

HEALTHCARE IN LATIN AMERICA

Healthcare is at the center of human survival – birth and fertility, death rates, terminal illness care – these problems are universal and no one country is exempt. In light of this, many countries around the globe are currently considering how they might implement healthcare for their citizens. For example, several European countries have implemented universal basic healthcare, and the United States began phasing in the Affordable Care Act during the administration of President Obama, amidst much criticism. In Latin America, there cannot be one sweeping statement made about healthcare, but overall, Latin American countries have taken strides to improve their systems and regulations.

To the benefit of those residing in Latin America, their healthcare tends to be cheap – at least cheaper than its American counterpart. Most appointments and procedures have a standardized price, generic doctor's visits converting to approximately 15 USD. The quality of this care, however, has been called into question in several instances. Until the middle of the twentieth century, Latin American health care systems were quite similar. Typically, health care was offered to employees in the formal labor market through public health insurance plans paid for by a combination of employer, private worker, and government contributions. This system remains in parcels, and so far, only Cuba has adopted a universal system. Keep in mind, though, that the Cuban health care system is known for lack of efficiency and overall quality of care.

In 1974, Costa Rica established healthcare under a new model. It involves the social security program and the Ministry of Health. The result has been eighty-six percent of the population with equal access to medical services. The other 14% is the wealthy who privately pay for their healthcare needs. Costa Rica is considered by many to be the standard of healthcare in the region.

Several challenges face the healthcare systems in Latin America. These include medical needs of a rapidly aging society-- particularly non-communicable diseases – distribution of healthcare in rural, still developing areas, and financial backing. The health of a population is arguably a result of political, economic, and social factors. For this reason, it is a complex sector to conquer. The international community can provide some assistance as well as policy models but

healthcare is a mainly domestic issue for each government to evaluate and strategically approach. Latin America has seen major strides in healthcare but some countries still have a long way to equal and accessible healthcare for all citizens.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Is Latin America to be treated as a developing region in terms of policies such as healthcare?

Is the international community obligated to contribute as the region pursues economic and social progress?

What previous healthcare models would be best suited to Latin America at present?

RESOURCES:

<https://www.nextavenue.org/prefer-get-health-care-latin-america/>

<https://www.americasquarterly.org/node/980>

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/06/these-are-the-5-health-challenges-facing-latin-america/>

This guide was graciously written by Sara Taylor, Undersecretary General

SEX TRAFFICKING IN CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE

ABSTRACT:

Article 3, paragraph (a) of the United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons defines Trafficking in Persons as “the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation.” It expands upon this by including the defining characteristics of exploitation as “at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs”. Globally, Women and girls together account for 71 percent of trafficked persons, with girls representing nearly three out of every four child trafficking victims. Nearly three out of every four trafficked women and girls are trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation. Due to the widespread poverty, corruption, and precedence of violence against women, the rate of trafficking of women is especially high in central and eastern Europe. It is the objective of this organization, along with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, to make progress towards ending the trafficking of women and girls in this region.

GUIDE:

The United Nations statistic Division includes Belarus, Bulgaria, Czechia, Hungary, Poland, Moldova, Romania, Slovakia, Ukraine, and the Easternmost parts of the Russian Federation in the nations that make up Eastern Europe. This region was largely within the Soviet zone of occupation in the Post World War Two and Cold War Era. After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, these countries gained independence. After independence was gained, many of these states underwent long periods of governmental development, but during this time, it was easier for large scale criminal activity, like organized crime and human trafficking organizations, to develop and become profitable. The effects of this are still seen in the region where some of the highest numbers of people are trafficked annually.

With an estimated 40.3 billion people enslaved today, there are more slaves now than at any other time in history. Human trafficking is conducted largely through individual contractors working with crime organizations. These individuals trick women and girls into leaving their homes and often countries with lies and false promises of money and prosperity or love. These are most appealing to women who live their

lives in poverty because it is seen as a way to improve their living situation. Because of their dire situations, they are more likely to take risks and believe the traffickers lies. Human trafficking is highest in states with corrupt or ineffectual government where organized crime flourishes.

In order to effectively end the exploitation and trafficking of women, each facet of what allows it to happen must be evaluated. One of the primary objectives of this committee must be to dismantle the trafficking and exploitation of humans as a business. Sex trade and human trafficking as a global industry is worth over 150 billion dollars annually. With the developments to technology, the internet has acted as a tool for the recruitment and exploitation of women. Because of the internet trafficked women are able to be held in one state and sold globally. The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime works with individual states to develop legislation that targets the sale of people on the internet but few states have put this legislation into effect.

The 2000 United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and the 2003 Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, focus directly on ways to end human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of women and girls. These documents created internationally recognized definitions of human trafficking and a trafficked person, in an effort to standardize each state's approach to human trafficking in legislation. The UNODC and European Union have also joined forces and developed the The Global Action to Prevent and Address Trafficking in Persons and the Smuggling of Migrants or GLO.ACT. The GLO.ACT is a four year, 11 million euro initiative focusing on six primary objectives: strategy and policy development, legislative assistance, capacity building, transnational and regional cooperation, protection and assistance to victims of trafficking and smuggled migrants, and assistance and support to children among victims of trafficking and smuggled migrants. They emphasize education about the signs of human trafficking and legislative progress towards laws protecting victims of trafficking.

Human trafficking and slavery is not only illegal in every country, it is also a violation of human rights. The international community has reached a crisis point with the number of people who are being trafficked and enslaved. Chair of the United States Senate Foreign Relations committee, Bob Corker, stated "The modern slavery problem is massive ... but it's more stoppable than it's ever been,". It is vital that this committee acts effectively to work toward the end of human trafficking and the sexual exploitation of women in Eastern Europe.

In order to effectively address this topic, each aspect of this multifaceted issue must be considered. Please consider your states efforts towards: education and prevention, legislation to end organized crime, poverty's role in human trafficking and the use of technology to exploit women.

RESOURCES:

<http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/human-trafficking/global-report-on-trafficking-in-persons.html>

<https://www.researchgate.net/publication/>

[240522675_Sex_trafficking_in_women_from_Central_and_East_European_countries_Promoting_a_victim-centred_and_woman-centred_approach_to_criminal_justice_intervention](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/240522675_Sex_trafficking_in_women_from_Central_and_East_European_countries_Promoting_a_victim-centred_and_woman-centred_approach_to_criminal_justice_intervention)

<https://www.un.org/press/en/2018/sgsm19146.doc.htm>

This guide was graciously written by Meg Corley, Chair of the Committee on Economics & Finance

EQUAL PAY IN SOUTH-EASTERN ASIA

In September 2018, Equal Pay Day for Southeast Asian Women was recognized, in hopes of bringing international attention to an issue of absolute worth. In the United States, Asian Women on average earn eight-five cents to every white man's dollar. If the scope of this comparison is expanded, however, we see - on average - sixty-one cents earned by Southeastern Asian Women to every one white man's dollar. Because this is an aggregated statistic, we can examine individual countries and see that in Myanmar, women see only fifty one cents; Samoan women only see fifty-six cents; and Hmong women see only fifty-nine to every white man's dollar. These averages by country or people group also vary based on a women's age and education level. For perspective, consider that in some cases this gap is equal to nine months of extra work to catch up to the wages of white men for the same job.

Thankfully, there is less of an issue when it comes to women earning and controlling their own income, as women in the workforce is generally accepted - especially as SE Asia has industrialized and women are needed to fill factory jobs. They are, however, limited in the kinds of occupations they are able to hold, further lessening their earning potentials. The prevalence of prostitution and sex trafficking serves as evidence of the disparity; many women are seen as desperate due to their inability to maintain good wages, and therefore seek sex work and find themselves trafficked. This is particularly the case in lower-income Southeast Asian nations such as Cambodia and Laos.

In these male-dominated societies, it is increasingly difficult for women to break the glass ceiling. Only in the last fifty years has the region seen social reform in favor of women. One route to higher wages is higher education. The number of women seeking secondary education is on the rise, and, in some countries such as Thailand and Malaysia, female graduates outnumber males. Although more women than men attend higher education in southeast Asia, they are underrepresented in the official and formal work sectors. The so-called "gender gap" in employment ranges from sixteen percent in the Philippines to twenty percent in Sri Lanka. There is an average gender wage gap in the region of thirty to forty percent, which was explicated above with US Dollar equivalent comparisons. As women continually seek higher education and therefore are seen as able to fill higher-earning and higher-tiered occupations in the official and formal sectors, the assumed natural result would be a closing of this gap in earnings. Women in these countries, however, are faced with large amounts of discrimination in the hiring process, which also

serves to keep their wages in a lower earning bracket. Sometimes this actualizes in the form of the wage gap and other times it physical violence and political oppression.

Equal pay is only one visualization of the gender inequality in Southeast Asia. Opening the discussion around wage disparity is a good, and needed start to a larger understanding of social justice in the region. However, the issue of equal pay is a large obstacle to overcome in a region so historically male-dominated. Patriarchal societies are inherently a cycle of fewer opportunities and in some cases oppression for women. The international community can serve as models for gender equality and attempt to influence policies to lower the wage gap and ultimately the gender inequality seen in Southeast Asia.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Are Southeast Asian countries interested in addressing this issue?

What measures, if any, can the international community take to end gender inequality in the region?

What are the benefits of a larger female presence in the workforce?

RESOURCES:

<https://feminist.org/blog/index.php/2018/09/12/today-is-equal-pay-day-for-southeast-asian-american-women/>

<https://asiasociety.org/education/women-southeast-asia>

<https://www.opendemocracy.net/5050/amanda-clarkson/long-road-gender-equality-southeast-asia>

This guide was graciously written by Sara Taylor, Undersecretary General