ANGOLA (Tier 2)

The Government of Angola does not fully meet the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking but is making significant efforts to do so. The government demonstrated overall increasing efforts compared with the previous reporting period, considering the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on its anti-trafficking capacity; therefore Angola remained on Tier 2. These efforts included providing supportive services to all victims participating in investigations; approving the national referral mechanism (NRM) and standard operating procedures (SOPs) and funding the national action plan (NAP); convicting two traffickers; cooperating with foreign governments to successfully repatriate victims; and increasing training for front-line officials and awareness efforts to the public. However, the government did not meet the minimum standards in several key areas. Efforts to proactively identify and refer victims remained inadequate in key transit areas despite the government’s development of new protocols and increased trainings of front-line officials. The government did not have regulations or oversee labor recruitment agencies beyond periodic labor inspections.

PRIORITIZED RECOMMENDATIONS: Implement and train front-line officials on the NRM and SOPs for the proactive identification of victims among vulnerable groups, including returned Angolans from Namibia and foreign nationals such as migrants and refugees, particularly in Lunda Norte, as well as North Korean and Cuban workers, and refer trafficking victims to appropriate services. * Increase efforts to investigate and prosecute trafficking crimes, especially sex trafficking and labor trafficking in the construction sector and in animal herding, and sentence convicted traffickers to prison terms commensurate with the severity of human trafficking crimes. * Increase efforts to provide shelter, counseling, and medical care for trafficking victims, either directly or in partnership with NGOs or international organizations. * Dedicate resources to address vulnerabilities of returned Angolan migrants from Namibia and screen for human trafficking indicators during the ongoing climate crisis in Huila, Cunene, and Namibe provinces. * Amend Article 178 to criminalize all forms of internal sex trafficking. * Establish and implement policies to formally disconnect the requirement of participation in investigations and prosecutions for victim identification and to receive official trafficking victim status. * Train and support law enforcement officials, prosecutors, and the judiciary on implementing the anti-trafficking provisions in Angolan law. * Expand the collection of law enforcement and victim protection data for trafficking cases, specifically the number of victims referred and provided protective services, and compile data from all provinces. * Support the provision of legal identity documents among vulnerable populations, including at-risk undocumented migrants, refugees, and stateless individuals.

PROSECUTION
The government maintained anti-trafficking law enforcement efforts. In November 2020, the government amended the anti-trafficking articles of the penal code, taking effect in February 2021. Laws 38/20 and 39/20 revoked the prior anti-trafficking legislation and the 2014 Law on the Criminalization of Infractions Surrounding Money Laundering, slightly increasing the penalties for some trafficking offenses. Article 177 criminalized slavery, with penalties of seven to 15 years’ imprisonment, and the buying or selling of a child younger than the age of 14 for the purpose of adoption or slavery, with penalties of five to 10 years’ imprisonment. Article 178 criminalized the labor trafficking of adults and children and prescribed penalties of four to 10
years’ imprisonment. Article 189 criminalized some forms of domestic adult sex trafficking and prescribed penalties of one to eight years’ imprisonment. Article 190 criminalized transnational adult sex trafficking and prescribed penalties of two to 10 years’ imprisonment. Article 196 criminalized child sex trafficking and prescribed penalties of five to 15 years’ imprisonment. These penalties were all sufficiently stringent and, with respect to sex trafficking, commensurate with those prescribed for other grave crimes, such as rape. The 2020 amendment removed “sexual exploitation” as a purpose of a trafficking crime in Article 178. Because the other anti-trafficking articles did not criminalize all forms of internal sex trafficking, Angolan law no longer criminalized all forms of sex trafficking.

The government initiated 13 human trafficking investigations with 15 suspects and continued six investigations from the previous reporting period, compared with 10 investigations initiated in the previous reporting period and 15 investigations initiated in 2020. The government did not initiate any new prosecutions but continued the prosecution of five alleged traffickers from one sex trafficking case investigation initiated in 2019 and convicted two traffickers. This was a decrease from 13 traffickers prosecuted and convicted in the previous reporting period. In an investigation from 2019, one trafficker convicted of aiding illegal immigration for trafficking of children – from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) forced to perform domestic work – received a sentence of four years in prison and was ordered to pay restitution to the victims. In an investigation from 2020, one trafficker was convicted of sex trafficking and sentenced to one year and six months in prison and ordered to pay restitution. Because of the pandemic, courts remained open but operated in a limited capacity during the reporting period.

The government did not report any investigations, prosecutions, or convictions of government employees complicit in human trafficking crimes; however, corruption and complicity remained significant concerns, inhibiting law enforcement action during the year. The government reported that investigations initiated during the previous reporting period of several officials from the civil registration office and migration and foreigners service who were allegedly involved in trafficking crimes were ongoing. In the past, well-connected individuals confiscated land from members of the San indigenous group, which forced many San to work as indentured servants on land they previously owned. For the second consecutive year, the government did not report whether it investigated or resolved the disputes, including whether the land was returned to the San. The government did not report any updates on two additional cases for the second consecutive year. These included the case of an Angolan border guard in Cunene province charged in 2020 for conspiracy to force a woman and five boys into exploitative labor and a second case of an Angolan army officer charged in 2020 with smuggling involving a possible trafficking nexus. Additionally, law enforcement did not consistently or effectively enforce laws against the commercial sexual exploitation of children.

Multiple law enforcement agencies were mandated to investigate human trafficking. In addition to the police, the Criminal Investigation Services and Court of Minors could investigate child trafficking. The Ministry of the Interior, as part of Humanitarian Border Management training, conducted six anti-trafficking workshops in the provinces of Luanda, Bengo, Malanje, Huambo, Cuanza Norte, and Cuando Cubango, which involved a total of 180 participants, including officials from the National Police, Immigration Services (SME), Border Guard Police, Civil Protection and Fire Service, and Criminal Investigation Service. The Ministry of Social Action,
Family and Promotion of Women (MASFAMU) conducted two trainings for government officials on the systems of referral and protection for children, including trafficking in persons. The Ministry of Justice and Human Rights (MJHR) held three workshops on human trafficking and asylum law and rights in the provinces of Moxico, Lunda Norte, and Lunda Sul for 121 participants. The government also signed agreements with South Africa and DRC establishing new cooperation protocols on combatting transnational crime, including human trafficking.

**PROTECTION**

The government increased its overall protection efforts. Through its investigations and identification efforts, the government reported identifying 26 trafficking victims, including adults and children and victims of sex and labor trafficking from Angola, DRC, South Africa, and Namibia, and supporting identified victims who participated in investigations, providing or coordinating shelter, basic needs, medical care, and education. Government hotlines identified 50 child trafficking victims; however, these victims may also have been counted in the government statistics, making the total number of identified victims uncertain. These efforts compared with identifying and referring to care 19 trafficking victims in the previous reporting period. The government, through the National Institute of Children (INAC), operated separate child support centers in all 18 provinces, providing food, shelter, basic education, and family reunification for crime victims younger than age 18. Additionally, MASFAMU managed a national network of safe houses for women, counseling centers, and children’s centers, which trafficking victims could access. NGOs and religious organizations also operated shelters and provided services for victims, which received limited financial support by the government. The government could also provide foster care and family tracing services for child trafficking victims, as well as legal representation, social workers, and counseling to all victims.

During the reporting period, the government approved, but must still adopt, SOPs for identification of trafficking victims and a NRM for Protection and Assistance to Victims of Trafficking for their referral to care, which were developed in partnership with an international organization. In addition, the government approved SOPs for Assistance to Child Victims of Violence. To promulgate the NRM, the government trained 41 law enforcement, border protection, customs and immigration officials, and members of local human rights committees on these victim identification and referral procedures with support from an international organization. Both the NRM and SOPs were disseminated to provincial human rights committees in all provinces; however, victims in rural communities had less access to resources and services than in urban areas.

The government encouraged victim cooperation in the investigation and prosecution of trafficking crimes; however, both access to care and immigration-related benefits were contingent upon the commencement of a criminal investigation and the victim’s testimony. Angolan law permitted live teleconference testimony, allowing foreign-born victims to pursue repatriation to their home countries while still participating in trials, although the government did not report any cases warranting use of this capability during the reporting period. While foreign victims remained in the country, Angolan law provided for immigration relief, including temporary residence documents and the right to seek asylum. While cooperating with law enforcement, all victims could access government-provided legal representation, medical and mental health services, some financial support, family tracing assistance, and access to
education, while having immunity from crimes committed as a result of their trafficking. In both convictions during the reporting period, judges ordered restitution paid to the victim and the State, which was an increase from no orders of restitution in the previous reporting period. The government cooperated with Congolese officials to repatriate two child trafficking victims in Uige Province to the DRC. However, despite a high prevalence of transnational trafficking, law enforcement routinely detained and deported undocumented migrants crossing the Angolan-Congolese border without screening for potential exploitation. As a result, authorities may have detained and deported trafficking victims for unlawful acts committed as a result of their trafficking, including alleged immigration violations.

PREVENTION
The government maintained efforts to prevent human trafficking. The Inter-ministerial Commission to Combat Trafficking in Persons, led by MJHR and the National Directorate of Human Rights, met regularly. For the third consecutive year, the government funded its 2020-2025 NAP on Preventing and Combating Trafficking in Persons, which was implemented by the Commission, in collaboration with international organizations and NGOs. The government made significant progress in expanding local human rights committees – creating 90 new committees, bringing the total to 163 committees at the provincial, municipal, and commune levels; the government trained these committees to increase victim identifications and referrals and broaden awareness raising activities. The government conducted eight awareness workshops, lectures, and seminars in Luanda, Quicama, Viana, and Cacuaco. The government conducted awareness raising programming on both human trafficking and child sex tourism through radio, television, and social media, and it updated and continued distributing its awareness raising brochure on trafficking in persons. The government did not report data collection efforts on human trafficking cases or victim identifications and referrals during the reporting period.

Systemic corruption among labor officials and lack of resources prevented effective enforcement of labor laws, including against forced labor. The government did not have procedures to oversee and regulate labor recruitment beyond periodic labor inspections. The government employed 266 labor inspectors trained on human trafficking, who conducted 9,088 inspections, which was an increase from the last reported year of 5,461 in 2020; however, no instances of forced or child labor were identified through labor inspections. Personnel and financial deficiencies hampered efforts to identify forced and child labor, with a lack of funding to cover transportation expenses for labor inspectors, and limiting inspections to the formal economy, where only one-quarter of Angolans work. In addition, despite the presence of young children in forced and child labor, labor inspectors focused on children ages 14-17 who had the legal authority to work.

The government demonstrated mixed efforts to document individuals within the country. It continued its mass registration campaign and, in 2021, issued more than one million Angolans their first identity documents. The program did not include undocumented migrants, refugees, or stateless individuals, who faced ongoing vulnerabilities to trafficking. NGOs reported some police confiscated and destroyed refugees’ documents during mass arrests. The MJHR operated a hotline for potential victims of crime and public reporting, and the INAC and the Integrated Center for Public Safety operated a separate hotline for crimes against children. The Foreign
Ministry, in partnership with the MJHR, integrated trafficking training into its diplomatic training program. The government did not make efforts to reduce the demand for commercial sex acts.

**TRAFFICKING PROFILE:** As reported over the past five years, human traffickers exploit domestic and foreign victims in Angola, and traffickers exploit victims from Angola abroad. Traffickers exploit Angolans, including children as young as 12 years old, in forced labor in the brick-making, domestic service, construction, agriculture, fisheries, and artisanal diamond mining sectors. Angolan girls as young as 13 years old are victims of sex trafficking, and girls in domestic work within private homes in Angola are vulnerable to labor trafficking. Angolan adults use children younger than 12 in forced criminal activity because children cannot be criminally prosecuted. As a result of the pandemic, “handlers” increasingly bring poor children to Luanda for street work, including begging, shoe shining, car washing, and parking assistance, where they are vulnerable to forced labor from their handlers and other traffickers. Extreme poverty and economic decline in recent years have led to an increase in the number of children living on the street, especially in urban areas of the capital. The provinces of Luanda and Benguela and the border provinces of Cunene, Lunda Norte, Namibe, Uige, and Zaire are the most high-risk areas for trafficking activities. Cunene province continued to experience widespread and severe drought, forcing children in some villages to drop out of school to gather water, dig wells, and herd cattle or relocate to urban areas where they faced increased vulnerabilities. Severe malnutrition across the southwestern provinces of Angola increased migration into Namibia in search of food.

Transnational traffickers take advantage of Angola’s numerous unsecured, informal, and heavily used border crossings. Traffickers take some Angolan boys to Namibia for forced labor in cattle herding and force others to serve as couriers to transport illicit goods as part of a scheme to skirt import fees in cross-border trade with Namibia. Other recruiters take Angolan adults and children to Namibia for work in agriculture, construction, mineral extraction, and unlicensed street vending, where they may be exploited by employers. Traffickers exploit Angolan women and children in forced labor in domestic service and sex trafficking in South Africa, Namibia, and European countries, including the Netherlands and Portugal.

Trafficking networks recruit and transport Congolese girls as young as 12 years old from Kasai Occidental in the DRC to Angola for labor and sex trafficking. Undocumented Congolese migrants, including children, enter Angola for work in diamond-mining districts, where traffickers exploit some in forced labor or sex trafficking in mining camps. Traffickers also exploit adult and child Congolese economic migrants in forced labor in construction. Women from Brazil, Cuba, DRC, Namibia, and Vietnam in commercial sex in Angola may be victims of sex trafficking, including in massage businesses. People’s Republic of China (PRC) nation-owned companies with large construction or mining contracts bring PRC workers to Angola, which increased during the pandemic; some companies do not disclose the terms and conditions of the work at the time of recruitment. There are reports that PRC-owned and -operated construction companies exploit Brazilian, PRC, Kenyan, Namibian, Southeast Asian, and possibly Congolese migrants in forced labor, including through withholding passports, threats of violence, denial of food, and confinement. These companies also at times coerce workers to operate in unsafe conditions, which sometimes reportedly result in death. The North Korean and
Cuban governments may have forced their respective citizens to work in Angola, including at least 256 Cuban doctors sent to Angola to combat the pandemic.