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Rescuing Victims of Human Trafficking: Strategies and Solutions

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Abstract

The purpose of this thesis is to research and investigate how victims of human trafficking are removed from exploitative situations. There are three main methods of removal, which are raids, purchases, and escapes. Each method has its own unique characteristics, advantages and disadvantages. The research was conducted in the form of a literature review. The findings of this research indicate that there is no one “right” way to rescue a victim of human trafficking. Each rescue must be carefully researched and planned before being executed, or the consequences can be severe.

Key words: human, trafficking, human trafficking, rescue, sex trafficking, labor trafficking, police, law enforcement, non-government organization, NGO, International Justice Mission, IJM, Operation: Underground Railroad, OUR, Amnesty International

Humanity's exploitation of their fellow man is an atrocity that is sadly commonplace in societies throughout history. From the time of written history until present day, there are innumerable examples of man enslaving fellow man. The Persians forcing the Jews to fight the Spartans at the Battle of Thermopylae, Cortez enslaving the Aztecs in the 1500's, the mid-Atlantic slave trade during the colonization of America until the mid-1800's, and the underground slave trade today are all excellent examples of the cruelty man has displayed to fellow man throughout history. In America, slavery was outlawed in 1863. However, one-hundred and fifty-two years later, slavery is alive and well, not only in America, but across the globe. As of 2012, the UN Trafficking in Persons Report estimated that nearly twenty-one million individuals were victimized by trafficking and exploitation. This is a horrifying and grievous statistic. To put it in perspective, imagine if the population of the continent of Australia was enslaved. This is roughly the number of individuals currently enslaved at this time.

Victims are exploited in many different ways. Some are trafficked for domestic servitude. Some are exploited in forced labor. Others are forced into sexual servitude. Still others are grotesquely used as unwilling and (in many cases) living organ donors. The possibilities are nearly limitless, and this alone makes finding those who are exploited exceptionally difficult. The UN Trafficking in Persons Report from 2012 states that the convictions in Norway for human trafficking are as low as the conviction rates for kidnapping. The UN report also found that sixteen percent of 132 countries reporting human trafficking did not report any convictions. Twenty-one countries that reported human trafficking were not able to punish those who would harm innocent people. This is a sobering and thought-provoking statistic.

The demographics, statistics, and patterns of human trafficking are quite diverse, as well. The UN report found that females globally accounted for seventy-five percent of all human

trafficking victims. Twenty-seven percent of all trafficking victims in 2012 were children (aged eighteen and younger). Victims trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation accounted for approximately fifty-eight percent of trafficking victims between 2007 and 2010, while thirty-six percent were trafficked for the purpose of forced labor. Only one and one half percent of those exploited during the same time frame were trafficked for the purpose of forced begging.

Approximately 460 routes of trafficking are found by the UN report during the 2007 to 2010 time frame. Over half the victims carried by these routes were internationally trafficked, while only about a quarter were trafficked domestically. The UN also estimates that there are around one-hundred and thirty-six different nationalities represented by victims of human trafficking.

The UN Trafficking in Persons Report (2012) also states global statistics on ratios between child and adult victims of trafficking in different regions of the world. Africa and the Middle East have the highest percentage of child trafficking victims between 2007 and 2010 at sixty-eight percent, whereas Europe and Central Asia have the highest ratio of adult trafficking victims at eighty-four percent. Globally, approximately one quarter of all trafficking victims were children while roughly three quarters of trafficking victims were adults. The UN document also contains statistics on the conviction of traffickers. In Africa and the Middle East, seventy-nine percent of those convicted for exploiting fellow human beings were male. In Eastern Europe and Central Asia, seventy-seven percent of convicted exploiters were female. Globally, sixty-seven percent of traffickers were male and thirty-three percent were female.

While it is agreeable that these statistics are both saddening and unacceptable, the question remains as to what should be done in regards to those being enslaved and exploited. This topic has come to light recently as more and more public officials and ordinary citizens are realizing that this is a large scale problem. Legislative efforts have helped enormously in the

struggle to end exploitation. The United Nations produces an annual report on human trafficking statistics and possible solutions. Law enforcement officials across the country are attending specialized training sessions to learn the signs of human exploitation. Non-governmental organizations (henceforth referred to as NGOs) such as the International Justice Mission (IJM), Operation: Underground Railroad (OUR), and Amnesty International are working to assist those who have been exploited in many different way. All of these efforts have shown progress, but there is still work to be done. Those that are enslaved should be released, if possible, and rescuing those who are victims of trafficking is dangerous. There are many risks inherently involved in attempting to remove individuals from situations of trafficking and exploitation; therefore, these efforts should be carefully planned, with emphasis on minimizing risks to trafficking victims and their families. The purpose of this thesis is to examine approaches to rescuing trafficking victims and the risks involved, as well as explore the immediate and long-term protection and after care, recovery and rehabilitation needs of rescued trafficking victims.

There are several methods of exit from human trafficking that this paper will discuss: rescues, purchases and escapes. There are other ways that individuals may be freed from human trafficking, but for the purpose of simplicity, only these three will be analyzed and explained in this specific document. These methods of exit will be discussed in depth in the coming pages.

Another critical topic that will be discussed is the aftercare program(s). Aftercare is the process of physically and psychologically rehabilitating the exploited person(s) and assisting them in acquiring vocational skills so that they may provide for themselves once their time in the aftercare program has been completed. These programs are extremely important. If a victim is recovered from an exploitative situation and placed back into the world with no additional help,

contacts, or skills, they remain vulnerable to the wiles and schemes of traffickers. Those that have been trafficked before are at an increased likelihood to be re-trafficked, for many reasons.

In order to understand how to rescue victims of human exploitation, it becomes necessary to briefly summarize how individuals can become exploited. Shelley (2010) lists several root causes for human trafficking, including: lack of employment, regional instability, corruption, and lack of border controls have a large impact on human trafficking. With a lack of economic opportunities, individuals are desperate to find a source of employment. This desperation can lead to making risky decisions and leave an individual open to exploitation. This leaves migrants at risk, illegal or otherwise, as they need passage across borders and job opportunities upon arrival (UN Trafficking in Persons Report, 2012). With a little deception and an upfront payment, a trafficker can exploit anyone who will trust their word. In some cases, Shelley (2010) states that exploiters may pose as lovers to the victims, enticing them to join them on a journey, or asking them to perform certain acts for them. In cases involving children, the likelihood that they were deceived is greatly increased, due to their inexperience, according to the 2012 UN Trafficking in Persons Report. Traffickers are most successful in areas that are already poor, as when resources are limited, even the faintest glimmer of hope can be a powerful motivator to cooperate.

Siddharth Kara's observations on human trafficking indicate that romance is a common method of deceiving an individual into human exploitation. He observed, in India, that faking love in order to exploit a victim was a relatively common occurrence (2009). This method of trafficking is cruel, cold, and effective. Promising a victim a better life, by giving them hope, and then ripping the rug out from underneath them to exploit them is horrendous.

The physical act of rescuing a victim or victims of human trafficking is tricky, at best. It requires planning, dedication, and, above all, a thorough understanding of the situation in which the rescuer(s) will be inserting themselves into to so that they may procure the freedom of a particular individual. As previously mentioned, this writing will divide rescue operations into to subclasses: active and passive. An “active” rescue would be a situation in which one would directly insert themselves into a situation to separate exploiter and victim. This would be an action such as a police style raid, be it executing a search warrant or a sting operation. The “passive” rescue would be along the lines of what Siddharth Kara does in his book “Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery”, where one surreptitiously makes contact with the victim(s) and encourages them to escape, providing them information, and other valuable resources (2009).

One of the main difficulties with successfully rescuing a trafficked person, no matter the method, is locating the victim. Rickert (2010) mentions that many trafficked individuals do not look any different than an average person or working individual. While in many countries it is less difficult to determine those being exploited, it is nonetheless a taxing task to locate a victim of human trafficking. Traffickers go to great lengths to ensure they are not discovered. In many cases, as Rickert (2010) states, those trafficked believe that they are keeping an agreement.

Again, Rickert (2010) discusses the situations of those placed into debt bondage. He states that many individuals looking for travel to America agree to work to pay off their travel debts. Many times these individuals are exploited to work excessive hours and surrender ludicrous portions of their paychecks to pay for their expenses. In one case, Rickert (2010) found that a woman surrender seventy-five percent of her paycheck for seven years before she became suspicious that her employer was abusing her power. In this case, it is likely that an individual

who is not well versed in locating victims of human trafficking would mistake this particular individual for another average worker. It is also not uncommon for those who are trafficked in this was to send money home in an effort to create a better life for their families, further depleting their paychecks.

Raids

Raids are a common method of rescue for the anti-trafficking movement, and are one of the more direct methods of rescue that occur. They typically involve a police or pseudo/paramilitaristic force, and can be conducted in the style of a sting or the execution of a warrant. To accurately illustrate the International Justice Mission (IJM) recently assisted Indian police in locating and rescuing victims from four different brothels in Kolkata (2015). The raid was highly organized, involved four different teams of armed officers, and resulted in the removal of six underage girls from the brothels (2015). A sting, for example, would be an individual posing as a customer for a trafficker. This individual would likely be wearing a wire or body camera. At a pre-planned moment, the police would descend upon the area and arrest all those involved, for better or worse. If the style of the raid were to be executing a warrant, then it is likely that a situational response team or a team of highly trained officers would breach the premises and subdue those inside, preferably with nonlethal or less-than-lethal methods. Bruxvoort (2014) provides a prime example of a less-than-successful raid, in which the well-known NGO, International Justice Mission (IJM), executed a raid in Cambodia. Thirty-seven individuals were removed from a brothel, and six more individuals were convicted for trafficking in persons. This, in and of itself, seems to be a positive outcome for the raid; however, according to Bruxvoort, twelve women ran away from the rescuers to destinations unknown. There was also an increase

in minors being exploited after the raid was completed. This detrimental outcome never gained significant media attention.

Bruxvoort (2014) also discusses a raid in Chiang Mai, Thailand. Fifty police officers in uniform raided a karaoke bar which was suspected of prostitution and detained eight Burmese women. These women were locked into bathrooms and not provided a translator to assist in communications. These women, likely in fear of their health and safety, attempted to flee the raid. They were forced to sign a document that they could not read as a result of the language barrier and were detained for thirty-eight days in a welfare home. They underwent mandatory medical testing to attempt to ascertain their ages. It was reported that they did not provide their consent to undergo these procedures. The women protested their detention and treatment, stating they were older than eighteen, were aware of the nature of their actions, and took part in these events willingly. The women were fined 200 baht (Thai currency) and missed six weeks of work and, subsequently, received no monetary compensation for their time spent with the police. (Bruxvoort, 2014). It is understandable that law enforcement officials must be cautious and suspicious in order to conduct a thorough investigation. However, treating individuals who may or may not be guilty of any wrongdoing in a manner such as the Chiang Mai case is simply inexcusable. Bruxvoort also mentions a study by SWP that many law enforcement officials use interrogation “harsh interrogation tactics during raids that did not prioritize the needs of trafficked persons” (Bruxvoort, 2014). Law enforcement officials are supposed to protect and serve the community in which they live. It is on police cruisers, uniforms, t-shirts, and badges across the country. Yet they choose to not protect nor serve individuals who need both services desperately. This is a disgraceful manner in which to conduct such an investigation.

In defense of raids, if they are conducted properly, they can be extremely beneficial. For example, a raid conducted by the International Justice Mission (IJM) in India resulted in twenty-five individuals being removed from an exploitative situation in a brick factory. These individuals were placed into a two year aftercare program to help rehabilitate them and assist in developing skills to regain their freedom (IJM, 2015). There were no reports of violence as a result of this raid. The article which spoke of this incident was not completely detailed as to the manner in which this raid was conducted, nor the long-lasting effects on the community and the victims. It is, however, a small glimmer of hope that those who conduct rescues may be more aware of the unseen collateral damage caused by forceful insertion into trafficking situations.

Rescues and raids do not happen solely overseas. In New Bloomington, Ohio, forty-five individuals were rescued from the custody of at least six traffickers/exploiters. Among the rescued were a significant number of children under the age of eighteen. Local authorities and the FBI obtained and executed a search warrant at around 4:30am on December 17, 2014. The raid involved over one hundred local and federal law enforcement personnel, and no injuries or conflict were reported by the *Lancaster Eagle-Gazette*. The living conditions discovered by law enforcement officials (LEOs) were squalid. There were, in some cases, around seven people living in a small trailer. Some of these trailers were apparently deliberately left unfurnished and with “no bed, no heat, no hot water, no working toilets and vermin.” One worker stated that he was forced to move into this trailer to prevent his father from being killed by his traffickers. Others appeared to be in “normal” condition. Those rescued were mostly Guatemalan illegal migrants seeking work in the United States. One of the individuals reported to federal authorities that his trafficker paid him five-hundred American dollars a week, but took almost ninety-five percent of his paycheck for “rent, utilities and food”. The migrants were forced to work twelve

hours a day for six to seven days a week. If workers complained about the wage garnishment, conditions, or hours which they worked, they were threatened with physical violence against them or their families and forced to live in a “desolate shack”. It is unclear as to whether these victims received the proper aftercare procedures, medical attention, or were relocated to prevent them from being subjected to retaliatory violence. (The *Lancaster Eagle-Gazette*, September 6, 2015).

While the incident in Ohio may appear to be a success, the reality is that this could very easily have been a failure, and still may end up failing. While LEOs were successful in clearing a trailer park full of traffickers and victims (*Lancaster Eagle-Gazette*, 2015), the trailer park contained sixteen trailers. That is a significant amount of ground to cover. Fortunately, LEOs planned ahead for this and assembled a team of over one-hundred members, lending to efficiency and speed during the execution of the warrant. If the traffickers had been given time to fight back, this raid may have ended with the deaths of many of the trafficking victims and LEOs. The unfortunate part of this raid is that it is unclear what has happened to the victims of trafficking. While they are illegal migrants, sending them back to their country of origin will only put them at further risk for trafficking. Under current legislation, the state may allow them to stay under temporary visas, but even this may not be enough. If the victims are not placed in a program designed to assist in psychological and physiological recovery, the victims will be at a greater risk for re-trafficking. Proper training in a specific craft or trade would allow these individuals to generate a legal means of income for themselves and their families whether they are deported or allowed to remain in the United States. The article also did not report whether or not the victims were placed into protective custody until such a time that they may be released without fear of retaliation from other traffickers. This, again, may lead to events that are to the detriment and not the benefit of the victims.

In a different raid conducted by Operation: Underground Railroad (OUR) in Mumbai, India, twenty-one individuals were rescued. Eighteen of these individuals were adults and three were minors. OUR reports that these individuals were found in tunnels and secret alcoves in a Mumbai brothel. Their only reason for executing the raid was the presence of children, as the presence of adults in brothels is not a crime in India. Those that were females were placed into a government run recovery program. India does not treat victims of human trafficking as criminals, but as victims who need assistance and rehabilitation. OUR are monitoring their progress and will keep tabs on them until they are out of the program. This program will give the victims the skills needed to create a steady source of income without being re-trafficked (OUR, 2015). Again, this article does not explicitly state how this raid was conducted. This is likely to ensure operational security for future endeavors. If a trafficker were to learn how the raid was conducted, they would likely be careful to take measure to prevent such a raid from happening to them. It is important to remember trafficking is a business, and that business owners will likely attempt to protect their assets (human lives, in this case). Thus the need for situational information censorship. This is a necessary evil. It would make the public more aware of these rescues in order to provide accountability to the NGOs and governments, but it would also potentially place every individual on both sides of the raid into harm's way.

Purchasing Victims

The next form of removal from trafficking situations is the purchase. Purchasing a victim can be quite tricky, as the individual has to interact directly with the trafficker after locating them, exchanging money for the individual, then leaving the area with the newly acquired individual. This may appear to be straightforward, but this process can be exceptionally dangerous for both rescuer and victim. This method also is arguably one of the most instantly

gratifying processes for the rescuer. The unwitting rescuer simply relinquishes some currency in exchange for the life of the victim. It seems like a productive and fair trade. This is not the case, unfortunately. Not only does the “rescuer” provide the traffickers with more funding to continue their operations, but they do not guarantee the safety of the victims. They may place them in harm’s way by invoking the wrath of the traffickers. They may also put the victim at risk for re-trafficking if they are not put into an aftercare program.

Kara (2009) examines human trafficking from a business perspective. He discusses that, like any other business, has supply and demand, profits, and factors that can provide assistance or be a detriment to the business environment. The text states that human trafficking operates just as any other business. As more capital comes into the business, the more expenses it can afford. This, naturally, supports the position that purchasing a victim will only further a trafficker’s ability to abuse and exploit individuals, perpetuating the problem.

For example, Bruxvoort (2014) references journalist Nicholas Kristof’s experience in Cambodia with two women. He purchased the two women from the brothel in Cambodia, after speaking with the women and gaining their permission to take such an action. He returned to Cambodia a year later only to find that one of the girls had made her way back into prostitution. While this is a prime example of both the need for aftercare programs and the reason purchasing victims as a method of rescue is a poor idea, Bruxvoort (2014) states that removing victims from trafficking is, in and of itself, a moral dilemma. While these actions are the proverbial “Band-Aid for a bullet hole”, it is ineffectual in attempting to prevent future trafficking situations, and further complicates the rehabilitation process. The potential rescuer may cause extra psychological or physiological harm in the attempt to assist the victim. This is, at the very least, is undesirable. When a “rescuer” causes more harm than good, it is advantageous to examine the

method in which they operated in order to ascertain which methods are ineffective and which methods have merit.

Many times there is a conflict of opinion between the individual being rescued and the rescuer. Darst's (2014) states that the following is a quote by a law enforcement official: "Even if that kid is mad and mouthing off and doesn't see you as a savior [he or she is] still very exploited and very at risk and needs to be in safety." (2014). This state highlights the attitudes of many "rescuers". They may have a savior complex and feel the need to try and save everyone, whether it is prudent or may cause harm to those involved. When a rescue is attempted "half-cocked", the results can be disastrous. On the opposite side of the coin, the individual(s) being rescued may not feel they are made any safer by the rescuers, and do not wish to leave for some reason. They fear they may be hurt for leaving, or that they will be abused by the rescuers. In some countries, victims may feel safer with their traffickers than with the government, as corruption runs rampant. If the rescue is not prudent, or outside factors are not considered, removing the victim from their situation may do as much harm to the victim as they would benefit them.

Escape

Another method of removal is the escape of the victim this act may or may not be facilitated by another individual, and is one of the most dangerous methods of removal for the victim. Kara (2009) shares the story of Maya, a young girl in a brothel in Mumbai, India.

"...One time I tried to escape. I complained to the police, but they did nothing. A few days later, the (brothel boss's) men found me on the streets and took me back to the brothel. The (boss) put chili paste on a broomstick and pushed it inside of me. Then he broke my ribs with his fist..." (pg. 2, 2009)

Maya eventually was able to escape from another brothel two years after she was originally imprisoned. She was able to find a women's shelter not far from where she was imprisoned, and was informed she was HIV positive. When she contacted her father, she was told that because she had HIV, she would never be married and was shameful to her family. She was not allowed to return to her home.

Maya's account of her escape and her entire experience is like that of many other women who have attempted to free themselves from their exploiters and abusers. When they are successful, it can be difficult to re-integrate into society without the proper assistance. In some countries, it may be impossible due to social stigmas, castes, and other cultural factors. In "Sex Trafficking: Inside the Business of Modern Slavery", Kara makes it clear that escape is rarely successful.

"...the fate of the world's sex slaves remains terribly grim. First and foremost, escape is rarely an option for a sex slave. The slaves I met in victim shelters were the bare few who had managed to escape, and even then their lives offered little hope. Most were infected with HIV, suffered acute drug and alcohol addictions, had been shunned by families, and had little prospects for employment or any form of self-sufficiency upon departure from the shelters, which invariably had to limit their duration of residence due to resource shortages. Slaves rarely attempt to escape because brothel owners terrorize them regard the consequences and also threaten violence against family members back home." (pg. 15, 2009)

While Kara (2009) is focused on sex slavery, this account holds truth for many individuals trafficked in other ways. For example, a slave working in the agriculture business may face the same threat to family back home or be held by the promise that their "wages" are being sent to their families. A "domestic servant" may be beaten severely if an attempt at escape is made, discouraging further attempts at an exit. Every trafficking scenario is different because

every person is different, and thus comes an uncertainty of what harms are inflicted to those who are trafficked.

Again, Kara (2009) provides another account of a girl in Thailand who, for cultural reasons, felt she was doing the right thing in her exploitative situation.

“Parents often send young Thai women to work in the entertainment industry to earn money to provide for them into old age. A strict sense of obligation to parents constituent to Thai culture, *bhun kun*, inculcates the youngest daughter with a duty to provide material support to aging parents. One of the most heartbreaking encounters I experienced with a sex slave was in a brothel in Chiang Mai, where a brave young Thai girl named Panadda told me that even though she hated the men who came to the brothel and harmed her, she was proud to fulfill her duty to her parents in the form of tiny payments that the brothel owner sent to her father after her trafficking debts were repaid.” (pg. 15, 2009)

This occurrence, while morbid and melancholy, is an ideal example of the conditions in which victims of human trafficking live. If Panadda were to be rescued by one set of means or another, it would be essential to include some form of occupational education into her rehabilitation. If she were to learn a craft or an art which will ensure a decent income, it is likely that she would not be as susceptible to re-trafficking. However, if she is not taught these skills, it may be that she returns to the only line of work which she knows she can procure the necessary funding to support her family. It is not a guarantee, and it is entirely possible that Panadda may be able to find a steady, well-paying employment opportunity outside of the world of trafficking. It is also entirely possible that she may be re-trafficked by another trafficker (or the same, for that matter), or begin to willingly prostitute herself for the money necessary to fulfill her responsibility to her parents.

Rescue is a critical part of removing a person from an exploitative situation. However, the physical act is not the only step. As has been stated, before the rescue, an extensive amount of planning is required in order to safely and efficiently conduct a rescue or to plan an escape. The rescue itself requires extensive training, knowledge, dedication, cooperation, and teamwork in order to conduct it successfully. In the case of an escape, prior planning and execution are necessary if one is to escape. Once the victims are out of their situation, however, then what should be done? It is entirely necessary to examine this portion of the process. Without this step, victims may be released back into their captors' possession unwittingly. Victims must be cared for after they are removed from their exploitative situations and taught skills that will allow them to make a living outside of being trafficked. Many scholars and researchers involved in human trafficking activities concur upon this point.

Post-Rescue Procedures and Injustices

Sadrudin et al. (2005) discusses that victims of human trafficking are provided protections and support if they provide "reasonable" assistance in prosecuting the trafficker. For non-citizens, immigration benefits and other protection under the Department of Human Health and Services. While these are good, benefits should be extended beyond that of assisting with the prosecution of a criminal. According to Sadrudin et al., (2005) under the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, non-citizen victims, in order to retain their benefits, must be attached to a case of trafficking that is extraordinarily severe. During each step of the benefits, the case is reviewed to determine the severity, and if the witness/victim is worthy of the benefits the government is providing. While the need to ensure that each individual receives the treatment they deserve is a necessary part of the aftercare program, checking every time a victim

receives benefits if they still “deserve” the help is a bit ridiculous. Being trafficked, no matter how briefly or severely the tenure is, is not something that can simply be quantitatively analyzed and determined that a situation is “not severe enough” to deserve financial and/or medical support.

Unfortunately, the injustices against those who have been trafficked do not end with a lack of proper healthcare. In many cases, these victims are arrested and charged with crimes. According to Gonzalez (2002-2003), even victims who take a courageous step and agree to testify against their captors are sometimes still deemed worthy of prosecution and not worthy of shelter. According to Gonzalez, a victim of trafficking who came forward against her exploiter to testify was charged with use of false documents. The judge would not accept that, as a victim, prosecuting her was unjust and unnecessary (2002-2003). This occurrence took place in Canada, a modernized, first-world country which currently has legislation advocating for gender equality. In 1998, according to Gonzalez (2002-2003), a similar incident occurred during another anti-human trafficking operation. Canadian officials arrested, charged, and prosecuted fifty-three women who were found to be prostituting themselves and were violating immigration policy. According to Gonzalez’s findings, government officials used the victims “contracts” as evidence. These contracts dictated that the women must pay off around forty-thousand dollars (Canadian, presumably) in debt. This involved being sold for around half that amount to “perform sexual acts.” After viewing these contracts, Canadian officials stated that due to some of the victims’ consent to work in the sex trade knew the ramifications of their actions, were prosecutable and guilty. (Gonzalez, 2002-03).

This situation speaks volumes as to the attitudes of many towards those in trafficking situations. In some cases, this may be true. That does not mean that people should be permitted

to exploit others for profit, nor does it mean that the exploited should be prosecuted.

Incarceration does not help persons who have been trafficked to acquire new skills, become employed, or escape captivity. It takes them from captivity, puts them into another situation where they have no freedoms, and are told that both situations are their own fault. This is not justice. The definition of justice, according to Merriam-Webster, is “the process or result of using laws to fairly judge crimes and criminals.” Prosecuting victims of human trafficking will not help their situation, and all such activities by governments should cease immediately.

Gonzalez does report that many countries are taking positive steps towards a brighter future for those who have been trafficked. Improvements to victim’s protections and trafficker exploitation have been made in many countries. Belgium has instituted a period of around a month and a half for victims to press charges against their captors, and they are granted temporary visas and housing until the case is resolved. The victims who press charges are given social benefits if they cannot find employment in this time. Belgium has also established shelters for trafficked individuals (Gonzalez, 2002-03). The Philippines, a noted country of origin, have established programs to ensure that migrant women are trained in such ways that they may find employment and be at a reduced risk to be trafficked. The United States has expanded its anti-trafficking legislation several times in the last decade and a half to allow for temporary visas for victims and increased prosecution of traffickers. Fehrenbacher (2013) details proper trauma care procedures for children who have been victimized, as children, while biologically similar to adults, can react differently to medical treatment. This may be a psychological or physiological difference, but it is relatively logical to postulate that children should be treated differently from adults.

Conclusion

The question that will likely rise from reading this piece will be “So, what should be done?” This is a question that has no definitive answer. Many will claim that there is one “right” way to conduct a rescue and aftercare operation, and this is simply not true. Each rescue and aftercare must be planned anew for each situation. There is no magic formula which will endow the law enforcement and NGO communities with the ability to successfully rescue victims in every operation. There will be operations that go horribly wrong, some that will be perfectly planned and executed, and still others that may never happen. In the end, it all comes down to this question: What is best for those being exploited? Will going in with a search warrant lead to more bodies than saved lives? If that is the case, then that strategy should be discarded in exchange for another. If it is most prudent to wait until an opportune moment to facilitate an escape, have patience. The moment will come when it is safest to remove the victims. It, at that point, will hopefully do more good than harm. That is the determining factor for the planning, execution, and adjudication of a rescue.

To ensure that the important pieces of information are reinforced, the following table summarizes the findings of this paper.

- 1) Victim rescue
 - a. Requires extensive assessment of each situation
 - b. Determine the risks involved with the methods of victim rescue available
 - c. Selection of the method offering the least collateral damage
- 2) Prosecution of traffickers

- a. Process of bringing charges
 - b. Evidence necessary to bring charges under the jurisdiction of the offense
 - c. Legislative needs in order to pursue convictions
- 3) Rehabilitation and Reintegration
- a. Plan for the victims rescued
 - b. Governmental support for training and protection
 - c. Cultural issues involved with reintegration in society

Human trafficking has been a problem for a very long time and will, in all likelihood, continue to be a major issue well past the end of this decade, and maybe even this century. This does not mean that all is lost. With the right planning and a more prudent approach, the law enforcement and NGO communities, with the help of private citizens, can continue to make progress in reducing the effects of human trafficking. Returning those who have been victimized to society is but one step in this process. This, by no means, makes it any less critical. A successful removal from human trafficking and an equally successful rehabilitation can mean the world to someone who has been exploited. The removal may be conducted in a number of ways, and should be conducted in the most effective manner possible. The rehabilitation process is conducted in any number of ways, and should be tailored around the needs of the victim. Using these guidelines, it is feasible that those who seek to do right by these

individuals and to uphold the law will be more effective than in the past. More importantly, they will make a difference in someone's life for the better.

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