

2.2.6. Men victims of trafficking

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Domestically, Nigerian men, including teenagers, are exploited in illegal mining196 and forced labour.197 In March 2025, Nigerian police arrested 130 people, including 113 foreign nationals, for alleged involvement in cyber-scams, like online casino and investment fraud. Nigerian authorities reported that some individuals working in these scam centres may also be victims of human trafficking, forced or coerced into criminal activities.198 In April 2025, Nigerian authorities repatriated 231 young Nigerians, mostly men, from Ghana who had been rescued from a human trafficking network involved in cybercrime. Ghanaian authorities uncovered 219 victims confined in 25 rooms within a residential estate in Accra, where they were allegedly forced to work under coercive and abusive conditions. Some victims showed signs of physical abuse, with reports of beatings and injuries linked to failure to meet financial targets. The trafficking ring had reportedly lured the victims with false job offers.199

In parts of Africa, including Nigeria, young aspiring footballers200 often pursue international opportunities as a means of escaping poverty, unemployment, and political instability. Young men are approached by traffickers posing as agents or scouts who promise professional contracts with football clubs in Europe. Victims are requested to make a payment before their journey, only to discover they have been deceived and must take up low-paying jobs, including cleaning or hospitality, once overseas.201

Recruitment and trafficking of Nigerian men has continued, particularly into Libya for labour exploitation.202 Nigerian men, especially from Edo State, are systematically exploited in Libya through forced labour, extortion, and even sexual violence. Driven by poverty, social pressure, and poor livelihoods, some Nigerian men become both victims and participants in the trafficking economy as some are drawn into smuggling activities as a survival strategy.203

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