



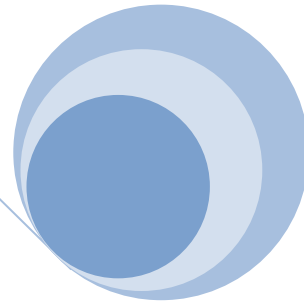
Rotary

Rotarian Action  
Group Against  
Slavery



RACSRAG Newsletter 67  
Member briefing paper  
[www.racsrag.org](http://www.racsrag.org)

# Just One<sup>+</sup>



*“To free the world’s 46 million slaves could cost \$15 billion. Is it a big number? It’s what the USA spends on crisps and pretzels each year! Much can be achieved through preventative programmes, many addressed by Rotary’s Areas of Focus.”*

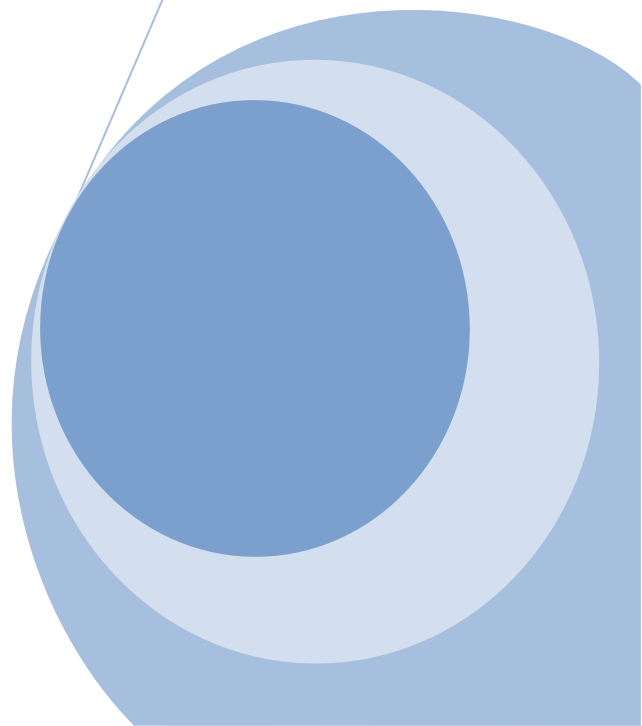
## Rotary’s Areas of Focus

### Helping to end Modern Slavery

*Just One<sup>+</sup> promotes Rotary International’s Areas of Focus projects in support of, and helping to bring an end to modern slavery, and those trafficked into it.*

Stephen Sypula, Vice-Chair  
August 2016







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**Projects supporting any of Rotary’s six Areas of Focus also help bring an end to human slavery – support *Just One*<sup>+</sup>**

**Those who have or are about to undertake a Rotary Foundation Global Grant will know that each application must meet [at least one] of the six areas of focus.**

-  Peace and conflict prevention/resolution
-  Disease prevention and treatment
-  Water and sanitation
-  Maternal and child health
-  Basic education and literacy
-  Economic and community development

**Support *Just One*<sup>+</sup> Rotary area of Focus and help address the causes of global slavery**

**There are nearly 46 million slaves in the world today, according to Walk Free’s [Global Slavery index](#). That’s nearly four times as many as were enslaved during the 400 years of the Atlantic Slave Trade.**

Despite being declared illegal in every Country, Global Slavery is growing. It’s the second largest illegal activity, worth an estimated \$150 billion in illegal profits.

**Can we stop this?**

Yes. Let’s put the challenge in perspective: To free the world’s 46 million slaves could cost \$15 billion. A big number? It’s what the USA spends on crisps and pretzels each year! Much can be achieved through preventative programmes, many addressed by Rotary’s Areas of Focus.

With commitment, leadership and by working in partnership with others we can end slavery once and for all within a generation. So please let’s generate a commitment throughout the Rotary movement, and with our partners, to help end slavery now.

**Where does the Action Group fit in?**

In addition to supporting projects and activities that assist the rescue, recovery, rehabilitation and re-integration of enslaved people into their communities, the Rotary Action Group, working with other RAGS and Non-Government Agencies (NGO’s), also look to encourage Rotarians generally, and its Action Group Members in particular to support all programmes that contribute to making the world a safer, healthier, more prosperous and peaceful place.

**Slavery links, projects and activities supporting RI’s Area of Focus**

Since being acknowledged by the RI Board in 2013, RACSRAG, through its member’s clubs have undertaken projects that embrace one or more Areas of Focus, as a means of addressing its objectives.



Examples of practical action, supported by their rationale are shown opposite.

To assist clubs further, RAGAS is working to create a relevant slavery statement for each area of focus. Global Grant applicants may wish to include these statements in support of their applications.

### Tackling Modern Slavery is the world's greatest 'man-made' challenge.

Slavery is engineered, by inter alia, greed and vulnerability. The Action Group, along with many within the Rotary movement, is committed to help re-engineer the causes and the effects of this inhumanity of man.

RACSRAG encourages all Rotarians to help create a chain of events, which, by either tackling the issue at its source by addressing RI Areas of Focus, or by supporting projects and activities that benefit the enslaved and rescued, help bring the reign and terror of slavery to an end.

**Want to know more?** Why not have a look at [Engage. Why should I?](#)

Stephen Sypula  
Vice-Chair, RACSRAG

[www.racsrag.org](http://www.racsrag.org)  
[Stephen@racsrag.org](mailto:Stephen@racsrag.org)

### Slavery links, projects and activities supporting RI's Area of Focus



#### Peace and conflict prevention / resolution

Slavery and conflict are common bedfellows. For example, in the United States in the early 1860s, slavery had become inextricably entwined with State rights, the power of the Federal Government over the States, the South's way of life etc. All of which made a major contribution to the causes of the American Civil War.

Several slave-holding countries are currently in similar situations of turmoil and upheaval such as Mauritania, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sudan, Syria, Iraq and Uzbekistan.

In Uzbekistan, the government's annual forced use of labour in collecting cotton, is creating conflict, injury and deaths amongst huge swathes of its own inhabitants.

RACSRAG and Walk Free have already tried to help here by writing a joint letter to the World Bank, urging the Bank to withhold funds from the Uzbek Government, until such time as slavery in its cotton fields cases.



#### Disease, prevention and treatment

Apart from forced labour, the most common purpose of human trafficking is sexual exploitation. Because victims of sex trafficking are usually forced to have sex with strangers 15-30 times per day, they are exposed to an untold number of sexually transmitted diseases, which increase the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS.



In addition these unfortunate victims are vulnerable to a whole range of infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis, hepatitis, malaria and pneumonia. These diseases are prevalent amongst sex trafficking victims usually because of unsanitary and dangerous housing conditions, use of needles and inadequate or lack of access to health care.

Ending this form of slavery, which is a major objective of many RACSRAG members, would end this manner of spreading disease. A very good example of action being taken by Rotarians against this form of exploitation, can be found in District 5100, Oregon. Several Rotary clubs have combined to drive out the traffickers through various methods, e.g. flooding hotels and motels with thousands of small soap bars labelled with a National Trafficking Hot-line number, persuading businesses, bowling alleys, bus and train stations and truck stops to display anti-trafficking posters, marching through the towns and cities with anti-slavery placards.



**Water and sanitation**

Lack of local water supply and proper sanitation affects all families but particularly the female members of the family. Without water on tap, women and children are forced to walk miles to the nearest supply each day. They are at a great risk of abduction from traffickers and the young girls are highly unlikely to even have the time to attend school.

Lack of proper sanitation also provide major problems for young girls. There is strong evidence that the lack of anywhere to relieve themselves in privacy and decency is an important reason why girls are kept out of school, especially after they reach puberty. They also have to handle the problems associated with menstruation

(such as changing and disposing of cloths). Girls who are denied access to education are more likely to be trapped in a cycle of poverty and disease, forced into child marriage and prostitution and become victims of sex trafficking or domestic violence.

RACSRAG member clubs in England and the USA combined fairly recently to provide new soak pits for the toilets at Punarnawa Ashram, a Trafficking Shelter in Bihar, India. When the Shelter 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. The new soak pits were completed in 2014.



**Maternal and child health**

If a child is in slavery, he or she is most likely to be malnourished and in poor health. The two main characteristics of modern slaves (as opposed to the slaves of the past) is that they are cheap and disposable. Because they are so cheap, they can be dispensed with if they fall ill. Their very cheapness means that no slave master will ever bother to spend money on ensuring that their slaves are healthy. If they can no longer do the work that is required of them, they are literally disposed off. This is one of the main motivations for RACSRAG to help NGO's to rescue children from slavery.

For example in 2010, several members of the Action Group combined to purchase a rescue vehicle (with the aid of a Matching Grant) to be used by anti-slavery activists



involved with a boys rehabilitation centre near Allahabad, India.



## Basic education and literacy

One of the best defences against slavery is education. If a community does not have a school, the children would end up playing on the streets of their community. In other words they become more vulnerable and open access to traffickers. Because they are vulnerable, they are most likely to be exploited into slavery. So schools are absolutely necessary for preventing children from being snatched into slavery. In the last few years, RACSRAG has provided funds for new schools particularly in Africa, e.g. Niger (through Anti-slavery International) and Ghana (through the Wulugu Trust) and is currently providing a school in Uttar Pradesh, India, under the project entitled "Schools4Freedom". For further details of this project see website link "[Education plus sustainable Freedom for over 130 Villagers](#)" and a project update in the Action Group's [Newsletter 66](#).

When children are rescued from slavery and brought to rehabilitation centres, they are educated not only how to read and write, but also how to acquire trade skills such as welding, weaving, bicycle repairs, tailoring, electronics etc. These survivors return to their villages equipped with a skill and the education to make their way in the world independently

Equally important, once they learn about their rights as citizens at these rehabilitation centres, they return home to their villages feeling empowered and committed to stopping other children from falling into the same trap which they have experienced. Many of RACSRAG's projects have involved purchasing the tools and equipment which ensure that

these rehabilitation centres and trafficking shelters can continue with work of educating the survivors of slavery and human trafficking. The best example has been the purchase (with the help of a Matching Grant) of a 20-25 seater bus to be used for educational purposes and visits for Mukti Ashram and Balika Ashram, two Child Slave Rehabilitation Centres in Delhi, India.



## Economic and community development

As Professor Kevin Bales has pointed out, slavery distorts the economic and social development of local and regional communities in two ways. Firstly, because exploited labour is unpaid or low, it has the effect of depressing the wages of free labourers in the same economic sector in which they work. In short these unfortunates represent severe competition for those workers who are free.

Secondly economies are distorted when enslaved workers and their families are removed from their local communities as consumers. In some countries (eg India) this happens to whole villages in which the inhabitants are enmeshed in generational debt bondage. Workers who are paid normal wages will spend their money on local food, goods and services. Slaves do not have such choices. Enslaved victims are unlikely to buy school supplies, pay teachers, access medical care or other services which are part of the local economy and which benefit the community. Freeing a slave or group of slaves stimulates the local economy.

RACSRAG is currently involved in freeing a whole village of debt bondage slaves in Uttar Pradesh, India. See [website link](#)

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