



IBVM UN NEWSLETTER

August 2014

Trafficking in persons is a form of modern day slavery.

The United Nations defines human trafficking as:

ACT +	MEANS +	PURPOSE	=	T R A F F I C K I N G
Recruitment	Threat or use of force	Exploitation, including ...		
Transport	Coercion	Prostitution of others		
Transfer	Abduction	Sexual exploitation		
Harbouring	Fraud	Forced labour		
Receipt of persons	Deception	Slavery or similar practices		
	Abuse of power or vulnerability	Removal of organs		
	Giving payments or benefits	Other types of exploitation		

Trafficking and Law

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) with headquarters in Vienna, Austria deals with Trafficking in persons. A major step forward in tackling this crime is the **Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children**, (known as *The Palermo Protocol*), under the **United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000)**. This international instrument called for all acts of human trafficking to be criminalized. When the (Palermo) Protocol was adopted in 2003, less than half of countries in the world had legislation criminalizing human trafficking. Now more than 90 per cent of countries do. Yet despite encouraging progress, legislation in some countries does not always comply with the Protocol and fails to cover all forms of trafficking and their victims, leaving billions of people inadequately protected and vulnerable. Anne McPhee is also connected with ACRATH having been asked to organise their Archives.

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Action: All the countries where IBVM is have signed the protocol; investigate how your country living up to its obligations. Are the legal systems and political will in place to enforce the Palermo Protocol and stop this violation of human rights?

Some facts: (www.unodc.org)

- 79% of trafficking in persons is for sexual exploitation, especially of women and girls; the majority of victims are between 18 and 24 years of age
- 18% of trafficking in persons is for forced labour
- in 2005 an estimated 2.4 million people worldwide were trafficked (e.g. forced or bonded labor; domestic servitude and forced marriage; sexual exploitation; organ removal; and the exploitation of children in begging and warfare)
- 20% of all trafficking victims are children (though it might be 100% in some parts of the world)
- takes place within and across national borders
- Trafficking is a multi-billion dollar criminal activity

Economic Causes

Economic disparities
Feminization of poverty
Globalization
Economic liberalization
A lucrative business
Demand by employers
An expanding commercial sex industry
Development policies promoting sex-tourism

Socio-cultural Aspects

Illiteracy
Erosion of family values
Racial discrimination, racism and related intolerance
Commercialization of sex
Male attitudes
Pornography and its role in the growth in demand for sex
Consumerist behavior with the commoditization and commercialization

Political Causes

Feminization of International Migration as women enter the labor market
Civil and military conflicts
The growth of transnational crime
Weak law enforcement
Corruption
Unequal and exploitative political and economic relations

IBVM members are involved and networking with others:

An **NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons** was established in **New York** in 2011. Anne Kelly represented the Institute on the Committee from the beginning until 2013 when she was replaced by Cecilia O'Dwyer. The NGO Committee was set up to raise awareness of the trafficking of persons as a violation of human rights, to ensure action at the UN to address the underlying causes of human trafficking and to advocate for provision of services to victims. The Committee established five task forces dealing with different aspects of Human Trafficking: exploitation and demand, forced labour, business and ethics, youth and children, media and trafficking. A Review and Writing Task force researches and analyzes specific UN documents and takes the lead in preparing interventions on behalf of the NGO Committee. Now in Australia, Anne connects with ACRATH (Australian Catholic Religious against Trafficking in Humans (<http://acrath.org.au>).



In **Albania** IBVM ministry (Imelda Poole and co-workers) in the field of anti trafficking has developed over ten years and now comes under the Foundation *Mary Ward Loreto (MWL)*. Aspects of the work include: a) empowerment of rural women for human and economic independence b) shelters for victims of trafficking c) a school in Tirana for 50 Roma children (the most vulnerable group for being trafficked for child labour) and outreach to their families c) an education and rehabilitation centre for victims of trafficking d) work with traffickers in prison toward their reconciliation e) working with vulnerable youth f) awareness raising projects g) project for systemic change in the education system in Albania. MWL collaborates with other NGOs, government institutions, police and justice, UN Women, The European Civil Society Platform Against Trafficking and RENATE. Websites: www.albaniahope.com and www.renate-europe.net



In **South Africa** Monica Shanley (left) was asked to take on this ministry some years ago; presently she belongs to a group of intercessors. Each week members of the intercessory group receive special intentions by email from the National Freedom Network who work to counter human trafficking. She has also been involved in advocacy (especially before and during the 2010 World Cup), awareness raising in church and school settings. <http://endhumantrafficking.co.za/> <http://nationalfreedomnetwork.co.za/>

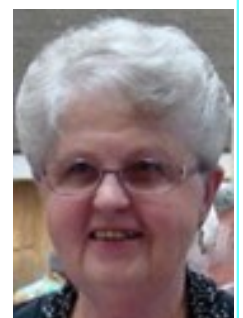


Betty Whyte (right) lives in Kenya and does awareness raising through conversations with educators, and circulating information and resources. She offers direct assistance to people at risk by providing information regarding employment terms, useful contacts and sources of support, encouraging support for local employment rather than be lured to the promise of jobs in far away places, and information about the methods traffickers use.



A 2011 conference brought together Religious men and women, teachers and students who continue to be involved in the issue of trafficking in a variety of ways. **Maria Lanthier**, Canada, actively collaborates with and supports several groups: *Women in Spirit Campaign* regarding murdered or missing aboriginal women; Diane Redsky and the Canadian Women's Foundation and National task force against trafficking of women and girls (www.redskyvision.ca); *Walk with Me* (www.walkwithme.ca), a mobile unit and healing home which also focuses on education of police (over 30,000 in the last six years); a collaborative group of Toronto area Religious congregations who meet monthly.

Jean Okroi, USA, engaged in this issue for eleven years now, established the Illinois Women Religious Anti-trafficking Committee, whose main focus is raising awareness, advocacy, developing conferences, networking with agencies, monitoring legislation at state and national level, supporting the National Human Trafficking day in January. As a member of The DreamCatcher Foundation (<http://thedreamcatcherfoundation.org>) she does outreach to prostitutes. Jean is a mentor for women who are attempting to refocus their lives. Time is also spent trying to find and establish housing and services for victims so that they will be survivors. She serves on the Victim Services subcommittee made up of Directors from 50 homeless shelters in Chicagoland.





Darjeeling Mary Ward Social Centre in India educates, identifies and trains young people about safe migration, networks with other groups and NGOs, assists and advocates for trafficked women and girls. They have built community vigilance groups in the tea plantations where women and girls are particularly vulnerable. An ethical enterprise programme for youth seeks to encourage them to stay in their villages by providing some means of income generation.

(<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Darjeeling-Mary-Ward-Social-Centre/186909197998147>)

Monica Suchiang, India, is involved in the areas of advocacy, law, education, capacity building and direct action on behalf of trafficked persons. She has worked in a legal and advocacy position in the Diocese of Kolkata. Now as Director of **Kolkata Mary Ward Social Centre**, she will oversee and encourage growth in its programs, in particular human rights and hidden domestic child labour .



What you can do (*choose one or more*):

- ⇒ Affirm the dignity of all human beings
- ⇒ Work to end poverty
- ⇒ Engage in this issue through prayer, learning about the issue and sharing information, encouraging others
- ⇒ Direct action by joining other groups working on the issue
- ⇒ Honour the UN World Day Against Trafficking in Persons (July 30, also Feast of St. Josephine Bakhita, Sudanese-born former slave, later Religious Sister)

A PRAYER TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

O God, our words cannot express what our minds can barely comprehend and our hearts feel when we hear of women, children and men deceived and transported to unknown places for the purpose of exploitation.

Our hearts are saddened and our spirits angry that their dignity and rights are transgressed through threats, deception and force.

We cry out against this degrading practice of trafficking and pray for it to end.

Strengthen the fragile-spirited and broken-hearted.

Let Your tender love and care surround them and deliver them from evil and the exploiters' hands.

Give us the courage and wisdom to stand in solidarity with them, that together we will find ways to the freedom that is your gift to all of us. Amen.

(adapted from prayer by G Cassini)

