultural settlements. Some of the villages are Agooba, Lafemiwa, Agbala, Bagbe, Orotedo, Ajue, Laota, Igburowo, Dagio, Orisumbare, Temidayo, Madebiayo, Onipanu, Omotosho, Aperin, Oniparaga, and Layamesa among others. These are all villages in Ondo and Ekiti states. 18 of the children worked in Lagos, which is about 340 kilometres away from Asewele, four worked in Delta and Edo states, 9 in Akure and 28 in Ondo and Ore towns.

2.4 LABOUR ACTIVITIES OF TRAFFICKED CHILDREN

Rural Locations

All the 38 children who were located in rural areas were males and were in age categories of 15-18 years of age. They worked as farm hands to farmers in the cultivation of a variety of cash crops and arable crops common in the respective localities.

Lagos

The ten boys and eight girls who were taken to Lagos worked principally as domestic servants. In addition to working as domestic servants in the homes, most also assisted in other economic activities depending on the occupation of the employer. For example, one of the boys worked as houseboy in the morning and as bar attendant later in the day in a beer parlour owned by the employer. This beer parlour is operated in front of the residence of the employer. For the period of the nine months during which the boy worked there, he worked quite late every night and had his sleeping space in the beer parlour meaning he could not sleep until the last customer leaves the beer parlour. It was therefore not surprising that this boy complained that he often suffered from fever and headache throughout his sojourn at the place. Aside from this boy who worked as domestic servant and bar attendant, most of the other returnees who worked in Lagos appear to have worked for employers who were professionals in upper middle class of the society. Among them were engineers, medical doctors, nurses, school proprietors, principals, and schoolteachers.

Benin City and Warri

Similarly, the three girls and one boy who were placed in Edo and Delta States also served as domestic servants in homes of professional men and women.

Akure

Seven males and two females spent their one-year in Akure, the Ondo State capital. One of the boys (17 years old) worked as a Truck Boy at the Coca-Cola Depot and another (16 years old) as an assistant at a Bakery owned by a retired civil servant. Others worked as domestic servants in homes of elites.

Ore and Ondo, Ado-Ekiti and Owo

Twenty-nine of the children were in the above towns in Ondo and Ekiti States. Ten were males and the rest females. Three of the boys served as shop attendant, MTN canvasser and store-boy respectively. One of the houseboys served as Houseboy to a retired soldier. The rest of the boys served as domestic servants in homes where the head of households were professionals like doctors, professors, teachers, traders and other top government functionaries.

The situation of the girls who worked in Ore and Ondo was rather difficult to determine. Even though they all claimed they worked as domestic servants, the fact that their employers were also hotel owners and that Ore in particular is a junction town where long distance travellers stop to eat, drink and patronise commercial sex workers, it is highly likely that ten of the girls actually worked as bar attendants or as commercial sex workers. This suspicion was further strengthened by the fact that these girls received higher wages than was typical of those who engaged in ordinary domestic work.

Work hours

In general, those in domestic work worked all days of the week and until night-time most days except Sunday, which they described as a day whose workload is considerably reduced because of the time, spent attending church services. On the contrary, those who engaged in farm work seemed to work shorter hours, had some periods of rest when the sun is high, do not work at night and on Sundays.

2.5 DESCRIPTION OF WORK EXPERIENCE

The children, particularly the girls who went to Lagos seemed to have had the most positive experience of the whole group. This may be because all of them were visiting Lagos for the first time and may have been captivated by the cosmopolitan nature of the city. One of the girls remarked, “I saw big places like airport, I saw long bridges, I saw things that I have never seen before”.

Another possible reason may be that the professional men and women with whom most of them worked were familiar with most of the campaigns by NGOs in Lagos about the abuse of domestics and therefore treated them humanely. This view is supported by many endearing phrases that these girls used to describe their employers. One of the girls said “She treated me like her own child”. Another said, “She enrolled me for fashion designing so that I was going for training in the evening”.

The experience of the males were largely mixed. The boy who worked as Truck loader at the Coca-Cola Depot gave negative report of his work experience. He complained that he at first found the work very strenuous but had to continue with the job because he had no choice and that after a while his body adjusted to the work. The boy who worked with the retired soldier complained of feeling very house bound, as the retired soldier did not allow him to go out much. Other common complaints were small size of food portion compared to what they were accustomed to in the village and general loneliness and nostalgia for the village life. It is interesting to note the types of “gains” the children perceived making from the trip. A child who worked as a shop attendant felt he was now better at calculating money than he was before the job. Another boy who worked as Bakery Assistant said he knows so much about baking that he might set up a small local bakery upon returning to the village.

A 17 years old girl who worked in Lagos as a house girl has learnt some sewing and will be setting up a sewing outfit upon her return to the village. However, despite the generally positive picture the returnees painted of their experience only 15 (18.9%) of the children think they will come back to Asewele to go through the experience all over and even lower percentage will encourage their brothers and sisters to be trafficked to Asewele. These facts are possible indicators that the one-year assignment may have been more traumatic than the children admitted to us.

2.6 EFFECT OF WORK ON HEALTH

Of the 97 children, 14 reported that the work adversely affected their health. These fourteen complained of experiencing malaria, headaches and fever for a good part of the period they spent with their employers. On the type of treatment received, only two out of the fourteen were treated in hospitals. Ten were given off the counter medications by their employers and the two others said neighbours gave them money to buy medications.

2.7 WAGES

The yearly wage for the children ranged from ₦ 20,000 to ₦ 45,000. The children’s wage seem to have been based on their age, their prior experience and the type of work they engaged in. Males earned higher than females and those in farm work earned higher than those who engaged in domestic work.

This yearly wage is a one-time payment paid to the child when his/her employer returns him/her and pays the Camp Manager in accordance with the agreement reached in early January when the child was attached to the employer. Out of every payment made, regardless of the amount, the Camp manager deducts his own Agent's fees. This year in all the Camps, the agent's fees are ₦ 2.000 for transportation, ₦ 4.500 for commission and ₦ 450 for development Levy, totalling ₦ 7.000. In addition, each child was surcharged ₦ 2.000 to cover transportation back to the village. The balance of the wages after all these deductions is then handed over to the child.

2.8 PLANNED UTILISATION OF MONEY EARNED

The children were asked the question, "What do you intend to spend the money on?" From Table 6, we find that 68 (over 70%) of the children expressed the intention of spending the money on furthering their education, and another 9 for the purchase of tools for vocational trade. Others wish to use the money to start trading or to assist their mothers. The salience of the high desire of the returnees to apply the money earned to furthering their education is evident when we note the types of immediate purchase the children made in Asewele once they collected their wages. While some bought clothes, shoes, wristwatches and other consumer goods, about 39 (40%) of them resisted the temptation to purchase anything preferring to reserve all their money back to the village to be used for their education or to buy tools for vocational trade.

Table 6: Profile of Returnees (N = 100)

1. Sex	%
Males	67
Female	33
Total	100

2. Age	
15 years	18.6
15 – 17 years	18.6
18 years	46.4
Total	100

SURVEY OF CHILD TRAFFICKING IN ASEWELE, ONDO STATE NIGERIA

3. Where were you placed?	
Lagos	18.6
Benin and Warri	4.1
Ondo and Ore	28.9
Akure	9.3
Various villages in Ondo and Ekiti State	39.1
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>

4. Type of work done	
Farm work	39.2
Domestic work	53.6
Sales Boy	4 . 1
Shop Attendant	1 . 0
Bakery Assistant	1 . 0
Truck Loader	1 . 0
Hotel Girl	1 0 0
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>

5. Day of Work	
Monday to Saturday	81.5
Monday to Friday	1
Monday to Sunday	17
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>

6. Were you ill during the period of your employment?	%
Yes	14,4
No	85,6
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>

7. Annual Income	
₦ 20,000	3.1
₦ 22,000	1.0
₦ 25,000	7.2
₦ 27,000	9.3
₦ 30,000	46.4
₦ 35,000	11.3
₦ 40,000	21.7
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>

8. What do you intend to spend the money on?	
1. My Education	70.0
2. Help Parents	8.3
3. Start a Trade	7.2
4. Purchase tools for vocational trade	9.3
5. Buy things	5.2
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>

SURVEY OF CHILD TRAFFICKING IN ASEWELE, ONDO STATE NIGERIA

9. Will you come back to Asewele?	
Yes	15.5
No	84.5
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>

10. On getting home, will you encourage your brothers and sisters to come on a trip like this?	
Yes	7.2
No	92.8
<i>Total</i>	<i>100</i>

CHAPTER 3

ASEWELE'S COMMUNITY REACTIONS TO CHILD TRAFFICKING

ASEWELE'S COMMUNITY REACTIONS TO CHILD TRAFFICKING

Asewele's community's reaction to the child trafficking phenomenon was derived from our interviews with the key informants, including the Baale of the town, the religious leaders, market women and from insights gained in our Focus Group Discussions with youths, women and men in the community. This was supplemented with observations made during our visits to the community and particularly during visits made in December when the trafficked children were en route back to the village.

Majority of those we spoke with claimed that the community was not benefiting anything from the trafficking children, but rather, that the business has some negative effects on the community. For instance, it was reported that some of the children in transit to or back from their employment, engage in stealing while some of the female children get involved in prostitution.

According to the Baale, the major reason for using Asewele as the base for child trafficking is that one of the major camp managers came and served in Asewele, years ago, as a labourer in the cocoa plantation. He (the Camp Manager), later brought his brothers (2 or 3) and gave them out as farm help and collected money from their masters. At the earlier time, those brought to Asewele were not children. With increasing demand for farm help by the villagers, the man continued to bring people outside his family but from within his town. As trafficking turned to be a lucrative business and the man then increased the number of people in the business. He involved other camp managers and extended the business later to children, male and female.

Despite the fact that the camp is conspicuously located on the main road in Asewele the community leaders claimed not to have ever visited the trafficked children in the camp. Also, despite the fact that they decry the practice of child trafficking, they have never confronted the camp managers about it. They believe the managers are engaged in their business and it was not their business to police the camps activities.

The women of the village perceive child trafficking to be dangerous because some of the children sometimes become involved in road accident and armed robbery attacks on their way during any of their trips. It is also a risk for their masters that engage them because the masters do not know the parents of the children. Some of the children die during the period, and create problem for their masters and the community where they are living, because police have to be involved and the corpse transferred to the village in Cross River State. Some of the children also get involved in some social vices such as stealing, drug and sexual abuse in the community where they are employed.

CHAPTER 4

INTERVIEWS WITH OFFICIALS

INTERVIEWS WITH OFFICIALS

4.1 INTERVIEW OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

At Odigbo Local Government Council, the following officials were interviewed:

- Personal Assistant to the Chairman
- Head, Department of Agriculture and natural Resources
- Head, Engineering Unit
- Higher Executive Officer (Admin)
- Supervisor for Works and Housing
- Community development Inspector

All the officials said they are aware that some children are trafficked from Cross Rivers State to Asewele to be used as house help, farm help and bar attendants. They confirmed the fact that some of the children are under 18 years. The officials view using children who are under 18 years as house help as child abuse and a crime against humanity. The officials expressed concern over government neglect of its citizenry, which has culminated into trafficking of innocent children. They suggested that government should make education free so that parents that can afford to send their children to school would have the opportunity to do so.

4.2 INTERVIEW OF SCHOOL TEACHERS

All the school teachers interviewed said they are aware that some children are brought from Cross Rivers to Asewele to be used as house help, farm help and bar attendants. They further said that some of these children are less than 18 years. When they were asked about their views with regard to using children who are under 18 years as house help, they said it is a form of child abuse and it should not be encouraged.

While many of the teachers said the community is not benefiting anything from child trafficking, some said the trafficked children are useful to the community. They assist as farm assistants in Asewele and as domestic servants and bar attendants in adjoining towns.

One of the reasons given for using Asewele as the base for child trafficking is that the community is along the road and traffickers have easy access to the village.

About the teachers' impression of the camp in Asewele, they said it is not a good place for children to live. They are packed in rooms and were not given adequate care.

The children have just a few days to stay in the camp waiting for their prospective employer. They are often very anxious and sometimes quite frightened and uncertain about their future.

All the schoolteachers interviewed decry child trafficking. According to them, it is inhuman to give out children who are 15 years or even 12 years as labourers. None of the teachers wished that the business should continue. They suggested that those involved in such act should be punished. They also suggested that both federal and state governments should provide jobs for the youths so that they can be more meaningfully engaged in jobs that can provide a future for them. Parents should be enlightened on the risks involved in allowing children who are under 18 years to be used as labourers.

4.3 INTERVIEW OF THE HEALTH OFFICIAL

The health official, a young lady, perceived child trafficking as bad. She reported not to have ever assisted anybody to get house help among the children brought to Asewele and would never make use of any of the children as house help. She believed that children from this source are not to be trusted. According to her, the boys steal and many of the girls can snatch husbands of their mistresses. She informed us that despite the fact that the Government Health Centre is just across the street from the Camp, neither the officials of the camp nor the children avail themselves of their services, preferring to purchase drugs from itinerant medicine hawkers for treatment of minor problems. They also prefer to go to neighbouring towns if the children have serious medical problem. This situation may be in part attributable to the fact that the Health Centre is not well equipped and the nurse there is often not available to render needed services.

In all, the attitude of the community to the trafficking business is one of “accommodation”. It was obvious to us that the community vicariously benefits for the business. In December when the children are camped preparatory to their return journey, traders in Asewele make good business from selling articles to the children. They also benefit from the excitement the influx of people into an otherwise quiet sleepy village brings, particularly during the December period. Thirdly, the community members get to have a first call on the choice of farm labour for themselves and domestic servants for their relations who live in the bigger towns. Lastly, we learnt from the camp manager that the camp office makes generous donations to community activities and even officially, pays Development Levy to the local government.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 CONCLUSIONS

Trafficking is a serious business and it is organized like any other venture. The Asewele camp has five officers who coordinate the Asewele end of the business but in addition have over 10 people who are recruiting agents back in the villages in Cross River State. The duty of the recruiting agents is to ensure that interested candidates are recruited and made ready for the traffickers to pick up in early January of the year. They are also responsible for the assemblage of the children for the outward journey and for the negotiations for the rental of buses or 9/11 for the conveyance of the recruits.

At the Asewele Camp, popularly called “Office” by the traffickers and their wards, there are five officials: the office director and four supervisors. The major assignment of this group is to organize “protection” for the business, to maintain records on the children being given out for employment, to maintain good relationship with the community, and serve as agent between the child and the employer.

It is a lucrative business. On every child placed, the “Office” made a minimum of ₦ 7,500. During the period of our survey, in which approximately 250 children and adults came for labour, the estimated agent’s fees amount to ₦ 1,875,000. There is however additional income. This is from the multiple claims for transportation of the children. The prospective employer pays ₦ 6,000 at the point of employment, presumably to cover the transportation to and from Asewele for the child. Still the agents levy an additional ₦ 2,000 as transport for each returning child. Other spurious levies on the employers of the children include ₦ 2,000 for non-refundable Registration fee. In all it is estimated that in one trafficking cycle (i.e. December to January) the trafficking team makes at least ₦ 3,000,000. It is estimated that the running cost of the business, which include such items as transportation of the children, payment for rent and other incidental expenses, cannot be up to ₦ 250, 000 per cycle.

The camp managers (traffickers) do not see trafficking as a “bad thing”. According to them, they are providing useful service to their home community by finding work for the otherwise unemployed youths. They were aware of the stipulation of minimum age of 18 years for labour and therefore did their best to keep from view those who were underage and often insisted that some of the obviously young children we saw were over 18 years.

5.2 RECOMMENDATIONS

Asewele community is better known as a labour/trafficking transit camp than as a farm settlement. Asewele camp collects its own labour from villages in the Yakurr local government of Cross River State. On the average, close to 350 youths and children are brought to Asewele from these villages on a yearly basis. The work year for the labourer starts from January 10 to December 10 of each year. It is mandatory that each trafficked child be returned to the village every December.

The trafficking process commences at the village level where recruiting agents identify youths and children who are desirous of seeking employment outside the village. There is good evidence that at the village level, there is poverty. A large percentage of the parents are farmers, fishermen or petty traders and cannot afford the school fees and other auxiliary fees needed for their children's education. It is also significant to note that another indicator of household level poverty-large family size- is predominant in the families of these trafficked children. There is also high youth unemployment thus creating a pool of potential recruits. The attraction of coming out of the village to the cities is one of the motivating factors for the labourers. Each year, the returnees who parade their new clothes, shoes and assorted household appliances serve as "Advertisement" to others in the village that coming to Asewele is one of the routes out of poverty into a better life.

Parents and guardians at home therefore regard the traffickers and their agents as "Labour Consultants" – people who can help fix their wards in lucrative jobs in the Western Region of the country. This view resonated in two of the remarks by the camp manager to the question of the benefits of the trafficking business to the village and how he gets the recruits. In relation to the first, he noted.

"We render labour service. We are more or less consultants. People at home consult us for help and we do this readily.... At the end of the work year, when they get back home, they have many things to show for their labour. Rather than for them to be roaming about the village doing nothing".

As to how he gets the children and adults from the villages to come to Asewele, he remarked:

"Many of the children or youth that come with me have nothing that they are doing at home. Their parents have no money to train them. They are not in school. They just have to tend for themselves"

Thus, one can argue that the extreme poverty of the rural area and high youth unemployment therein is one of the causative factors in the trafficking of children and youth out of the villages of Cross River State into various parts of the south western region of the country.

The expectation is high that the proceeds from the labour of the trafficked child will improve the living standard of his/her family.

A second factor in the motivational structure of the trafficked children also relates to poverty. Most have come to Asewele because of the need to raise funds for their education or for their vocational pursuit, as a way of finding exit points out of poverty. The principal breadwinner and the person said to be responsible for paying school fees is the father. Understandably, the proceeds for the farming, fishing or petty trading is inadequate to meet the educational expenses in large-sized households. Thus, the journey to Asewele for most of the children who are “drop-out” becomes a last-ditch attempt to procure money to pursue their education.

Once in Asewele, the child has little choice as to the type of labour activities he engages in. The goal of the camp office is to dispose all of the labourers as soon as possible. Also, at that point, the desire of the child is to spend the minimum time at the overcrowded camp. With respect to the survey, we found that the two predominant labour activities were farming and domestic service. Those engaged in farming activities are boys and spent the nine months to one year on agricultural farms in the region. Almost all the girls and some of the boys worked as domestic servants in the major cities in the Southwestern area. The girls placed in homes of professionals in the Lagos, Akure, Ondo, Ore, Ado-Ekiti, Owo, Warri and Benin- city. The work hours for the domestic servants were usually morning till sleep time except on Sundays when attendance at church service provided reprieves from labour.

The experience reported by the children varied. Those placed in homes of professionals like Engineers, Medical doctors, School proprietors with small to medium family size appeared to have fared better than those placed in situations requiring commercial interactions with the public, e.g. bar attendants. This latter group seemed to have operated under greater stress, as they often had to combine the role with that of full time domestic servant. They also tend to work the longest hours and are more likely than others to report having suffered from headaches and malaria repeatedly during their one year engagement overall, the experience was one that majority of the children did not wish to repeat. Neither did they wish to encourage their siblings into the experience.

For the period of one year away from home, all of the children reported missing their parents and their siblings. Some reported extreme loneliness and serious disorientation in terms of value systems. Some reported feeling incarcerated – could not move out and play freely with age mates in the neighbourhood. Few suffered from recurrent headaches and fevers. From our study therefore, the immediate “damage” to the children is psychological-feeling of being torn away from familiar persons and familiar frames of reference.

The greatest beneficiaries of the trafficking process are the traffickers and his team. It is conservatively estimated that the Asewele camp alone makes a net income of ₦ 2.75 million every year from the business. If this figure is used, as the average for each of the eighteen “labour camps” recruiting children from four local governments of Cross River State (Yakurr, Abi, Obubura and Uyo local governments), the total revenue from the business is very close to fifty million naira annually.

Asewele community’s stance to the phenomenon is ambivalent. On one hand, they decry the practice and particularly find worrisome the influence these transient children may already be having on the morals of their own children and the security threat they pose. Yet, the community seems to coo perate with traffickers and benefit directly from their activities. Members of the community have the ‘first call’ on choice of labour as soon as the lorry full of labourers arrive from Cross River State. The community receives donations from the trafficking managers for community activities. The returning children also provide ready buyers for goods and services in Asewele in December, thereby enhancing the community economy. Thus, the relationship between the Asewele camp office and the Asewele community is a symbiotic one.

The local government office is aware of the trafficking business and in fact its gives some form of spurious official recognition to it by collecting Development levy from the trafficking office.

The policy implications of our findings are four :

1) *First*, there is a need for government agencies particularly the Ministries of Agriculture and Rural Development to address the issue of rural poverty. Families in the rural areas must be assisted so that their productive ventures, be it farming or fishing or whatever, will yield income sufficient to sustain themselves and their families. For as long as there is a wide gap in income and social amenities between the rural and urban settings the urban locations will be glamorous in the minds of children and youths in the rural areas. The urban centres will therefore continue to be an attractive alternative to children and youth without concern for some of his hazards.

2) *Secondly*, is the problem of poverty and youth unemployment. The national figure with respect to youth unemployment is high but this figure seems higher in the rural areas where formal employment opportunities have always been limited. There is thus a justification for the encouragement of small and medium sized agro-based industries that can utilize the abundant raw materials in these rural locations and at the same time provide employment for youth and better income to farmers. A pre-requisite to the effective implementation of this concept is the improvement in the infrastructures of such rural locations. In order to attack one of the root causes of child trafficking, the rural areas that provide these children must be given opportunity to earn their incomes without sending out their children to labour camps.

3) *Thirdly*, there is need for intense sensitisation in the sending local government areas about the hazards of child trafficking. For now, it appears that the prevailing perception is one that idealizes the “gains” (shoes, bags, better looks) from Asewele experience and not the deprivation and the psychological damage that children suffer in the process.

4) *Fourth*, it is no longer admissible that the government is unaware of the presence of these transit labour camps in the Western area. We are aware that there are eighteen such camps scattered in Ondo, Ekiti, Lagos and Ogun States. Further, it is clear that many top government officials patronise their services and that some of the local government closest to them even collect development levy from the Labour Camp. This semi-official recognition needs to be turned into a proper official recognition in order to effect close monitoring of their activities.

Thus, it is highly desirable that these labour camps be properly registered as Labour Exchange Centres to be monitored by the Inspectorate Division of the Federal Ministry of Labour. Such monitoring should focus on ensuring that underage children are not recruited, that the living environment of the transit camp is hygienic, and that a copy of each of the agreement form is lodged at the local government office and the Labour Office closest to the Camp. This formalization will ensure that a department of government has responsibility for monitoring the activities. Government will also be able to specify the minimum conditions that must be fulfilled in order to run such labour exchange. It will therefore be able to apprehend and prosecute operators whose practices run counter to the established rules.

ANNEXES



QUESTIONNAIRES

SURVEY OF CHILDREN TRAFFICKED TO ASEWELE

Section A

Demographic Characteristics for Recruits and Returnees

Sex:.....

Age:.....

Level of Education.....

Do you wish to go further?Yes []No []

If not, are you learning a trade?.....Yes []No []

How far have you gone?.....

Have you done freedom?.....Yes []No []

Ethnic Group (Specify).....

Hometown.....Local Government.....

State of Origin.....

Religion.....

Parents :

a. Location of mother.....(i) Village [] (ii) Town []

b. Location of father.....(i) Village [] (ii) Town []

c. Mother's occupation.....(i) Farming [] ... (ii) Trading []

(iii) House wife (iv) Civil Servant

[]

Artisan (specify).....

d. Father's occupation.....(i) Farming [] .. (ii) Trading []

(iii) House wife(iv) Civil Servant []

(v) Artisan (specify).....

Other Siblings

a. Number of brothers.....

Location of brothers (if 4 brothers)

- (i) Village [](ii) Town []

- (ii) Village [](ii) Town []

- (iii) Village [](ii) Town []

- (iv) Village [](ii) Town []

Job of brothers (if 4 brothers)

(i) Farming [](ii) Trading []

..... (iii) Civil Servant []

]

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- (iv) Artisan (specify).....
 (i) Farming [] (ii) Trading [] (iii) Civil Servant [] . . .
 (v) Artisan (specify).....

b. Number of sisters.....

Location of sisters (if 4 sisters)

- (i) Village [] (ii) Town []
 - (ii) Village [] (ii) Town []

- (iii) Village [] (ii) Town []
 - (iv) Village [] (ii) Town []

Job of sisters (if 4 sisters)

- (i) Farming [](ii) Trading []
 (iii) Civil Servant [] (iv) House wife (v)

Artisan

(specify).....

- (i) Farming [] (ii) Trading [] (iii) Civil Servant [] . . .
 (iv) House wife (v) Artisan (specify).....
 (i) Farming [] (ii) Trading [] (iii) Civil Servant [] . . .
 (iv) House wife (v) Artisan (specify).....
 (i) Farming [] (ii) Trading [] (iii) Civil Servant [] . . .
 (iv) House wife (v) Artisan (specify).....

Health Status

How is your health? (i) Very Good [] (ii) Good [] (iii) Fair []
 (iv) Poor []

Common ailments: (i) Malaria [] (ii) Stomach Problem []
 (iii) Skin Disease [] (iv) Frequent Headache []
 (v) Eye Problem [] (vi) Others (Specify).....

Health of father (i) Very Good [] (ii) Good [](iii) Fair []
 (iv) Poor []

Health of mother (i) Very Good [] (ii) Good [](iii) Fair []
 (iv) Poor []

Does your village have?

Primary School	Yes []	No []
Secondary School	Yes []	No []
Health Centre	Yes []	No []
Pipe borne water	Yes []	No []
Electricity	Yes []	No []

5 What do most people do in your village?

- (i) Farming [] (ii) Trading [] (iii) Fishing []

- (iv) Artisan (speci-
fy).....
(v)Others (specify).....
.....
.....

• • •
Section B

Questionnaire for new Recruits

1. From which village did you come?
2. Who took you from the village? (i) Father [] (ii) mother []
(iii) relative [] (iv) friend []
(v)others (specify).....
3. Were your parents given any gifts/money by the person who brought you?
Yes [] No [] I don't know []
If Yes, What / How much?.....
4. Is it the person who took you from the village that brought you to Asewele?
Yes [] No []
5. When did you leave your village?
(i) Within the last one week []
(ii) Within the last two weeks []
(iii) Within the last one month []
(iv) Over one month ago []
6. How many days did you spend on the way from the village to Asewele?
(i) one day [] (ii) two days [] (iii) three days []
(iv) more than three days []
7. How did you learn about coming to Asewele?
(i)through a friend[]
(ii) through a relative [] (iii) parents []
(iv) others (specify).....
8. What were you told you were coming here to do?
(i) schooling [] (ii) learning a trade []
(iii) working for money [] (iv) staying with
relative[] (v)others(specify)
9. How much were you promised? Specify
10. Before your arrival here, what were the good things that you have heard
about Asewele?
.....
(10 b)What were the bad things?
.....

11. Do you know anybody who has been to Asewele before?

(i) Yes [] (ii) No []

12. What did he/she tell you about Asewele?

13. In what ways did this person benefit?

14. In what ways do you think the person did not benefit?

15. Is this your first time of coming to Asewele?

Yes [] No []

If Yes, skip to Q18

If No, what did you do the last time you were here?

(i) Worked in a shop/store [] (ii) Worked in a farm []
 (iii) House help [] (iv) Worked in an hotel []
 (v) Hawking []
 (vi) others (specify)

16. How much did you have with you at the end of that year when you finished your work?

(i) N5,000.00 [] (ii) N5,000.00 – N10,000.00 []
 (iii) N11,000.00 – N15,000.00 [] (iv) N16,000.00
 – N20,000.00 [] (v) more than N20,000.00 []

17. Do you have a preference for a particular type of placement? Yes [] No []

If Yes, Specify

Expectation of Child

18. What is your feeling about Asewele, now that you are here?

(i) Very good [] (ii) good [] (iii) indifferent [] (iv) bad []

19. What instructions have you been given by those people who brought you?

20. For how long are you going to stay?

(i) Less than one year [] (ii) One year [] (iii) Two years []
 (iv) Three years [] (v) more than tree years

21. What do you expect to get when you are going back to the village? Specify

22. What do you intend to do with what you get?

(i) Schooling [] (ii) Trading [] (iii) Give to parents []
 (iv) Buy clothes [] (v) to help relatives [] (vi) other materials

23. What are you already missing about home?

(i) Nothing [] (ii) Mother [] (iii) Father [] (iv) Siblings []
 (v) Friends [] others (specify)

Push Factors

24. Did you take the consent of your parents before you travelled out?
 Yes [] No []
 If No, why?
25. Who was responsible for your education at the village?
 (i) Father [] (ii) Mother [] (iii) Relative [] (iv) Brother [] .
 (v) Sister [] (vi) Community []
26. Did you experience any hardship in your schooling? Yes []No []
27. What is the major source of water supply in your village?
 (i) Pipe borne [] (ii) well [] (iii) stream [] (iv) bore hole []
 (v) rain []
28. What do you do after work in your village?
 (i) Sleeping [] (ii) Reading [] (iii) play ball [] (iv) Listening to
 radio [] (v) nothing [] others specify.....
29. In your village, what do people think about this type of your travelling?
 Please, specify

Section C

Questionnaire for Returnees

1. Where were you placed?
 Location
 Work type
 If in domestic service – size of family:
 (i) husband, wife and one child []
 (ii) Husband, wife and two children []
 (iii) Husband, wife and three children []
 (iv) Husband, wife and four children []
 (v) Husband, wives and children []
 (vi) Husband, wives, children and other relations []
2. Sex of Employer
3. Occupation of Employer (i) Farming [] (ii)Trading []
 (iii) Civil Service [] (iv) Artisan
 (Specify)
4. How long were you with them? (i) less than one year []
 (ii) One year [] (iii) Two years [] (iv) Three years []
 (v) More than three years []
5. If in distributive trade, product being sold (i) Food []

- (ii) Drinks [] (iii) clothing [] (iv) provision []
 (v) others (specify)
6. If in farming, what product? (i) Cocoa [] (ii) Yam []
 (iii) Oil palm [] (iv) others (specify)
7. What activity in relation to the product? (i) Planting [] (ii) Weeding []
 (iii) harvesting [] (iv) processing [] (v) selling []
8. If in the service sector what role? (i) Attendant [] (ii) Maid []
9. Describe your experience
10. Period of work (per day): (i) 5 hrs [] (ii) 6 hrs []
 (iii) 7 hrs [] (iv) 8 hrs (v) more than 8 hrs []
11. Days of work: (i) Monday – Saturday [] (ii) Monday – Sunday []
12. Effect on health: (i) negative [] (ii) positive [] (iii) no effect []
 (iv) don't know []
- Explain Why?
13. Is the work tiring/difficult? Yes [] No []
 Explain Why?
14. How much was the agreed payment?
15. Schedule and mode of payment: (i) monthly [] (ii) bi-monthly [] (iii) half yearly [] (iv) annually []
16. (a) How much of it were you paid? Specify
 (b) How much of it belongs to the agent? Specify
17. What do you intend to spend the money on? (i) Schooling []
 (ii) help parent [] (iii) trading [] (iv) buying instrument []
 (v) others capacity []
18. Will you come back? (i) Yes [] (ii) No []
 if No, why.....
19. During this year that you have been away, what have you missed about the village
- About your parents.....
- About your brothers and sisters.....
20. Were you ill at any time during this period? Yes [] No []
 If yes What was the illness?
 How did you get well? (i) go to hospital [] (ii) buy pills []
 (iii) take herbs [] (iv) pray [] (v) herbalist [] .(vi) nothing []

21. Did you sustain any injury during this period? Yes [] No []
22. What was it?.....
Where did it happen?
How were you treated? (i) Go to hospital []
(ii) buy pills [] (iii) take herbs [] (iv) pry [] (v) herbalist [] .
(vi) did not do anything []
23. How will you describe the type of food you eat, compared with the village?
.....
24. What were the things you did not like about your employers?
(i) Hardship [] (ii) poor care [] (iii) too much work []
(iv) poor feeding []
25. What were the things you like about your employers? (i) Good care []
(ii) friendliness [] (iii) good food [] (iv) good pay [] (v) good
accommodation [] (vi) others (specify)
26. Will you like to come back to the same place? (i) Yes []No []
If yes, why?
.....
27. If No, why?
.....

Trip Back

1. How long will you stay here before proceeding to the village?
(i) one day [] (ii) two day [] (iii) three day [] .(iv) four day []
(v) greater than four days []
2. Who will be responsible for the transport back to the village? .(i) Self []
(ii) the person who brought you [] (iii) the person I served []
3. What things have you bought to take home with you? (i) cloth []
(ii) Radio/TV set [] (iii) Shoe [] (iv) Stove [] (v) Pressing Iron
[] (vi) others (specify) [].....
4. In what ways do you think that your life has been made better by being
away from home for this one year? (Specify).....
.....
5. In what ways do you think your life has been made worse by your being
away from home for this one years? (Specify).....
.....
6. On getting home, will you encourage your brothers and sisters to come
to a trip like this? (i) Yes [] (ii) No []
If yes, Why?.....
.....
.....

SURVEY OF CHILD TRAFFICKING IN ASEWELE, ONDO STATE NIGERIA

If No, Why?
.....
.....

7. What Church/Mosque do you go in the village? (i) Catholic []
(ii) Anglican [] (iii) Pentecostal [] (iv) Mosque []
8. How often did you normally go? (i) daily [] (ii) thrice per week []
(iii) weekly []
9. While away during this one year, what Church/Mosque did you attend?
(Specify)
10. How often? (i) Daily [] (ii) thrice per week []
(iii) weekly []
11. With your master or alone? (i) with my master []
(ii) alone []
12. When you get back home, what Church/Mosque will you be going?
(i) Catholic [] (ii) Anglican [] (iii) Pentecostal [] (iv) Mosque []

LOCATION OF TRANSIT LABOUR CAMPS MANAGED BY EMPLOYERS INVESTMENT (HOLDINGS) OF WESTERN REGIONS

NAME OF MANAGER	HOME ADDRESS	L.G.A	OFFICE ADDRESS
PETER	EKORI	YAKURR	SAGAMU
JOHN	EKORI	YAKURR	IKORODU-LAGOS
INYANG	EKORI	YAKURR	ASEWELE-KOREDE ONDO
PRINCE	EKORI	YAKURR	5, SAMAKINWA STR. ONDO
EDDY	EBOM	ABI	ADEGOJU STREET, ONDO
OVAT	OBUBURA	OBUBURA	AROWOJAYE ONDO
EDDY	EKORI	YAKURR	OREMEJI SAWMILL ONDO
ODINTA	EKORI	YAKURR	ODE – SAGAMU
JAMES	EKORI	YAKURR	IJEBU-ODE
SAMUEL	EKORI	YAKURR	ODIGBO
ASUQUO	EKORI	YAKURR	ILESHA
BASSEY	EKORI	YAKURR	ADO-EKITI
POPULAR	EBOM	ABI	AKIN-MARIN ONDO
DAVID	AGOI EKPO	AKURR	KINISHO
OYAMA	AGOI EKPO	YAKURR	OKA SAWMILL
KABOOR	AGOI IBAMI	YAKURR	OKA – ONDO
ATIM	UGEP	YAKURR	BARRACKS ROAD
ROSE	AKWA-IBOM	UYO	OKE-ODUNWO ONDO

LOCATION OF TRANSIT CAMPS BY STATES IN THE WESTERN REGION OF NIGERIA

1 ONDO STATE

- A ASEWELE KOREDE
- B ONDO

- (i) Oka- Ondo - (ii) Oka Sawmill, Ondo
- (iii) Barracks Road, Ondo - (iv) Oke Odunwo, Ondo
- (v) AkinMarin, Ondo - (vi) Oremeji Sawmill, Ondo
- (vii) Arowojaye, Ondo - (viii) Samakinwa Street, Ondo
- (ix) Kinisho, Ondo - (x) Adegoju Street, Ondo



- C ODIGBO
- 2 OGUN STATE
1. Sagamu - (i) Sagamu - (ii) Ode Sagamu
2. Ijebu-Ode
3. EKITI STATE - Ado-Ekiti
4. OSUN STATE - Ilesha
5. LAGOS STATE - Ikorodu, Lagos.

LABOUR EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

THIS LABOUR EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT:- is made this 12 of JAN between PIJA – VENTURES (NIG) LTD (represented by MR. X), a Labour Employment Agency whose registered Office is No. 2 African Street, Okonobongha Ward, Ekorì – Yakurr Local Government of Cross River State while its office or contact address is Asewele-Korede Village, via Ore, Ondo (hereinafter called the “Agency/Guardian”) on one part and Chief/Dr/Mr./Mrs _____

_____ whose office/residence is _____ (hereinafter called the “Employer”) of the other part.

WHEREAS: Upon the Employers intention and willingness to employ labour (hereinafter called the “Ward/Agent” from the Agency/Guardian and upon the Agency/Guardian’s willingness to release to the employment of the Employer a Ward/Agent.

NOW THIS AGREEMENT WITNESSES the release of _____ (Male/Female) to the employer Chief/Dr/Mr./Mrs. _____ upon these

CONDITIONS below:-

- 1 That the Ward/Agent is employed basically for domestic services (house-help, factory work, salesmanship or _____)
- 2 That the employment shall not be for immoral, illegal or other unsuitable services and shall not be for any services injurious or dangerous to the health of the ward.
3. That where the Ward/Agent is exposed to such immoral, illegal or other un-suitable services, the employment with the Employer shall be discontinued without prejudice to Ward’s right to his/her wages for job already done.
4. That fare/fees payable are:-

(a) (i) TransportationN 6,000

(ii) Registration (non-refundable)N 2,000

(iii) Ward/Agent remuneration (wage)N

(iv) Agency’s CommissionN 500

(b) (i) After a month’s stay of Ward with Employer, the transport levy is deemed spent i.e. no more refundable under any circumstance.

(ii) The Ward’s remuneration and Agency/Guardian’s commission

is to be paid at the return of Ward on 10th December.

(iii) In the event that a Ward is returned before a month of his/her employment by the employer and no replacement is made, the Ward's work shall be calculated and paid from the transport and balance if any shall be paid back to Employer.

(iv) If a Ward is returned same day by Employer, the Employer may have his registration fees paid back to him/her

5. That where an Agent/Ward no longer wishes to stay with Employer there may be replacement or Ward's job done so far may be calculated and he/she shall be paid off.
6. That where the Employer is dissatisfied with services of the Ward/Agent, Employer shall promptly report such dissatisfaction to the Guardian/Agency and there may be such replacement upon such terms as shall be agreed upon ALTERNATIVELY, Employer may pay Ward/Agent for work done and lay him/her off.
7. All matters concerning Wards/Agents are first to be reported to the Guardian/Agency before the Police except in cases of extreme needs i.e. crime.
8. THE EMPLOYER COVENANTS: - with the Agency/Guardian that:
 - (a) The Employer shall under no circumstances pay off Ward/Agent without bringing the Ward to the place of employment i.e. the office of the Guardian at Asewele-Korede, via Ore, Ondo State.
 - (b) The Employer shall be responsible for the medical care and upkeep of the Ward/Agent within the period of his/her employment.
 - (c) The Ward shall be returned to the Guardian/Agency on the 10th December unfailingly, upon which this Agreement determines. Any failure to return Ward on 10th December shall attract a daily fine of 1000 until Ward is returned
 - (d) It shall be the giant responsibility of the Employer, OND PIJA Venture to look for a Ward/Agent in case of loss during Employer's Employment.

9. THE GUARDIAN/AGENCY GUARANTEES:-

- (a) That the Ward shall be of very good behaviour within the period of his/her employment. Where however, there is any case of misconduct of Ward, this shall be promptly reported to the Guardian for disciplinary action.
- (b) Where a Ward absconds by reason of genuine case of theft, the Guardian shall assist Employer to fish out the Ward for prosecution. Where however such claim is false, the Employer shall bear all the cost of search for Ward.

SIGNED:

MR. X
GUARDIAN/AGENCY

EMPLOYER

D

WITNESS

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW OF CAMP MANAGER

Name of Camp Manager : Mr. Samuel Ibe

Age : 41 years

Home Town : Ekori in Yakurr Local Government of Cross Rivers State.

Question 1 : What were you doing at home before you moved to Asewele?

Response of the Camp Manager :

After his (the Camp Manager's) elementary school education and precisely in January 1981 someone from Ugep in Cross Rivers State met him and asked whether he (the Camp Manager) would like to work somewhere outside Ekori (the Camp Manager's home town). I accepted and the man took ME (the Camp Manager) to his father who gave his consent to the arrangement. The man took me from his hometown to Ilesha where I was employed as a domestic servant by a retired judge. By November of that year (1981) I was paid my money for the year and I returned to my hometown. When I got home people saw a difference in my dressing and what I brought from Ilesha after one year. Some young men in the village approached me for assistance and when I was going back to Ilesha in January 1982, I left the village with five other people. When I got back to Ilesha the following year, I continued with my domestic work in the house of the retired judge while the five people with whom I returned to Ilesha were given out as poultry assistant. At the end of the year the six of us returned home after we had collected our wages. I continued like that (coming to Ilesha in January and returning home in December) for about five years. The name of the person from Ugep who took me from my hometown to Ilesha is John Lekam. So, John Lekam was the one who introduced me to the business..

After my fifth year of work in Ilesha as domestic servant, I started trading in Okirika (second hand clothings). Sometimes in 1990 a Permanent Secretary contacted me and asked me to assist in getting young people that will work for him (the Permanent Secretary) in his palm tree farm. I had to travel to my hometown to look for young men who will be willing to work as farm assistant. I asked young people who were not doing anything at home whether they will like to follow me to where I was working and they agreed. So, I took six people from Ekori to Ilesha to work in the Permanent Secretary's farm.

That was how I started going home to bring young people who are not doing anything to come and work in Ilesha. Even after I had started the Okirika business, I was still assisting people to look for house help, farm labourers or poultry assistants.

Question 2 : How old are you? Do you have your family at Asewele?

Response : I am 38 years old. (That means he had been on the business since he was just a little above 15 years of age). My wife and children are in Asewele.

Question 3 : How often do you go home?

Response : I go home regularly and anytime anybody comes to him for help. That is, if anybody approach me for labourers, I will travel home and negotiate with young people who want to work and bring them down to Asewele

Question 4 : How long have you been in the business? The business of having to assist people to look for house help, farm help etc.

Response : Since 1996.

Question 5 : Is there any member of your family (brother or sister) assisting you in the business?

Response : No. But there are other people from my home town who are assisting me. (He gave the names of his assistants as Bassey Ofem, Lawrence Ikoi and Felix Edet).

Question 6 : What problems are you facing in the business?

Response : The major problem is having to return children back home each time an employer returns a child either due to sickness or because he does not need the service of the child. I have to take such a child back home, as I do not keep anybody permanently in the camp.

Question 7 : With these problems, why are you still in the business?

Response : I enjoy what I am doing presently. It is service to people. People come to me for help and I render it. The problems notwithstanding, I still want to continue to help people who are in need of my assistance.

Question 8 : Do people really sign agreement with you before they take your children away?

Response : Yes, people sign agreement. (He showed the interviewer, a copy of the agreement). The employer in addition to having to sign an agreement will also snap picture (take photograph) in the camp office with the child.

Question 9 : In the last one-year, can you remember the number of children that you have brought from home?

Response : I have brought 75 out of which 15 have been returned home. Some of those that have been returned have misunderstanding with their master. Some fell sick and some felt like returning home just a little time after their arrival. They probably felt home sick or did not actually know the type of work they were going to do when they left home.

What is the age range of these children?

Response : 16 years and above. Generally, most of them are grown-ups. These children are usually brought in January Precisely, on the 10th and they are returned in December 10 of the same year.

Question 10 : How do you get these children or the supposed grown-ups?

Response : Everybody in my hometown knows me. They know me as someone who has been assisting their children to get job and many of those that I had taken away from the village for work and who had returned after one year had good stories to tell about me. As soon as people know that I am around, they will come personally at times and discuss with me about how I can be of help to them. Parents even come to me with their children. I have never taken anybody away without the approval of his or her parents or members of his or her family. Many of the children or grown-ups that come with me have nothing that they are doing at home. Their parents have no money to train them. They are not in school. They just have to fend for themselves.

Question 11 : How do you transport them to Asewele?

Response : They are transported to Asewele by bus

Question 12 : How long does it take to get the children to Asewele?

Response : Just one day.

Question 13 : What do you do for them on the way?

Response : We usually start the journey from home very early in the morning

at around 5 a.m. and when we get to Umunede in Delta State we will stop for about forty minutes to eat and then continue with the journey.

Question 14 : When they reach Asewele how do you take care of them?

Response : My assistants and myself will start taking care of the children as soon as we get to Asewele until when someone who needs their service will come around to pick them (take them away). The person that comes around to pick any of the children will also bear the cost of transporting the children from our hometown and also our service charge.

Question : What type of care do you provide for the children?

Response : We give them food and provide accommodation for them. But if any one fell sick, before he or she is taken away by an employer we also attend to such a child. But if the sickness continues, we will take such a child back home.

This is part of hazards of the job. The risk of having to travel home often and having to spend money on a child that eventually will not bring any gain.

Question 15 : What is the average pay for each child at the end of the year?

Response : Anybody that wants to employ any of the children from January to December must be ready to pay at least N 35, 000.00 at the end of the year (that is eleven months). This money or payment is for the child's labour and has nothing to do with transportation cost, and administrative charges. If the child had been engaged for domestic work and Hotel Service, the employer will pay N 35, 000.00. For farm work it is N 40, 000.00. For poultry work it is N 38, 000.00.

Question 16 : How do you see the people of Asewele?

Response : They are peace-loving people. They have always been good to us.

Question 17 : What is special about Asewele? Why are you permanently at Asewele and not elsewhere?

Response : The person that started the child trafficking/child labour business once lived in Asewele. He was from Cross Rivers State and worked at Asewele as a farm labourer. Other people came around to join him and some of these people have also moved to other areas (towns) within and outside Ondo State. But Asewele is the foundation of the business in Ondo State and in the neighbouring states.

Question 18 : What do your people at home think about you when you bring their children back?

Response : They are always happy especially when the children had returned home with money and those things that he had bought. One thing that we always insist on is that the children have to return home in December and if he or she so wishes, he can come again in January for work and even with the same employer. Like in my own case, I worked with the same employer in Ilesha for three years but I always return home in December.

Question 19 : How many of the children died on the way last year or other years?

Response : None

Question 20 : How many died in the last two years before they return home?

Response : None

Question 21 : How many of them were involved in accident?

Response : None

Question 22 : As a manager, what assistance do you think you are rendering to Asewele or the people of Ondo State generally?

Response : We work as vigilante for the people of Asewele. We also assist in farm work and provide ready made labour. We also pay Development Levy to the Local Government.

Question 23 : How do you think the business is helpful to your village back home?

Response : We render labour service. We are more or less consultants. People at home consult us for help and we do this readily. We take people (grown ups) from home, bring them to Asewele and get job for them. At the end of the work year, when they get back home, they have many things to show for their one year labour. Rather than for them to be roaming about the village not doing anything.

Question 24 : To make the job more profitable, what do you want government to do for You?

Response : Government should stop persecuting us for an offence that we have not committed. Our business is mainly the provision of service. Helping young people to get job rather than leaving them to be problems to the society. We are not traffickers. So, people particularly, those in government should not take us like people who trafficked Nigerians to Gabon or other foreign countries.

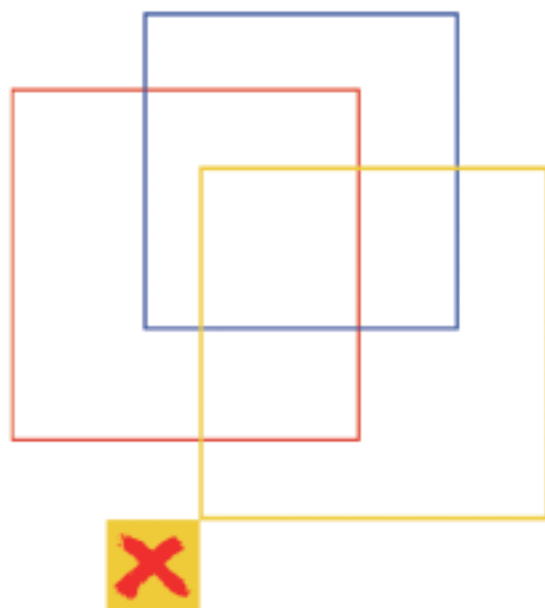
SURVEY OF CHILD TRAFFICKING IN ASEWELE, ONDO STATE NIGERIA

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