

Rotarian Action Group against Slavery

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“We could eradicate slavery. The laws are in place. The multi-nationals, the World Trade organizations, the United Nations, they could end slavery, but they’re not going to do it, until and unless we demand it”
(Kevin Bales)



Exploitation of child refugees in Turkey



A BBC undercover investigation has recently exposed what many charities have been warning about- that Syrian refugee children in Turkey, who should be in school and learning, are allegedly being exploited and working underage.

The report - broadcast on Television last month by [Panorama](#) - claims that children are working for more than 12 hours a day in Turkey, sewing, stitching and ironing to

create fashion for British and European high street stores.

The BBC said it had uncovered factories where Syrian refugee children as young as ten were being employed to make clothes for retailers including Marks & Spencer, ASOS, Zara and Mango.

One factory owner said that he had been working for Next and showed reporters a set of Next pyjamas he claimed the

factory produced. Instead of learning how to read and write, some Syrian refugee children are doing backbreaking work, with some being paid less than \$1.20 an hour.

Turkey has taken in more Syrian refugee children than any other country. According to UNICEF, more than half of Turkey’s 2.7million registered Syrian refugees are children and nearly 80% of them are not at school.



Kenyan Protection Unit safeguards 150 Children

On 17th October, the first Children Protection Unit in Kenya was officially launched in Nairobi with the support of the UK’s National Crime Agency. Comprising of 12 officers from the National Police Service of Kenya, the Unit, which was set up to combat the thriving child sex tourism industry in the country, has already been instrumental in safeguarding 150 children. Whilst the UK is not hosting a dedicated officer, it is providing training equipment and financial assistance to the Kenyan National Police.

Although there is little data to verify the true scale of the national problem, children are clearly vulnerable to exploitation by traffickers and slave masters given the levels of poverty and the large number of AIDS orphans and street children. Walk Free has provided RAGAS with a [News Report](#) which states that in the port city of Mombasa alone, there are an estimated 40,000 child prostitutes some as young as 8 to 10 years of age. Apparently it is quite easy to buy a “holiday companion” for a month, a week, a day or even for a couple of hours.



Anti-Slavery Commissioner's 1st Annual Report



Last month, the UK's Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Kevin Hyland laid his first annual report before Parliament and the Northern Ireland Assembly. The report focuses on progress made in the fight against modern slavery with specific examples of significant achievements as well as failure of procedures in the UK system which require urgent improvement.

The key successes reported by Mr Hyland are reproduced in the Annex to this Newsletter. These include raising awareness of modern

slavery to 700,000 frontline staff in health and local authorities, securing an anti-slavery target in the UN's development agenda and securing a House of Commons select committee inquiry into access to benefits for victims.

As far as procedures are concerned, the report identified some areas where procedures had improved, but there were many other areas where performance fell short of expectations. There were also *"too many gaps in the system for victims to fall through"* especially once they left supported

accommodation

Mr Hyland's greatest concern was the failure by police to properly record referrals. Among the English and Welsh forces, he found 3,146 National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referrals brought just 884 recordings of slavery crimes, or 28% of the total. More than half of the English and Welsh forces had difficulties answering whether any referrals via the NRM had resulted in a crime record, whilst four could not find their internal records about NRM cases.



"You may choose to look the other way, but you can never say again that you did not know"

(William Wilberforce)



Editorial

The reports of the exploitation of Syrian refugee children are heart breaking and at the same time frustrating.

Earlier this year at the Supporting Syria Conference, a promise was made by several countries (including Germany and the UK) to get every Syrian refugee child back to school this school year. Sadly they are still waiting.

Some young people have been out of school for over 5 years. Children who are out of school are at risk of trafficking, slavery, child marriages and exploitation.

Every child deserves to be at school, learning with friends, not hunched over a machine in a backstreet workshop. Schools are not

just for learning to read and to write. They are a sanctuary, a safe place for children to channel their trauma and to feel protected. They are the best defence against exploitation into slavery

What an appropriate day it was for Anti-Slavery Commissioner Kevin Hyland to make his first annual report on the UK's progress in the fight against slavery. The report was published on the same day that a service was held at Westminster Abbey to commemorate William Wilberforce and his efforts to bring about the abolition of the trade in slaves.

Whilst highlighting his key successes (see Annex) Mr Hyland is scathing in his criticism of some of the

police forces. He is of the opinion that efforts to eradicate modern slavery are being hampered by passivity from the police and that victims are slipping through the gaps in the system. In other words these forces, he maintains, are failing victims of modern slavery by not recording what happens to them as crimes, meaning many cases are not being investigated.

I seem to recall that a few years ago, the Centre for Social Justice highlighted the fact that "human trafficking" is not a performance indicator for the police. The organization maintained that until it is, there is more incentive for the police to investigate a shed burglar than there



Mr Hyland at the Westminster Abbey service to commemorate Wilberforce



Editorial (cont'd)

Is a human trafficker. Perhaps someone can update me on the current situation vis a vis slavery and police performance indicators.

Neither does the National Crime Agency escape reproach from our Commissioner. The report says that the Agency, which collects the referrals from non-police bodies such as local authorities or border forces, has been too “passive” and has not ensured that every referral is passed on to the local police force to be recorded and investigated as a crime.

Mr Hyland’s report concluded that “*chronic weaknesses*”, “*substandard data-collection*” and “*passivity*” on behalf of the police meant that thousands of cases of possible slavery were being missed.

It is a real comfort to know that in the UK we have an Anti-Slavery Commissioner who does not pull his punches and who is strong, passionate and energetic enough to lead a concerted and effective counter offensive against those depriving vulnerable people of their liberties.

Speaking at the same service at Westminster Abbey, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Justin Welby said that people in Britain were too “*blind*” and “*insensitive*” to realise that victims of human trafficking and slavery were in their midst, not just hundreds of miles away overseas. “*We drive past slaves at car washes, we encounter slaves in the street doing routine jobs, for which they receive virtually nothing,*” Archbishop Welby said. “*We buy goods where the supply chain includes slavery. It is around us. It is in our hands. William Wilberforce convinced his generation that slavery was a sin.....our sin lies in blindness and ignorance*”

Some pointers on how to spot a trafficked victim and to understand the mind set of a trafficked victim, are included on pages 5 and 6 of this Newsletter.



Above: Princess Eugenie lays a wreath at the grave of William Wilberforce
Below: Archbishop Welby speaking at the service at Westminster Abbey



Kalimpong Project.- Official Opening of VTC

16th Sept 2016 at Kalimpong, NE India

(by Robin Hamilton, RC of Dunbar, District 1020, Scotland)

Seven Rotarians from Dunbar, Scotland and two partners (all known as the K9) were at the official opening of the Vocational Training Centre (VTC) at Kalimpong in NE, India on the 16th September 2016. The Centre, had been completed earlier this year at a cost of \$69,000 and with the help of 14 Rotary Clubs and a significant RF Global Grant.

The VTC represents Phase 1 of the Kalimpong Project and is currently providing vocational training courses (see the seven trade courses listed below) for those vulnerable in the local community. Phase 2, will provide shelter accommodation for those women and girls, who are rescued from human trafficking and slavery.

The opening started with the K9 following the Scottish University Mission Institutes (SUMI) pipe band playing Scottish tunes, into the school courtyard where 2,500 pupils, members of Kalimpong Rotary club, District 3240, including the District Governor, teachers, community representatives, all cheered as they made their entrance.

They were then garlanded and seated in as the chief guests of the event. During the course of morning, they received 7 friendship scarves. This was indeed a very moving experience for the visitors from Scotland.



The SUMI pipe band playing in Kalimpong in honour of the guests from Scotland.



Kalimpong Project - Official Opening of VCT (Cont'd)

(by Robin Hamilton, RC of Dunbar, District 1020, Scotland)

"We are the doers of our communities, the leaders, the ones who are most involved, who see the problems and have the means to find the solutions"

(Kalyan Banerjee (RI President 2011/12)

The VTC was then handed over by Rotary to the Diocese of Eastern Himalayas Church of North East India (DISHA). This was followed by a series of speeches by Rotary Presidents past and present, the District Governor of D3240, the SUMI Principal, officials of DISHA and finally by myself, representing the Rotary Club of Dunbar.

The morning was interspersed with a cultural programme of dance and song by SUMI pupils, prayers, readings and gifts to International Rotarians. This was a day which will be remembered forever by all K9.

We then proceeded to the VTC (5min from SUMI) following the pipe band for the official opening ceremony where the ribbon was cut and a plaque with the names of all supporting clubs and individuals was unveiled.

Finally they enjoyed a tour of the fully kitted out VTC and a presentation by the representatives of the Government National Skills Development Corporation, the body which is initially running seven trade courses. These are:

1. Certificate programme for Customer Relationship
2. Certificate programme for Helper Electrician
3. Certificate for self employed Women Tailoring
4. Certificate for Helper Mason
5. Certificate programme for Floriculturist (open cultivation)
6. Certificate programme for Organic Grower
7. Certificate programme for Dairy Farmer

A number of candidates have already been identified and interestingly training involves identification of a placement at the beginning of the course. This is all part of an initiative by the new Government in India in which classes are free. This is a great opportunity to learn a new skill

For the Phase 2 Shelter Home (to be built above the VTC), a Coordinator has been identified (Dr Sharon) who has been working in various hospitals in India. She feels the Shelter Home name will stigmatise women and would prefer to call it Crisis / Rescue Centre. Thus it will be used by women and children rescued from trafficking, suffering from domestic abuse, teenage pregnancy and other vulnerable issues. Phase 2 is a safe haven and support centre and those using it will also be able to use the VTC skills training in the ground floor to give them a new start in life

As part of their visit the K9 were taken the previous day to many of the remote locations to see the rural issues around Kalimpong

Fundraising for Phase 2 has already started and now that Phase 1 is operational, we are looking to secure further funds, grants etc for the next stage of the Kalimpong Project.

If you would like to help or have more information about Phase 2 of the Project, please contact me at robinham23@gmail.com



Postbag

Dear Editor

Having seen the plea for financial support for the excellent Kumudini project, I thought I should outline a way that the strongest supporters can encourage others to give.

The approach I have seen working in our local Community Foundation in Norfolk (and elsewhere) is to build a small pool called 'Matched Funding'

How this works is that a few already committed individuals – instead of putting their money into the scheme – offer it up to the scheme organisers as a pool of "matched funding". What this means is that the scheme organisers can go out to others and say 'if you put in £x we can match it with say a 50% uplift. This is often seen by donors as a 'no brainer' and results in much higher levels of giving and/or much higher numbers of givers.

So in this example: we are trying to raise just the £3000 that they need to make this great project work. So, the pool needs to be £1000 so they can add this money, as the 50% offered, to the £2000 we then must raise from other subscribers. This leveraging really seems to work for the benefit of all. I would be happy to put in to put in the first £250 to kick start such a pool.

In the event that this is seen to work, hopefully those early adopters can be prevailed on to do the same again for the next substantial project.

I hope this is seen as a positive idea that can help your important work.

Sincerely

Frank Eliel

RC of Norwich Blackfriars, England

How to spot a trafficked victim

Signs of modern slavery can be difficult to detect, with victims remaining hidden for years. But you can be aware of the situations below.

Physical appearance...victims may show signs of physical or psychological abuse, look malnourished or unkempt or appear withdrawn.

Isolation...Victims may rarely be allowed to travel on their own, seem under the control or influenced by others, rarely interact or appear unfamiliar with their neighbourhood or where they work.

Poor living conditions...Victims may be living in dirty, cramped or overcrowded accommodation, and/or living and working at the same address.

Few or no personal effects...Victims may have no identification documents, have few personal possessions and always wear the same clothes – day in, day out. What clothes they do wear may not be suitable for their work.

Restricted freedom of movement...Victims have little opportunity to move freely and may have had their travel documents such as passports, retained.

How to spot a trafficked victim (Cont'd)

Unusual travel times...They may be regularly dropped off/collected for work very early in the morning or very late at night.

Reluctant to seek help...Victims may avoid eye contact, appear frightened or hesitant to talk to strangers and fear law enforcers for many reasons, such as not knowing whom to trust or where to get help, fear of deportation or fear of violence to them or their family.

The mindset of a trafficked victim

Why doesn't a trafficked victim just leave?

- Traffickers teach victims to distrust outsiders, especially law enforcement officers.
- Foreign victims are afraid of the government and police because they believe they will be deported (whether they are in a country legally or not).
- Victims often feel it's their own fault that they have been trafficked.
- They develop loyalty to their captor as a coping or survival skill. Sometimes they even protect them from authorities.
- Even if they are being raped for profit night after night, it may still be better than what they came from (unbelievable but true).
- Victims, whether domestic or foreign, probably don't know their rights.
- Their captors have lied to them about their rights.
- They don't see themselves as victims or trafficked.
- They don't have a cell phone, and their captors took away their ID, visas, and passport
- They never heard of calling or even knowing the number of a helpline and they distrust police anyway.
- Their captors may threaten their families, and say if they try to escape, their families will pay the price.

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NB There are vacancies for Coordinators to cover Queensland, New South Wales and Tasmania

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

Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner's 1st Annual Report

The Commissioner's report outlines his key successes as:

- developing crucial awareness raising for health practitioners and local authorities in the form of videos highlighting the signs and symptoms of modern slavery, with the potential of reaching up to 700,000 frontline staff;
- galvanising focus and funding to fighting modern slavery internationally, through securing an anti-slavery target in the UN's development agenda for 2015-30 (which now underpins the UK's £33.5 million International Modern Slavery Fund);
- successfully pushing for funding devoted to tackling human trafficking at source, in particular the trafficking crisis of women and girls brought from Nigeria to the UK (following recommendations provided by the Commissioner, in September the Prime Minister announced that at least £5 million will now be spent in Nigeria to tackle human trafficking);
- securing a House of Commons select committee inquiry into access to benefits for victims;
- driving forward improved modern slavery crime recording to ensure that organised crime groups cannot act with impunity;
- collaboration with the Independent Chief Inspector of Borders and Immigration, who has now dedicated 350 working days to inspections related to modern slavery across border and immigration systems.

For details of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner's Report click on the link below

[Anti-Slavery Commissioner's Report](#)