

# Rotarian Action Group against Slavery

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Website [www.ragas.online](http://www.ragas.online)

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4 children in a refugee camp in Calais



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

*"You must be the change you wish to see in the world"*

(Mahatma Gandhi)



## The Action Group is now called RAGAS

Last month, the RACS-RAG Board submitted a request to Rotary International for permission to change the name of the Action Group from "The Rotarian Action Group against Child

Slavery" to "The Rotarian Action Group against Slavery" (RAGAS).

The rationale for the name change was explained in Newsletter 66 which was issued on 16<sup>th</sup> July.

The application for change has been accepted by Rotary International.

The name change has now been reflected in the Action Group's new Website whose address is [www.ragas.online](http://www.ragas.online).

## Exploitation of children in French refugee camps

A recent report issued by UNICEF claims that unaccompanied minors in refugee camps in Calais and Dunkirk are being sexually exploited and forced to commit crimes by traffickers who promise passage to the UK. The claim is based on 6 months of interviews.

Children in the camps told researchers they have been forced to work and commit crimes such as opening lorry doors to enable adults to be smuggled across the Channel.

The interviews reveal the traumas the children have suffered getting to Europe their experiences in the camps and the risks they are taking to be reunited with family members, despite many having a safe and legal route available.

## UK's PM announces proposals to fight slavery

In an exclusive newspaper article, Mrs Theresa May, the newly elected UK Prime Minister, announced a few weeks ago, a three pronged attack on Britain's "sickening and inhuman" underworld in which up to 13,000 people are being kept in servitude.

Mrs May will personally chair a new Cabinet Task Force to drive out the abuse, and will create a multi-million pound aid fund for the estimated 46million victims around the world. The third strand of Mrs May's strategy will focus on putting pressure on police, with an investigation into forces which are failing to take the modern slave trade seriously. (see Annex for Mrs May's article)



## PepsiCo supplier Indofood accused of child labour violations

PepsiCo's Indonesian snack manufacturing partner Indofood has been accused of running plantations rife with child labour, worker intimidation, and health and safety violations

A report issued recently by OPPUK, an Indonesian labour rights advocacy organization, has found extensive labour violations on 2 palm oil plantations in North Sumatra operated by PT PP London Sumatra – a subsidiary of Indonesian food giant Indofood. These violations, which were conducted by field investigations and worker interviews, are claimed to include child labour, unethically low wages and worker exploitation.

Indofood is Indonesia's biggest food company and one of the largest palm oil growers in the world. The company is connected to PepsiCo through a joint venture which makes it the sole manufacturer of PepsiCo's snack products in Indonesia.



A young Kernet worker pushes a heavy load of fresh fruit bunches in Indofood's plantation.

*"In a world where most people loath slavery, awakening their awareness will unleash great power "*

*(Kevin Bales)*



## Editorial

Some people in the UK have continued to labour under the comforting myth that slavery is a thing of the past in these Isles, that the practice ceased with the abolition of the Transatlantic Slave Trade and the American Civil War.

Others see the problem from a different perspective. They believe that "modern slavery" is a new phenomenon and that it is restricted to countries such as India, China, Northern Nigeria and North Korea rather than the UK. After all did we not, nine years ago, celebrate the 200<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the 1807 Abolition of the Slave Trade Act? And was not slavery itself abolished in Britain and the Empire by the British Emancipation Act of 1833?

The reality is that whilst the laws permitting slavery and the slave trade have

been repealed everywhere, people around the world continue to be brutalized, broken, exploited and enslaved through violence or the threat of violence....and the UK is no exception.

The most recent Home Office estimates suggest there are between 10,000 and 13,000 victims of modern slavery in the UK, with 46 million estimated victims across the world.

Last month Mrs Theresa May reconfirmed her pledge to rid the world of the "barbaric evil" of slavery as she spelt out her personal mission as the UK Prime Minister.

As she explained "*just as it was Britain that took an historic stand to ban slavery two centuries ago, so Britain will once again lead the way in defeating modern slavery and preserving the freedoms*

*and values that have defined our country for generations"*

If every national leader were to make and fulfil the same level of commitment as Theresa May, slavery and the slave trade would soon be history.

The full text of Mrs May's article in the Sunday Telegraph of 31<sup>st</sup> July is included in the Annex to this Newsletter.

It seems that Malcolm Baird's article on Supply Chains and Slavery has stimulated a response from two areas of the UK. First we have an open letter from Brigitte Faubert from the Rotary Club of Kew Gardens, England, to Malcolm and secondly we have an article from Kieran John, a Rotaractor from Norwich, England. Kieran has spent the past several months researching and analysing (cont'd)



## Editorial (continued)

Section 54 of the UK Modern Slavery Act 2015 (Transparency in Supply Chains) as part of his law degree. On page 5 he summarises his view of the shortcomings of the current legislation. If you would like a copy of the full dissertation please contact Kieran at [kieranjohn92@gmail.com](mailto:kieranjohn92@gmail.com)

One of the challenges which RAGAS sometimes faces is the lack of presenters we can call upon to speak on the subject of human trafficking and slavery in some parts of the world. This challenge has been diminished by IJM's offer (see below) to provide speakers in the UK and certain other countries. This is one of the benefits which flows from RAGAS's and IJM's decision to forge closer working links with each other.

### Slavery: Vast, Brutal... and according to IJM, Stoppable

by Abigail Jarvis, International Justice Mission

This was Gary Haugen's - International Justice Mission CEO - [message](#) at the RI Convention in Seoul. To bring that message home to your club, you may be interested in hearing directly from an IJM speaker. Like [RAGAS](#), IJM is passionate about raising awareness about the levels of slavery and human trafficking around the world. As a well-established, effective international anti-slavery organisation, IJM can extend the message of the anti-slavery fight even further.

Each of IJM's partner offices has experienced and passionate staff and volunteers who would be delighted to come to your Rotary Club or District. They will share about why justice matters and what can be – and is being done to bring about an end to slavery and make justice for the poor an everyday reality. IJM is the largest anti-slavery organisation in the world and has developed a unique and proven expertise in achieving significant, sustainable reductions in human trafficking and slavery. *IJM will not give up until all are free.*

- Learn about the global reality of 45.8 million people living in slavery.
- Understand the global nature of human trafficking and slavery and how it impacts your own country and community
- Discover the critical importance of investing in local justice systems to protect the poor from slavery and violence by rigorously applying anti-trafficking and slavery laws.
- Explore how your shopping, investment habits and campaigning can influence large companies to eradicate slavery from their supply chain
- Find out how you and your club can contribute to the end of slavery by raising awareness of the issue and fighting to bring it to an end through Rotary, RAGAS and IJM.

UK (Northern Ireland, Scotland and England regional offices) and Republic of Ireland: [www.ijmuk.org/speakers](http://www.ijmuk.org/speakers) or email [contact@ijmuk.org](mailto:contact@ijmuk.org)

Germany: Email [info@ijm-deutschland.de](mailto:info@ijm-deutschland.de)

Netherlands: [www.ijmnl.org/sprekers](http://www.ijmnl.org/sprekers)

Australia: Email [contact@ijm.org.au](mailto:contact@ijm.org.au)

Canada: [www.ijm.ca/speakers](http://www.ijm.ca/speakers)

USA and the rest of the world: [www.ijm.org/get-to-know-us/request-speaker](http://www.ijm.org/get-to-know-us/request-speaker)



Gary Haugen speaking at the RI Convention, Seoul



## The Red Sand Project: Keeping People From Falling Between the Cracks

by Carol Metzker, One World Rotary Club



*“You may never know what results come from our actions, but if you do nothing, there will be no result”*

(Mahatma Gandhi)



Anne Marie fell between the cracks—at home, at school, in her community. Sexually assaulted by her brother and dismissed by her mother, she started skipping school. Her attendance dwindled until no one noticed she was missing. She believed that no one cared.

After years of hell, Anne Marie received help as a victim, instead of punishment as a criminal. Today she helps women recover from the life she endured. She also advocates for better laws and practices to help keep children from falling between the cracks of society, becoming vulnerable to traffickers.

The Red Sand Project, started by artist Molly Goochman, helps communities address the issue of modern slavery. When groups work together to fill cracks in concrete or between bricks of sidewalks—symbolizing a commitment to keep humans from falling between the cracks—they raise awareness of the problem and its solutions. Passers-by look twice and ask questions, sparking conversations about how to help people like Anne Marie who are vulnerable to human trafficking and modern slavery, or how to help support the recovery of survivors.

Rotarian Carol Metzker and a group of artists gave the Red Sand Project a whirl in Philadelphia on 24 July 2016. The result: more attention by artists to the plight of people who are homeless, hungry, in strife and vulnerable, and street conversations with onlookers who left with eyes wide open.

Learn more: watch [Red Sand Project](#) on Youtube

## “The Negro’s Complaint” by William Cowper

Forced from home and all its pleasures, Afric’s coast I left forlorn,  
To increase the stranger’s treasurers, o’er the raging billows borne  
Men from England bought and sold me, paid my price in paltry gold;  
But, though slave they have enroll’d me, minds are never to be sold

Still in thought as free as ever, what are England’s rights, I ask  
Me from my delights to sever, me to torture, me to task  
Fleecy locks and black complexion cannot forfeit Nature’s claim  
Skins may differ, but affection, dwells in white and black the same

Why did all creating Nature, make the plant for which we toil ?  
Sighs must fan it, tears must water, sweat of ours must dress the soil.

**Editor’s Note:** *In the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, abolition embraced an extraordinary range of contemporary interests and talents. It had a particular resonance for a variety of writers and poets. One of these was William Cowper, who attacked slavery in the above poem of 1793*



## Slavery and Supply Chains

by Kieran John, President, Rotaract Club of Norwich

Slavery is present in the supply chains of the food we eat, the clothes we wear, and the materials that built our houses. The British Government is aiming to tackle this pressing issue through s.54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. It compels any commercial organisation with a turnover of over £36 million to prepare a slavery and human trafficking statement for each financial year, signed off by the board of directors or partner, and published prominently on their website. They are compelled to include the steps taken to ensure slavery is not taking place in any of its supply chains, and in any part of its own business. The current British Prime Minister Theresa May MP sponsored this act when she was Home Secretary. She stated that the aim was to 'increase transparency by ensuring the public, consumers, employees and investors know what steps an organisation is taking to tackle modern slavery'. This article aims to summarise the legislation, outline its limitations, and present the reader with the platform to hold companies to account.

It is fitting that this article is for the RAGAS Newsletter. Members of RAGAS (formerly known as RACSRAG) played a pivotal part in implementing s.54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. Early drafts of the bill did not include a "supply chain clause", However latter drafts took on board feedback from RACSRAG, Ethical Trading Initiative and Joseph Rowntree Foundation who all called for a "supply chain clause".

It is noted that the British Government should be commended for implementing the supply chain provision. Large multi-national companies are well suited to implementing change in their supply chains, due to their significant purchasing power. However, in my opinion this legislation does not go far enough, for four key reasons.

1. S.54 does not require organisations to guarantee that their entire supply chain is slave free. This has led to many companies producing statements which do not fulfil the relatively simple requirements of s.54 (Ergon has found that of the first 100 statements, supply chain issues are only covered moderately well, or in detail, in 41% of statements).
2. Despite s.54(7)(a-b) requiring that statements are published on the company website, and linked prominently on the homepage, a number of organisations are not complying, and have not been held to account. For example, it takes four stages to locate the statement for the retailer Halfords on their website (Home-Investors-Governance-the Halfords Anti Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement). Without stronger enforcement companies can effectively "bury" their statement without any financial or legal repercussions. Additionally if consumers cannot easily access the statements they will not be able to hold companies to account, nor will the average consumer become aware that slavery still exists in global supply chains.
3. The primary method of enforcement of s.54 is not legal but reputational, as inspired by The California Transparency in Supply Chains Act of 2010. However, the general academic consensus is that this approach, in isolation, is not effective. The British Government even admitted that public awareness and understanding of modern slavery in the UK is low, so it remains to be seen how the ill-informed consumer can hold multi-national corporations to account, if they are not imbued with the background knowledge to do so.
4. Finally, the scope of s.54 is limited as it is restricted to organisations who 'carry on a business' in the UK. This is particularly important with parent companies and their subsidiaries, as the parent is free to determine whether their subsidiaries form a part of their own business or supply chain. This distinction is important in light of news

## Slavery and Supply Chains (cont'd)

reports of forced labour in Qatar for the 2022 FIFA World Cup; with many of these labourers being employed by subcontractors working for British construction firms.

### What can you do as a Rotarian

1. You can speak directly to these multi-national companies through the #AskTheQuestion Campaign from the team behind the Modern Slavery Garden at the 2016 RHS Chelsea Flower Show. This campaign encourages consumers to ask whether the products they buy are slavery-free, by taking a photo of the product, posting it to social media, and tagging the manufacturer and using the hashtags #AskTheQuestion and #SlaveFree.
2. Encourage your local MP to propose a reform to the Modern Slavery Act 2015 to rectify its shortcomings
3. If you are not based in the UK, encourage your government to introduce legislation building on the Modern Slavery Act 2015

### **Contact**

If you are interested in reading more about this, please contact me via [kieranjohn92@gmail.com](mailto:kieranjohn92@gmail.com).

## Letters

### Letter from Omaha – Jennifer Jirak-Brungardt

Hi Guys

I wanted to let you know that Matt's visit to Omaha was very successful. About 500 people heard him speak over 3 days. Many of whom are interested and wanted to know what to do next. I will be interested to see if you get some new memberships from Iowa/Nebraska over the next couple of weeks as we gave out the brochures after his talk to 200+ Rotarians on Tuesday.

We have gotten some good interest/traction here in the city. Nebraska/Iowa are served by Coalition Against Human Trafficking however their focus is local focusing on forced prostitution here in the Midwest. I think we have a lot of interest in the intl. issues as well with clubs considering possible Rotary projects.

Best Regards,

Jennifer Jirak-Brungardt  
Executive Director  
Suburban Rotary  
District 5650  
USA

## Letters (cont'd)

### Letter from Brigitte Faubert to Malcolm Baird

Dear Malcolm

I just wanted to congratulate you on your article, but also to point out that there are some fundamental tenets in Rotary that Rotarians need to be reminded of in the context of slavery

Both the four way test and the second object of Rotary demand that as Rotarians we have signed up to combat slavery and in particular not to turn a blind eye to its presence in our own communities - it is not just something that happens in the Third World, but also manifests itself in our own homes and businesses. There are examples in the UK of car washing services that operate in supermarket car parks where slavery practices exist. How many of us use them as a matter of convenience assuming that the supermarket ensures that everything is fair and hunky dory when really at heart we know that their employer does not pay pensions or tax on this cash in hand service.

Always buying at the cheapest price without working out what the original producer got for his/her labour at the start of the supply chain means that we are tacitly supporting slavery. And regardless of nationality or ethnic origins we have to face the fact that many Rotarians earn their own living off the back of slavery.

However I have to take issue with the Group in one respect - in many cultures "children" are part of the family economic activity. In subsistence farming, the whole family including women and children, are involved in the survival of the family unit. They are unwaged and largely unregistered in the official calculations of gross national product etc. So in many countries that for development funding purposes have been forced to adopt ILO processes such as minimum wage and labour rights legislation exploitation practices continue because thousands of people are not recorded as economic participants/ agents. So figures that suggest that average income is less than USD1 a day mask the true picture. The head of the family, the recorded economic agent, might be recorded as earning more than 1 USD a day, but to achieve that he/she will rely on many other unwaged members. eg cotton picking in Uzbekistan.

Finally Malcolm I refer you to Business in the Community in the UK and its companion groups around the world that are addressing responsible business

<http://www.bitc.org.uk/international/business-and-human-rights>

<http://www.bitc.org.uk/our-resources/report/modern-slavery-act-insight-paper>

Yours in Rotary

Brigitte Faubert  
RC of Kew Gardens, D1140  
England

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**Disclaimer:** The views expressed by the contributors are not necessarily those of the Editor or of the RAGAS Board



**Article in the Sunday Telegraph – 31<sup>st</sup> July 2016**  
**by the Rt Hon Theresa May, UK Prime Minister**

**We will lead the way in defeating modern slavery**

A year ago the Modern Slavery Act that I brought forward as Home Secretary came into force. The first legislation of its kind in Europe, this Act has delivered tough new penalties to put slave masters behind bars where they belong, with life sentences for the worst offenders.

It has created a vital policing tool to stop anyone convicted of trafficking from travelling to a country where they are known to have exploited vulnerable people in the past. It has delivered enhanced protection and support for victims and a world-leading transparency requirement on businesses to show that modern slavery is not taking place in their companies or their supply chains.

But we must not stop there. Just because we have some legislation does not mean the problem is solved. So as Prime Minister, I am setting up the first ever government task force on modern slavery. Together with my successor as Home Secretary we will hold regular meetings in Downing Street with every relevant department present to get a real grip on this issue right across Whitehall and to co-ordinate and drive further progress in the battle against this cruel exploitation.

First, I want to make sure that the Act itself is having its intended effect, so I commissioned an independent review from Caroline Haughey, a barrister with a proven track record of successfully prosecuting slave drivers. She finds that there has been good progress in the first year of the Act – with 289 modern slavery offences prosecuted in 2015 alone and a 40% rise in the number of victims identified by the State. But she says there is still further to go raising awareness of these despicable crimes, improving training for those in our criminal justice system and strengthening support for victims – and I want the task force to help drive work on all three.

She also finds the response of local police forces can be too patchy. For example, between April 2015 and March 2016, six of the 43 territorial police forces did not record a single modern slavery crime. So I am commissioning an HMIC Inspection to make sure that all police forces treat this crime with the priority it deserves.

Second, we must work collaboratively with law-enforcement agencies across the world to track and stop these pernicious gangs which operate across borders and jurisdictions.

The new Anti-Slavery Commissioner that I appointed, Kevin Hyland, is the only such commissioner in the world and he is critical in our fight to stop criminal gangs exploiting innocent men, women and children. Through his work collaborating with other countries we are looking at intelligence flows. This has helped us uncover criminal gangs creating twinned towns of modern slavery between Britain and other nations.

Modern slavery is international and requires an international response. So rather than chasing individual criminals in Britain as they are reported, we need a radically new comprehensive approach to defeating this vile and systematic international business model at its source and in transit – and we need to flex the muscle of all parts of the UK government and collaborate with international partners. This will be an important focus for the new task force because modern slavery will never be stopped if our police, borders and immigration agencies work in domestic silos.

Third, we played the leading role in getting the eradication of modern slavery into the Sustainable Development Goals, and I want Britain, as a bold country confident in its values, to continue to lead this fight on the global stage. As part of this we will be using over £33 million from our aid budget to create a five-year International Modern Slavery Fund focused on high risk countries, where we know victims are regularly trafficked to the UK.

It is hard to comprehend that such sickening and inhumane crimes are lurking in the shadows of our country. But the most recent estimates suggest there are between 10,000 and 13,000 victims in the UK alone and over 45 million across the world.

From nail bars and car washes to sheds and rundown caravans, people are enduring experiences that are simply horrifying in their inhumanity. Vulnerable people who have travelled long distances believing they were heading for legitimate jobs are finding they have been duped, forced into hard labour, and then locked up and abused. Innocent individuals are being tricked into prostitution, often by people they thought they could trust. Children are being made to pick-pocket on the streets and steal from cash machines. Others, like the seven-year old who was found and rescued in Wood Green, are held as domestic slaves, while some children are raped, beaten and passed from abuser to abuser for profit.

One woman I met had come to England as a student but was forced into prostitution, imprisoned in a house in south London and regularly abused, including being threatened at gunpoint. When she finally escaped to north London, she was picked up by another gang that systematically exploited her and raped many others in a squalid high-street brothel.

These crimes must be stopped and the victims of modern slavery must go free. This is the great human rights issue of our time, and as Prime Minister I am determined that we will make it a national and international mission to rid our world of this barbaric evil. Just as it was Britain that took an historic stand to ban slavery two centuries ago, so Britain will once again lead the way in defeating modern slavery and preserving the freedoms and values that have defined our country for generations.