



carmelngo

BULLETIN OF THE CARMELITE NGO

2016 - VOL 9, NUMBER 2

"In the long history of human beings, the trade in human beings will go down as one of the greatest crimes ever committed."

-- Kofi Annan
Secretary-General / United Nations
1997-2006



Migrant Laborers and Human Trafficking

Lodalem twenty years ago was a small remote village in the southern part of Malang, East Java, Indonesia. Most people lived in poverty due to the infertile soil and lack of water. Now it is a town with beautiful houses and buildings, because many of the young people from the area work abroad as migrant laborers. Lodalem is one of the villages in Indonesia whose face has been changed by the migrant labor program started by the Indonesian government before the 1970s. Many people have achieved success through this program, but there are also many who feel trapped in fear.

Indonesia has become one of the biggest migrant-sending countries in Asia after Sri Lanka and the Philippines. Approximately 700,000 documented Indonesian migrant laborers go overseas each year to seek better income opportunities in the Middle East, South East Asia and East Asia. Of these documented migrant workers, approximately 80 percent are women working as domestic workers abroad. Approximately 2.7 million documented Indonesian migrant workers are currently working overseas. Although there is no information of the exact number of Indonesian migrant workers who have migrated through irregular channels, several studies estimated that the number of undocumented exceeds the number of documented migrant workers.

For Indonesian government, Indonesian migrant workers not only help to relieve unemployment problems in Indonesia. But also contribute a great deal to the Indonesian economy and society. They are the second largest contributor to Indonesia's foreign exchange incomes, amounting to about US\$2.4 billion annually. While for the destination countries, they are an important part of their labour force. They are heroes for both

continued on page 2

countries, Indonesia and the destination countries. Unfortunately, many of these heroes experience exploitation and abuse throughout the migration process, both in Indonesia and abroad. They are vulnerable of being victims of human trafficking.

The problems migrants face often start at home, in their countries of origin where the recruitment process begins. Little has been said about the crucial role played by the labor brokers and other middlemen who facilitate transnational recruitment and who, in varying degrees, profit from migrants' exploitation. Many of the problems Indonesian migrants experience begin at the point of recruitment, before they even leave home. Many of them who come from rural areas and have only a primary school education and limited formal work experience are misled by labor brokers about their wages or conditions abroad or are charged excessive recruitment fees. Many of the abuses can be linked to a lack of transparency and accountability in migrants' recruitment by private firms, as well as to a failure to provide migrants with adequate information, proper shelter, length of time spent at the training camps, payment for work done while at the training camps and information about their rights prior to departure. They may also experience bad treatment on arrival at the airport.

Other problems are encountered during their services in destination countries. Many Indonesian women migrant laborers who work for foreign employers are hired to perform domestic work in private homes. They experience underpayment, salaries withheld, contract violations, excessive working hours, verbal abuse, restrictions on movement, verbal or psychological abuse, the confiscation of travel documents and early termination. According to the 2010 report of IOM (International Organization for Migration) 43 to 50 percent - or about 3 to 4.5 million - Indonesian woman laborers abroad are victims of circumstance that may indicate the existence of human trafficking. The traffickers use various methods to attract and control the victim, including promises to get jobs with high wages, debt bondage, threats to society and the family, threats of violence, rape, false marriages, and confiscation of passports. Many of them end with forced prostitution; are pregnant or with the children who had been born in the destination countries upon their returning from those countries.

On returning to Indonesia, the existing problems that Indonesian migrant laborers encounter are not only illegal agency charges and static economic condition but also their psycho-social problem. Many of the returnees are cheated by the agency who sent them abroad. They are forced to pay illegal charges and due to their lack of knowledge they just give what the agency ask them. Moreover, even though all migrant workers have gone overseas to earn, many of their economic situation has deteriorated since their migration. In many places, improvements in the housing condition can be seen but most of the investments have been on consumable assets such as electrical and electronic items and less on acquisition of productive assets. Soon after they come back to their home countries they have used all their savings. Most of them lack the capacity to figure out what to prioritize on, in regards to utilization of savings mainly due to the relatively low educational attainment. Furthermore, their family institution has become more fragile. Children of women migrant laborers are placed in vulnerable situations due to the guardian mostly being grandmothers who are often unable to give appropriate care to the children. Many families of women migrant laborers are broken due to their husband's promiscuous behavior. Finally, many of them have difficulty reintergrating socially.

What can we do to help migrant laborers from becoming victims of human trafficking? The first thing is to inform the candidates of migrant laborers about the reality they may face. They have to know the consequences before they make the decision to become migrant laborers. So far, the information that they receive are only from the middle men and the company that facilitate them to work abroad. Often the information

CarmeNGO is published four times each year and is distributed to those interested in the mission of the NGO. For more information or to add your name and address to our mailing list, please visit our website (carmelitengo.org) or write to us by email (jremson@carmelitengo.org) or by regular post at 1725 General Taylor Street; New Orleans, LA 70115; USA)

Related Websites This Issue:

Articles on Human Trafficking in Indonesia
www.gvnet.com/humantrafficking/Indonesia.htm

Torture by Police, Forced Disappearance, Other Ill Treatment (by country)
gvnet.com/torture/index.html&

Human Trafficking on Pinterest
www.pinterest.com/bdcutty/humantrafficking/

UNDOC: United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
www.unodc.org/unodc/human-trafficking/

Office of the High Commissioner: Human Rights and Human Trafficking
www.ohchr.org/Documents/Publications/FS36_en.pdf

National Human Trafficking Resource Center
traffickingresourcecenter.org



A Clarion Call from the World's Religious Leaders

Trafficking in persons or modern day slavery is a serious national and transnational crime that encompasses a range of exploitative practices. There is a distinction between trafficking and slavery. Trafficking involves the recruitment and harboring of a person or persons for the purpose of exploitation through coercion, threat or deception. Slavery occurs when a person exercises the right of ownership over a person or persons. The link between the two is that they result in the gravest violations of human rights as well as having a detrimental impact on sustainable development and regional security. It is important to note that no country is immune to these crimes because every country is involved as a country of origin, transit or destination for victims.

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crimes (UNODC) estimates 70% of trafficked victims are women and girls. Addressing human trafficking raises the important topic of gender equality and violence against women.

While economic growth and increased labor mobility are providing people living in least developed countries with greater opportunities, they also increase the risk of exploitation. The prevalence of serious forms of labor exploitation in the global supply chain, including human trafficking, is an issue of increasing concern of the global community. In his encyclical, Pope Francis stated; "The contemporary world, so apparently connected, is experiencing a growing and steady social fragmentation, which places at risk "the foundations of social life" and consequently leads to "battles over conflicting interests" (Laudato Si', 229).

In a two year period, UNODC identified victims of human trafficking in 152 different citizenships in 124 countries worldwide. The International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates as many as 20.9 million people worldwide are subject to forced labor including sexual and domestic exploitation.

According to the ILO Global Estimate of Forced Labor, 2012, 90% of victims worldwide are exploited in the private economy, including 68% forced labor exploitation, and 22% sexual exploitation. The ILO estimates that forced labor generates US\$150 billion a year in illicit profits.

Pope Francis makes this clear when he addressed world leaders at the United Nations in September 2015; "Human beings who are easily discarded when our only response is to draw up lists of problems, strategies and disagreements." (*Pope Francis speech at the United Nations, September 2015*).

On December 2, 2014, leaders of the world's religions (Anglican, Buddhists, Catholic, Hindu, Jewish, Orthodox, Muslim-Shia, and Muslim-Sunni) issued the following statement at the Global Freedom Network gathering; "We gather to affirm a deep shared commitment for the liberation of those humiliated, abused and enslaved by their fellow-human beings. It is a challenge which must be undertaken in global partnership with others." "We call to action all people of faith, leaders, governments, businesses, all men and women of good will, to give their strong support and join in the action against modern slavery in all its forms."

While human trafficking and slavery can and does occur within a country's borders, these crimes are also transnational. The cross-border movement of people for exploitative purposes can occur through legal migration or irregular migration. Regional experience of human trafficking has indicated there is some convergence with people smuggling, particularly in the criminal network which facilitate these activities for profit.

A clarion call went out from the world's religious leaders when they declared; "Sustained by the ideals of our confessions of faith and by our shared human values, we all can and must raise the standard of spiritual values, common effort and the vision of freedom to eradicate human trafficking and slavery from our planet. We declare on behalf of those who are calling our communities to action, that every systematic deprivation of individual freedom for the purpose of personal and commercial exploitation be rejected entirely and without exception." (*Global Freedom Network, Together Faiths of the World Unite*).

by Jane Remson, O. Carm.



KARIT Celebrates 20 Years

Born as a result of the Carmelite Order's Iberian Region Justice and Peace Commission, and its ability to see as a "sign of the times" that laity and religious could unite to work side by side inside the Carmelite Family, KARIT was a means to live our "commitment to justice" and join in solidarity with the people who live in situations of daily poverty.

KARIT develops its activities within the geographical area of Spain, collaborating with other NGO organizations on both the local and international level which have the same objectives.

KARIT began on March 22, 1996, 20 years ago. Congratulations to our sister organization!

Indonesian Province NGO

The Carmelite NGO in Indonesia continues to move ahead with several projects. In education, there are now four "study houses"-- three in Malang and one in Pontianak. The number of students coming to study and participate in group activities and training continues to increase. Some of the earlier students are now returning to be volunteers for the current students.

Utilizing Bible study communities, the NGO is conducting a new environmental campaign. The Carmelite NGOs Day of Prayer booklets provide some of the classes. Participants gain a better theological and spiritual foundation for their actions to protect the environment.

The Indonesian NGO also promotes inter-religious dialogue through inter-religious seminars and workshops. Students in the Carmelite high schools and youth in the parishes are able to participate in "Live-In" programs.

Other programs in the NGO focus on women and vulnerable people.

is incomplete and one sided; they are only informed that they may have financially better and brighter future by becoming migrant laborers. Moreover, they have to be educated that they have knowledge and understanding of their rights. They also need to be informed as to whom they might run into and what they can do when faced problems.

Another thing that we can do is to cooperate with institutions in the destination country that can help them when they are in need. In Hong Kong where there are a lot of Indonesian and Filipino migrant laborers the diocese founded a commission which focuses itself in taking care of the migrant laborers. Beside employing chaplains from Indonesia and from the Philippines for the spiritual assistance for Catholics, the commission also provide shelters and assistance for any Indonesian or Filipino migrant workers who have problems with their employers or working situation. They also provide legal assistance.

by Hariawan Adjii, O. Carm.

Coordinating Committee Holds 10th Annual Meeting to Set Agenda for Next Year

The Coordinating Committee of the Carmelite NGO held their 10th annual meeting at the Carmelite General Curia on June 28, 2016. Electronic reports were submitted in advance for review allowing the group to discuss both the information and to plan for the coming year.

New to the NGO Animating Team is Renato Rallo, a doctoral student working on environmental and social sustainability issues, especially in urban areas. He will be attending the 2017 Environmental Summit with Andrea Ventimiglia to network with other religious groups at the meeting.

Andrea Ventimiglia has participated in some international conferences in Geneva, Switzerland. The Italian province through its NGO is working with migrants in Sicily. The Carmelite NGO will reach out to KARIT (NGO of the Spanish Carmelite provinces) so that a more unified response to this major problem can be coordinated.

Communications from the Carmelite NGO continue using several media: publications, social media, internet, and attendance at area meetings. Our mailing list now contains 997 people and efforts are being made to increase the number over the next year. Our revamped website continues to see an increase in the number of hits. Other changes in the page will be done over the coming months. The Carmelite NGO initiated an aggressive tweeting program under the direction of Jorge Monterroso of the PCM province in America.

A lengthy discussion was held regarding the partnering of other NGOs with the Carmelite NGO. Some requirements for accomplishing this were drawn up.

The Carmelite NGO Environmental Curriculum project was presented. In cooperation with Salpointe Catholic High School in Tucson, Arizona, and Colegio Nuestra Señora del Carmen (Carmelitas) in Lima, Peru, the NGO has developed a secondary school curriculum on Carmelite spirituality and the environment. It is hoped that the curriculum will be introduced across the Order at the meeting of Carmelite schools in 2017. It is currently being translated into Spanish. Non Carmelite schools will be allowed to use the curriculum as well.



Members of the Carmelite NGO meeting in Rome: (l-r) Hariawan Adjii, Blaise Fernando, Jane Remson, Andrea Ventimiglia, Annah Theresa Nyadombo, Eduardo Agosto Scarel, William J. Harry, Conrad Mutizamhepo, Renato Rallo. Annah and Renato are members of the Animating Team.

Carmelite NGO Coordinating Team

Jane Remson, O. Carm.
Main Representative

Joseph Chalmers, O. Carm.
International Liaison

Mary Blaise Fernando, O. Carm.
North America

Hariawan Adjii, O. Carm.
Asia Pacific Region

Conrad Mutizamhepo, O. Carm.
Carmelite General Council

Eduardo Agosto Scarel, O. Carm.
South American Region
UNFCCC Representative

Andrea Ventimiglia
European Region

William J. Harry, O. Carm.
Communications

Committees

North American Climate Change
Blaise Fernando, O. Carm.

Spirituality Reflection Team
Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, O. Carm.
Eduardo Agosto Scarel, O. Carm.
Joseph Chalmers, O. Carm.

Animating Committee

Gabrielle Fogarty, TOC
Australia

Esther Martin Lozano, TOC
Iberian Peninsula

Jorge Monterroso, O. Carm.
Central America

Annah Theresa Nyadombo, HOLMC
Africa

Renato Rallo
Europe

Mary Ellen Wheelahan, O. Carm.
Asia

Rolf Nepomuk Willemsen, O. Carm.
North America

New York Office

Dennis Kalob
Chief Administrative Officer

Carmelite NGO Main Office:

1725 General Taylor Street
New Orleans, LA 70115 USA
Tel: (+01) 504.458.3029
Fax: (+01) 504. 864.7438
jremson@carmelitengo.org
carmelitengo.org