



Prevention of Human Trafficking in Taiwan

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Young People Against Prostitution and Human Trafficking:

The Greatest Violence Against Human Beings

Casina Pio IV

Vatican City, 15-16 November 2014

To prevent youth from being trafficked, we can:

- Work with youth in the Church;
- Work with youth groups in Good Shepherd Foundation;
- Advocate awareness of anti-human trafficking among university students; campus advocacy.

To do this, we make every effort to let them know the situation so that they understand the need and nature of prevention of Human Trafficking in Taiwan and the problems we face here.

The number of trafficked persons served by Good Shepherd Shelter is 190 persons (Government building run by Good Shepherd Foundation) from October 2009 to July 2014

In the shelter the victims are given all the help possible so that they can re-adjust to society: medical, counselling, skill training – recreational facilities etc. Protection well done is also a means of prevention.

Seventy girls are sex victims. One girl, 20 years old, was introduced to a nice-looking young man. She applied for her Cambodian passport and they were married in Vietnam. After reaching Taiwan, her passport was taken away and she was driven to a hotel and forced into prostitution. She was transferred to different hotels every three months. She was a forced prostitute for 5 years after which she was very tired. A customer who had sex with her felt sorry for her and helped report to the police. The police invaded the hotel and she was saved and sheltered in Good Shepherd. But nobody knew who took her money, who rented the room where she stayed in and we could not get any compensation for her 5-year forced labor.

Our shelter offers diverse services in order to protect the victims who were trafficked. We would like to share we once served male victims from Bangladesh, who were deceptively being guaranteed jobs in Taiwan. They came as tourists and were very afraid that they would be caught. So throughout their stay, they were paid very little, not enough to eat, and slept on the floor in the factory.

The victims were forced to work, and their wives and children lived without any hard financial support but could only try to survive by themselves...

After they were saved and lived in our shelter, one man shared with tears in his eyes that his wife and children were starved and sick. But in our shelter they had compensation and good paying jobs. So when they went back, they were very happy.

We have stories of fishermen who jumped off the boat and swam ashore, seeking for help. This is a complicated problem involving many countries. In Taiwan, we are making every effort to see how to prevent this kind of trafficking. Cambodian fishermen are recruited in Cambodia and they work for foreign boat owners. From what we hear, in Cambodia a young mother with a child will be the one to approach the man telling them that there are jobs available. These men believed the woman with a child and they were brought directly to the High Seas to work as fishermen. But in the High Seas they were beaten and forced to work long hours and some died.

"We were beat frequently by the Thai crew, on the back of the head and across the back. The captain had a gun. On shore [on Sarawak] we saw a Thai captain decapitate a Vietnamese fisherman, and another Thai captain decapitate a Thai fisherman".

19-year-old victim from Banteay Meanchey

“My boss used bad words toward me, beat me, forced me to do hard work, and threatened me that if I braved to run, he would shoot me. There were a lot of big waves in the sea. It was not safe. A worker died because he fell into the sea and my boss know it as well, but he did not return the boat to save him”.

21-year-old victim from Prey Veng

(from ‘The Global Catch: Modern Day Slavery Fishermen’, TENAGANITA, 2009)

We call them migrant fishermen. But when NGO TENAGANITA made the study, the fishermen were young people, i.e. 19 and 21 years old, and had already worked sometime in the High Seas. How can we prevent young people from becoming victims?

Three Recommendations

I. Prevention work within a country is in not enough, not effective. The victims come from another country. To be effective in prevention work, we receiving country must work together with the countries where the victims come from. In the case of the migrant fishermen, they come from Cambodia and work on foreign ships. Young people from Cambodia must know that it is very dangerous to go direct to the High Seas. There is no evidence that you were on the boat. The captain can throw you into the sea and no one knows or has evidence. If university students in Cambodia are involved with facts from Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand... we are very sure that the villagers in the rural areas will be aware of the dangers of being trafficked.

II. We recommend that we also educate young mothers and families. It was a young mother who told them about the work of becoming fishermen. People trust women especially a woman with her child. To prevent young women from being used, we need to educate women on the harm and pain that these fishermen suffer. Did this young mother know the ages of the 2 fishermen and that they were only 19 and 21 years old and had spent some 2 years in the High seas already?

III. Young people including middle school and high school students are full of ideas. Once they become concerned and caring about others, they have ideas and are quick on the computer – raising awareness using media, technology. We need to motivate and guide them and they will motivate others to prevent human trafficking of young people.

I am very grateful that I can attend this symposium. I feel that I can work with young people and help Good Shepherd Foundation in Taiwan to prevent human Trafficking of young people and women. Once we know how they are being tricked and lured into prostitution or trafficking we can educate those who are at risk.