

Rotarian Action Group against Child Slavery

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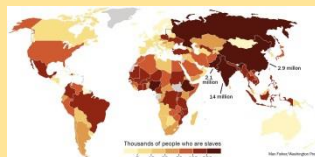
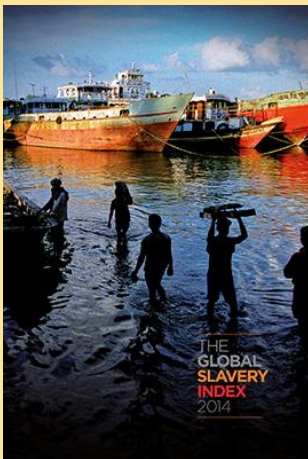


Editor: Mark Little – Rotary Club of Norwich St Edmund, England

“Slavery is far too big to be stopped by any individual, no matter how powerful, charismatic, or clever that person might be. The end of slavery is within our grasp, but only if we join together to make it so”
(Kevin Bales)



Global Slavery Index



In November 2014, the second annual edition of the Walk Free Foundation's Global Slavery Index was issued.

The Index found that almost 36 million people are likely to be enslaved around the world.

Whilst incidences of slavery were found in every one of the 167 countries, five countries, ie India, China, Pakistan, Uzbekistan and Russia counted for nearly 22 million people (61%) suffering in bondage.

India was top of the list with an estimated 14.29 million enslaved people, followed by China with 3.24 million, Pakistan 2.06 million, Uzbekistan 1.2 million and Russia 1.05 million.

Mauritania had the highest proportion of its population estimated to be in modern slavery, at 4%, followed by Uzbekistan with 3.9%, Haiti 2.3 %, Qatar 1.36 % and India 1.14 %.

The regions with the lowest estimates of people

estimated to be enslaved are Europe and North America. Iceland and Ireland have the lowest prevalence of modern slavery in the world.

Scandinavian countries with comparatively low prevalence include Norway, Finland and Denmark. Canada has the lowest estimated prevalence in the Americas, and New Zealand, Taiwan and Australia have the smallest concentration of people enslaved in the Asia Pacific region.

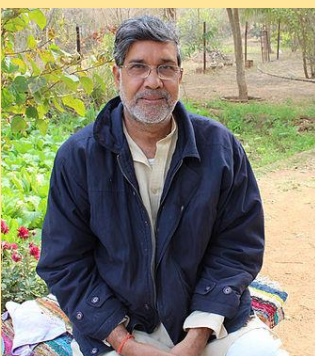
Nobel Peace Prize winner demands action in India

Following the Global Slavery Index's damning statistics for India, Nobel Peace Laureate, Kailash Satyarthi, in an exclusive CNN-1BN interview in London last November, sought immediate enforcement of the Anti-Child Labour Act in the country.

Satyarthi maintains that he is not against any industry in the world but was against the evil and crime committed against children. He is hopeful that the Narendra Modi Government at the Centre will assist him in his decades-long fight against child labour.

60-year-old Satyarthi's non-government organisation Bachpan Bachao Andolan (BBA) has been credited with freeing over 80,000 child labourers in India over 30 years. He shared the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize with Pakistani activist Malala Yousafzai. For more information about the Indian anti-slavery activist, click on

[Kailash Satyarthi](#)



Editorial

The photo on the left is one which I took in 2004 of 15 years old Basu Rai at Mukti Ashram, a Child Slave Rehabilitation Centre for Boys near Delhi, India.



He is pictured standing in front of a bus which was purchased by my Rotary Club in 2003 for the Ashram, with the help of the Rotary Club of Delhi West, our partner clubs in Mainz (Germany), Reims, (France), Unley (Australia) and a Matching Grant from Rotary Foundation.

One of the remarkable things about young Basu was that, unlike other young children at Mukti Ashram, he spoke fairly good English. In chatting with him, I discovered that he was from Nepal and that he had had a tough time trying to exist on the streets of Kathmandu by his own wits.

Just before last Christmas I made contact with Basu and was surprised and delighted to learn that he had written a book entitled [From the streets of Kathmandu](#) which describes his experiences as a survivor from numerous scrapes, fights and unscrupulous “protectors” who exploited him because he was an orphaned child.

The book's Foreword is written by Kailash Satyarthi, the joint winner of a Nobel Peace Prize in 2014 for his work in combating “Child Labour”, not

only in India, but all over the world. An interview with Basu on India Post can be viewed on the link [Interview with Basu](#)

I am looking forward to meeting up with Basu in Delhi next month when I hope to learn more about how he goes about raising awareness of the issue of child labour and child slavery in order to prevent other children from experiencing the traumas and pain he suffered as a child.

A short article by Basu is included on pages 3 and 4 of the Newsletter.

It seems that human trafficking opportunities exist in every sphere of activity. With the start of the African Cup of Nations on 19th January, the world's attention will be focused on the continent's footballing talent and young teenagers all over Africa will be dreaming of becoming stars like Yaya Toure and Didier Drogba.

Many of these youngsters, usually aged between 14 and 16 years old, will already have fallen victim to unscrupulous, often unregistered sports agents who promise them football contracts in Europe in exchange for thousands of dollars in placement fees.

All too often these agents have absolutely no connection to the teams they claim to be scouting for, with the result that youngsters are frequently abandoned and left to their own devices in different countries in Europe.

I await with bated breath, to see if FIFA will have the fortitude to instigate any investigation to ensure that its player recruitment regulations are not being breached.

But then again how can such an organization be expected to give a voice to these boys when it has done very little to influence/act against the organizers in Qatar who are exploiting migrant workers used in the construction of stadiums required for the 2022 World Cup ?

On a more positive note, it is refreshing to see Indonesia leading the way in trying to eliminate child labour from the country. The Government has just announced measure to ensure that the country will be child labour-free by 2022. (see page 4 for further information).

“The mass movement against slavery will only work if every single supporter performs simple acts of preventative abolition”

(Benjamin Skinner)



Fight to end Slavery

by Basu Rai

My name is Basu Rai. I became an orphan when I was just four and half years old and immediately I ended up on the street of Kathmandu, got beaten brutally same day, became beggar, forced to work in eatery shop, picked rags, worked in carpet factory, became domestic servant, pick pocket and knife wielder, stabbed at people and survived many gang fights in the streets. I saw some children die in front of my eyes but no one was there to take the report of them, because they were orphans like me.



Today we are proud to live in 21st century, but child slavery is a blot on humanity. Children are easily getting trafficked into slavery. Freedom is birth right of everyone, yet there are millions of vulnerable children whose rights are getting snatched away every second. I know. I was one of them. Are we waiting for thousands more to die on the street, become slaves, become crippled and sick in the factories, murdered or become criminal or anti-social element which society feels unsafe with ?

When I see my past life I feel each and every individual is responsible for this. I plead to governments, faith and religious leaders, intergovernmental agencies, entrepreneurs and corporates, the civil society, and each one of us, to eradicate all forms of violence and abuse against children. This includes, not only child labour and slavery, but also trafficking, child marriages, sexual abuse and illiteracy.



I firmly believe through my experiences that good education is the key to solve all the problems. I was on the street and knife wielder but good people like you, whoever is reading this article, helped and rescued me from the street, helped me with my education, gave me another chance to change my life and today, look at me. I am an author of my own autobiography known as, "From the Streets of Kathmandu"

Since 1998 when I was just 9 years old I got chance to participate in the worldwide movement known as "Global March Against Child Labour" I fought and walked jointly step by step across 20 countries with Mr. Kailash Satyarthi, Noble Peace Prize winner of 2014 and along with many others, across the world to demand an international law for the children. After that I spent whole of my childhood and adolescence demanding rights for all children. Nowadays, I am sensitizing people through street theaters because I firmly believe that children are the future of country and the world.



I have learnt since childhood that one week of global spending on armies could bring all the children of the world into schools. We talk about quality education but it seems to serve only the children of the richest, making marginalised children literate but not educated. So what are we producing ? more unemployed youths ? Why can't all children get same education ? Society still wants to keep the class system to maintain this modern slavery system. So we have a long, hard fight.



Fight to end Slavery (Cont'd)

by Basu Rai



"You may never know what results come from our action, but if you do nothing, there will be no result"

(Gandhi)



So now I am on a mode of revolution and I am doing it bit by bit. I know I don't have funding agencies to support me but I am on the streets and waking up everyone through street play. I hope I will be not alone on this fight and that you will support me in this cause

So, let all of us act and do something rather than doing nothing to save the children around the world. I can understand the issue is very big and you might be not counting your small contribution. So let me share with you very small story,

"There was a small bird whose egg dropped into the sea, so she got so much tense and sad about it. Why not, it was her unborn child after all ? She asked sea to return the egg but sea didn't listen to her because bird was very tiny, and sea didn't have time to care about this small matter, so tiny bird pleaded and cried a lot to sea, but sea didn't hear her, so tiny bird said to the sea, "If you don't give my dropped egg back, I'll empty the water of the sea to get my egg back". Sea smiled back to tiny bird and said, "Let's see your strength then" Bird got very determined for her egg started to empty the sea carrying small drop of water in her beak. Suddenly all the birds joined her, one by one, after feeling the tiny bird's pain. Then an hour later countless numbers of birds started to empty the sea. With this revolution Sea God got surprised and returned tiny bird's egg back"

So this fight is to return the snatched away childhood back. There are lots children who can't even dream of freedom so this is the time to give them their freedom, good health and education to shape beautiful future. So lets do it together. I am counting on you and believing in you that one day you'll save millions of Basu Rais. I am lucky that I got saved but there are millions still waiting for you.

Indonesia bans Child Labour

Manpower Minister M. Hanif Dhakiri has recently announced the implementation of a Child Labour Free Zone programme in industrial areas across Indonesia that prohibits all companies from employing children, According to Indonesia's Antara News Agency "The government will not hesitate to impose firm sanctions on companies found to violate the law on child protection by recruiting children,"

This is the first declaration of its kind in the country and according to Minister Dhakiri this declaration *"will create history for its efforts to abolish child labour...we believe this will encourage local government and companies to remain committed to prevent children from working"*

The Manpower Ministry has withdrawn 48,055 children from workplaces between 2008 and 2014, with another 16,000 expected to be taken out of employment next year. Indonesia is targeting child labour-free status by 2022.



A Message from our Pennsylvania Correspondent

LISTEN UP! In 30 seconds, learn some signs of human trafficking and what to do if you suspect a case within the United States. You could save someone's life.

<https://soundcloud.com/carol-hart-metzker/human-trafficking-bed-2>

Besides listening to this public service announcement, if Rotarians have connections to their local radio stations, please let Carol Metzker know at echmetzker@aol.com.

Review of Progress by the Action Group

The birth of a new year has a special significance for people of all races, classes and creeds. As well as for merrymaking, for new beginnings and for new resolutions, it is also a time for stocktaking, for sober reflection on what has or has not been achieved in the past and for conjecture on that which is yet to come.

In order to reflect upon the Action Group's achievements, it is necessary first to measure its progress against its objectives. These were established even before the Group's approval as a Rotarian Action Group in January 2013. The two main objectives are:

- a) to raise awareness that millions of children are held captive and forced to work for someone else's commercial gain, and
- b) to encourage Rotarians to participate in projects which help to protect children from slavery and its consequences.

Raising Awareness.....The Action Group has been fairly successful in achieving the first objective mainly through:

- a) the production of a Newsletter which goes out, usually monthly, to over 1,200 Rotarian supporters/members in 62 countries. 54 newsletters have been produced since the first issue in July 2009. All of these past issues can be viewed on the Group's website which is www.racsrag.org
- b) the maintenance of a website which, inter alia, updates its members on modern slavery issues, provides resource material for members who wish to make presentations to other clubs, furnishes Rotarians and Clubs with project opportunities and which provides links to relevant organizations combating all forms of slavery. However, it is readily accepted that the website needs improvement. So dear reader if you know of anyone who is willing to help our current Web Master, Stephen Sypula, to improve the website, please do let him know. His email address is Stephen@racsrag.org
- c) the establishment of a booth at Clubs, Districts and RI Conventions to publicize the work of the Action Group and to encourage Rotarians to join the Group. Booths have been successfully manned at the past RI Conventions in Birmingham, Montreal, Bangkok, Lisbon and Sydney.
- d) the appointment of RAG Coordinators in New Zealand, Italy, South Africa, USA, India and Australia. More Coordinators are needed in other countries.
- e) the production of Action Group leaflets and posters for distribution to delegates at RI Conventions, District Conferences, Institute and Foundation Seminars and at RI and RIBI Assemblies.

Action Group Review (Continued)

- f) the delivery of presentations at Rotary Clubs, District meetings and Conferences and also at non-Rotary meetings and events.

NB. Whilst the Action Group was delighted to have had the opportunity to organize speakers at a Breakout Session at the RI Convention in Sydney in 2014, it is still hoping for an opportunity to nominate speakers on the issue of "Child Slavery" at a Plenary Session of future RI Conventions and at the event known as Rotary Day at the United Nations which takes place once a year, usually in New York.

Taking Action.....The main function of a Rotarian Action Group (RAG) is to help Rotary clubs and Districts to plan and carry out community development and humanitarian service projects in their area of expertise. Attached as an Annex to this Newsletter is a list of

- a) Projects completed since the Action Group was approved as a RAG in 2013.
- b) Current projects
- c) Summary of projects completed between 2009 - 2012

We do believe that we have been active enough to have justified the decision taken by the RI Board to grant us RAG status.

NB: A Wish List of future project opportunities will be published in March.

RACSRAG Board

Chairman: Mark Little, RC of Norwich St Edmund (D1080), England. mark@racsrags.org
 Vice Chairman: Mark Doyle, RC of Pretoria West (9400), South Africa. mpdoyle@mweb.co.za
 Vice Chairman: Stephen Sypula, RC of Stevenage Grange (D1260), England. stephen@racsrags.org
 Secretary: Harry Payne, RC of Burnham on Crouch (D1240), England. harry@racsrags.org
 Treasurer and
 Webmaster: Stephen Sypula, RC of Stevenage Grange (D1260), England. stephen@racsrags.org
 Board Member: Bob Christie, RC of Dalkeith (D1020), Scotland. bob@racsrags.org

Board Member: Dave McCleary, RC of Roswell (D6900), USA dmccleary@fms-inc.us
 Board Member: Dorothy Pulsford-Harris, RC of Swaffham (D1080), England. dorothy@racsrags.org
 Board Member: Girish Mittal, RC of Mumbai Boravali East (D3140), India girish@racsrags.org

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 Oceania and parts of SE Asia: David Black, RC of Dunedin Central (D9980), New Zealand
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Victoria: Tony Stokes, RC of Box Hill (D9810) stokes9@optusnet.com.au
 Western: Gillian Yudelman, RC of Bay View Claremont (D9455) yudelman@westnet.com.au
 NSW: John Roberson, RC of Wagga Wagga, (D9700) johnroberson@bigpond.com
 Tasmania: Chris Love, RC of Salamanca, (D9830) chrislove@internode.on.net
 South: Teresa Evans, RC of Adelaide, EDGE, (D9500) teresa1407@hotmail.com

NB There is vacancy for a Coordinator to cover Queensland.

ANNEXE

Action Group's Anti-Slavery Projects

A. Projects completed since formation of RAG

Asha Nepal - A Trafficking Shelter, Kathmandu, Nepal

- a) Purchase of scooter for use by social workers – funded by RCs of South Holland (D1070), Norwich St Edmund (D 1080), England and a member of RC of Mainz 50 Nord, Germany (D 1860) – March 2013
- b) Kitchen equipment – funded by RC of North Walsham (D 1080), England – April 2013
- c) Basket ball hoops and balls – funded by the RC of West Chester Downtown (D7450), USA – August 2013
- d) Misc equipment – New curtains, bikes, household equipment – by a member of the RC of Norwich St Edmund – Sept 2013
- e) Fleece blankets – funded by RC of West Chester Downtown – Presented Feb 2014.
- f) Computers & jewellery making tools- funded by members of RC of One World (USA), Longwood (D7450), USA and Stevenage Grange (D1260), England – Spring 2014

Maiti Nepal – A Trafficking Shelter, near Kathmandu, Nepal

Purchase of vocational training equipment, including sewing machines, needle and thread, beads and cloth – funded by a donation from a member of the Rotary Club of Norwich St Edmund (D 1080)

Punarnawa Ashram, - A Trafficking Shelter in Bihar, India

- a) Repairs to water supplies – funded by the RC of West Chester Downtown (D7450)
- b) Water Purification Plant – funded by a member of the RC of Annapolis (D 7620) and West Chester Downtown. (D7450)
- c) Computer and sewing machines – RC of West Chester Downtown and RC of Diss & District (D1080)

Dawns Place – Trafficking Residence in Pennsylvania, USA

- a) Cooking utensils
- b) Educational purposes, eg text books, GED exams, tutors etc
- c) Transportation passes
- d) Funds for computer maintenance

Mekong Club (Group of business persons organized to fight human trafficking in SE Asia

General Donation by a member of the RC of Washington DC

New Day Women's Drop-in-Center – A Day Shelter for victims of sex trafficking, PA, USA

- a) Freezer – funded by member of the RC of Paoli-Malvern-Berwyn (D 7450), USA
- b) Personal hygiene products, clothing and cleaning supplies – Members of RC of One World & Kennett Square (D7450), USA.

New Soak pits for the toilets at Punarnawa Ashram, Bihar, India

When the new Trafficking Shelter at Punarnawa Ashram was constructed in 2009, the original pits, for absorbing/processing waste water/sewage, were built to service 25 survivors of sex trafficking. The capacity of the Ashram was later increased to 50 girls. As a result the then existing system often overflowed causing a health hazard not only for the girls but also the staff.

It was subsequently agreed that the construction of three new soak pits was a priority. With the benefit of funds from various member clubs of RACSRAG, these soak pits were completed in January 2014.



The participating clubs were the Rotary Clubs of Norwich St Edmund (D1080), West Chester Downtown (D 7450) and a donation from a member of the RC of Mainz 50 Nord. District 1080 in England also contributed via a District Simplified Grant.

Safety grills for the dormitories at Punarnawa Ashram, Bihar, India

In order to provide greater security for the girls at the Ashram, it was agreed that safety grills should be installed in the dormitory buildings. As a result of the construction of the grills, the girls are now safer at night from any risk of intruders. Having a grill in place is part of being able to offer the overall shelter home service, as a place of recovery, education and skills training for the girls rescued from sex slavery in North India.



The new safety grills were funded by the Rotary Clubs of West Chester Downtown, Norwich St Edmund and a donation from a member of the RC of Mainz 50 Nord, Germany

Heightening the perimeter wall at Punarnawa Ashram

Punarnawa Ashram is a Trafficking Shelter in Bihar, India for girls rescued from sex slavery. When originally constructed, with the addition of barbed wire, the wall was of sufficient height to deter slave masters to recover their previous "investments" from the Ashram.

However, the wall needed to be increased when a new paved road was built in the developing village. The changes in the grading and the addition of materials made the road 3 feet higher than previously. Thus it became potentially easier for a trafficker to snatch a girl back after rescue in order to stop her from testifying or to revictimize her.

It was agreed to raise the wall along the whole extension of the Ashram at an estimated cost of \$18,000. The Wall was completed in May 2014 under the supervision of our partners, [Free the Slaves](#) based in Washington DC and a grass roots anti-slavery organization called [M.S.E.M.V.S.](#) based at Varanasi, India.



The following Clubs/individuals contributed to this successful project.

Rotary Clubs in England: Stevenage Grange (D1260), Swaffham, Norwich St Edmund, Littleport, Diss & District (D1080) and Croydon South (D1140).
Rotary Club in Australia: Walkerville (D9500)
Rotary Club in USA: West Chester Downtown (D7450)
Churches: Sutton Methodist Church, Norfolk, England
Personal Donations: Members of the Rotary Clubs of Accrington (D1190), England, Walkerville (D9500), Australia, Adelaide EDGE (D9500, Mainz 50 Nord (D1860), Germany

Smart Phone APP to identify Slavery victims

A very small percentage of victims of slavery are ever identified. One of the main factors which contribute to this situation includes the inability of law enforcement officers who come into contact with potential victims to determine where they are from.

To address the issue of victim identification, the Mekong Club (a group of businessmen committed to eradicate human trafficking) has been doing research/tests/studies to use smart phone technology to solve the problem. This initiative involves the refinement of an existing and fairly successful APP which enables law enforcement officers and/or NGO workers to question potential victims without speaking their language. This is achieved using pre-recorded videos and questionnaires which are loaded onto a smart phone. \$4,500 was needed to complete the field testing in Thailand.

The initiative was funded by RACSRAG, the Rotary Club of Norwich St Edmund, a member of the Rotary Club of Mainz 50 Nord, Germany and the RC of Stevenage Grange in November 2014.

B. Current Action Group Projects

Kalimpong Vocational Training Workshop, East Bengal, India

Global Grant approval was awarded in August 2014 to complete the construction of a Vocational Training Centre estimated to cost \$69,000. The Centre will train those in need in the community of Kalimpong which is in East Bengal, India. In addition to the RF Global Grant, funds have been provided by 13 Rotary Clubs from Scotland, England and the Czech Republic, 3 Rotary Districts and 4 individual contributions. Work on the scheme commenced in December 2014 and represents Phase 1 of the Project. Funds will shortly be requested to commence Phase 2 which is the construction of a Shelter Home (on top of the VTC building) for those women and children rescued from trafficking. The training facilities of the VTC will allow the survivors to retrain in a vocational skill in order to get them back to work in the community. The estimated cost of Phase 2 is currently at \$92,000.

Schools4Free, India

This project has been masterminded by the [Voices4Freedom](#) Foundation but is being promoted by RACSRAG member, Carol Metzker in Pennsylvania. It is described as an innovative transitional school model which educates child slaves and in the process frees entire villages from generational debt bondage.

The plan is that grass root activists go undercover into enslaved villages and educate the villagers about their plight. They explain that it is possible to free themselves if the villagers learn their rights, join together and demand change. Usually the villagers are frightened. They have personal experiences with the slaveholder's thugs. None of it is good. Activists tell them the first step is to educate the children. They bring in teachers and set up a school. **This changes everything.**

The parents are inspired. The idea of their children becoming educated emboldens them. Like parents all over the world, these mothers and fathers will risk most anything to get their children educated.. they'll even risk their own lives. Each school educates at least 40 former slave children. These students spend three years getting up to grade level so they can catch up and transfer to Indian Government schools.

The students learn the three "Rs" plus the most important "R". They learn their rights. And so do their parents. Because when the parents see their children learn, they want to learn too. Parents learn how to organize and how to open doors that have always been closed to low caste illiterate people. By educating the Children, Freedom Schools become the catalyst that brings entire villages to freedom.

The three year project will start as soon as \$36,000 is raised. This sum will provide funds for facilities to start a school, a salary for 2 teachers, lunches for the children, vocational and educational supplies and equipment and the costs of frontline workers to organize and educate parents about their rights, teach livelihood skills and how to access government services. .

To date the project has funds collected/promises equivalent to 38% of the required sum. These funds come from 8 Rotary Clubs and 11 individuals.

(See over the page for a summary of projects completed by the Action Group between its inception in 2009 and 2012, ie prior to its approval as a RAG in January 2013. Full details of the projects, description, photographs, club and personal contributions etc, can be obtained via the Action Group's website)

C. Summary of Action Group's Projects between 2009 - 2012

Purchase of a Motor Bike – Bal Vikas Ashram - Child Slave Rehab Centre for Boys, Nr Allahabad, India

Purchase of a Motor Vehicle – Bal Vikas Ashram (Part funded by RF Matching Grant)

Construction of a Bio Gas System, Cows and Cow Shed – Punarnawa Ashram - Trafficking Shelter for Girls, Bihar, India

Purchase of vocational equipment – Punarnawa Ashram, Bihar, India

Installation of solar lamps (additional security) – Punarnawa Ashram, Bihar India

The installation of solar panels – Punarnawa Ashram, Bihar, India

Purchase of high quality cameras, videos and ancillary equipment – Field workers in Uttar Pradesh & Bihar

Purchase of books for Literacy and Education for the benefit of survivors of human trafficking and slavery in the USA and India

Purchase of vocational tools and equipment for Bal Vikas Ashram

Construction of a Gazebo (open air classroom) for Punarnawa Ashram

Funding support for schools operated by Wulugu in Northern Ghana

Purchase of materials, equipment, food etc for Rescue Mission for Children Centre (a Trafficking Shelter), Mae Suai, Thailand

Funding support for schools operated under the auspices of Anti-Slavery International in Niger.

Funding, equipment, furniture and operational support for Dawns Place, a Trafficking Residence in Pennsylvania, USA

Funding support for Rescue Shelters in Phoenix, Arizona