

NGOs Supporting Anti-Trafficking and Survivor Recovery

The driving force for human and sex trafficking is lack of education and poverty, specifically the hope of earning a reasonable wage to support oneself and one's family. Multiple organizations within Nepal -- including 3 Angels Nepal, Maiti Nepal, and Shakti Samuha all have working models to help eliminate trafficking. Additionally, international organizations such as Free The Slaves in Washington DC and online movements such as #enditmovement work to educate the public about the issue of modern day slavery and advocate for ending it.

Three areas that have become widespread within grassroots organizations working to eliminate human and sex trafficking are 1) counseling for survivors, 2) vocational and harm reduction trainings, and 3) legislative action protecting survivors and punishing traffickers.

3 Angels Nepal

3 Angels Nepal (2016) has recovered 4,500 girls and works to prevent trafficking by going into schools to educate children about their safety surrounding potential traffickers. 3 Angels Nepal is based out of Kathmandu and firstly provides survivors with a safe haven away from their distressed past. Their three step method involves rescuing, prevention, and rehabilitation (3 Angels Nepal, 2016). Rehabilitated survivors eventually join government officials and 3 Angels Nepal staff at border crossings in order to monitor suspected trafficked women before they are taken to their final destination (3 Angels Nepal, 2016).

The organization, though, has had some issues working together with the police due to the lack of their computer equipment matching the police system. That is where Dress 4 A Voice comes in as a financial resource. Dress 4 A Voice is a group of women who are currently crowd-funding (by wearing the same dress for 30 days) to raise \$3,000 for the computer equipment that 3 Angels Nepal needs to more closely with local police (3 Angels Nepal, 2016).

This donation will help the agency lessen financial stress and establish a wider range of action within Nepal. Dress 4 A Voice is one example of how the international Australian-based group can provide resources to support the end of trafficking, providing a helpful model for other groups that may be wondering how to help from afar.

Maiti Nepal

Maiti Nepal's main focus is on the prevention of trafficking. The organization has created comic-book-looking storylines which they distribute to children and adults in rural villages around Nepal (Maiti Nepal, 2016). This personable avenue for sharing information is a clever way to get kids engaged and educated early about the risks of traffickers, providing that the child can read or there is someone available to assist in the reading. Regardless, one step towards prevention is getting the information into the hands of those who may need it. Maiti is also dedicated to border surveillance before girls cross over into the homes and factories of traffickers. They have recovered nearly 2,000 girls as border crossings this year (Friends of Nepal, 2010).

Anuradha Koirala is the founder of Maiti Nepal. She was the CNN hero in 2011 and is a champion advocate for anti-trafficking. Besides establishing a recovery center and shelter for recovered girls, she creates advocacy parades with survivors, goes into homes of children in poverty to model trafficker behavior for them, helps raid brothels to release victims, and has led international campaigns to support anti-trafficking (Friends of Nepal, 2010). Maiti Nepal is also home to girls who are HIV positive, providing them a loving and supportive environment. In times of need such as from natural disasters like the earthquake that happened in Nepal in 2015, Maiti Nepal will also open its doors to children who need temporary support (Friends of Nepal,

2010). Anuradha Koirala understands the effects of trafficking and crisis on Nepalese children and has given her life to support their recovery.

Maiti Nepal is taking great strides towards gathering empirical data for the understanding of core causes of vulnerability for women in South Asia. Partnerships with not-for-profit organizations (NGOs) in Bangladesh, India, and Nepal have been instrumental in collectively addressing concerns surrounding women's rights and providing an empirically-based framework for systematic, local, and individual care. These specific organizations are 1) CARE Bangladesh, a long-established county resource in Bangladesh which is constantly working to fight inequality and poverty, 2) India-based: Durbar Mahila Samanwaya Committee, advancing sex workers' rights and HIV/AIDS prevention, and STOP for the elimination of "trafficking and oppression of children and women," and 3) Nepal-based Maiti, supporting "a society free from trafficking of children and women" and WOREC, a women's rehabilitation center fighting trafficking using a human rights perspective (Shah, Brar, and Rana, 2002).

According to Shah, Brar, and Rana (2002), "a rights-based approach to rescue and rehabilitation" gives women the choice to enter the best-fit skills training after proper recovery care has been provided. Given that governmental restructuring is remarkably slow and that job markets are not easy to create, organizations like Maiti Nepal provide vocational skills and support finding local jobs as "innovative alternatives" to rehabilitation rather than having survivors wait on the chance of long-term systemic change to support them (Shah, Brar, and Rana, 2002). Systematic change regarding prosecution of traffickers and safeguarding recovered survivors is always being fought for by these organizations.

Shakti Samuha

When sex slavery survivors in India connected with Nepal non-profit agency WOREC, initially they were told that they would not be allowed to return to Nepal because they would bring HIV into the country. Eventually WOREC joined with other NGOs to get the girls back to Nepal and out of the prison-like conditions of the Indian remand homes. WOREC, though, was not suited for these survivors, and Shakti Samuha (2013) started only a few months after survivors returned to Nepal when they 1) learned that they were not to blame for their traffickers actions and 2) realized that their recovery would be best served by forming and running their own organization. These survivors had grown more knowledgeable due to rights education in the rehabilitation centers and learned to claim those rights through establishing Shakti Samuha (2013). Their vision is as follows: “Trafficking survivors will be empowered to lead a dignified life in society” and the organization has five core themes: prevention, protection, prosecution, capacity building, and advocacy (Shakti Samuha, 2013).

Survivor-led organizations like Shakti Samuha are essential avenues through which to meet the unmet needs of unique survivors. It is vital that continued funding for these organization be available and that continued partnerships with organizations like Free The Slaves, UNICEF, and the Nepal Government remain strong in supporting anti-trafficking and recovery (Shakti Samuha, 2013). Their Combating Trafficking in Persons (CTIP) programming and publications like *In Search of Self-Reliance and Procedures for Safety and Personal Protection* allows for in-person or snail mail distribution of support (Shakti Samuha, 2013)

Free The Slaves

Free The Slaves is an international organization dedicated to ending human rights abuses. They utilize a community-based model that brings together governments, faith communities, NGOs, institutions, businesses to discuss and create tangible solutions and education. These

empowerment methods are usually through increasing access to education, vocational training, and essential services for marginalized individuals and communities. Established in 2000, Free The Slaves is considered a “pioneer in the modern abolitionist movement” having freed over 1,000 individuals from slavery, created awareness raising campaigns for an audience of 325,000 people, and helped arrest 74 traffickers and slaveholders (Free The Slaves, 2016).

Free The Slaves has a four step model that involves the following steps: 1) *investigate and identify* those individuals who, primarily due to poverty and/or lack of education, may become prey for traffickers, 2) *provide technical training and financial support* for organizations already established to support trafficking survivors and advocate for justice, 3) *unite at a community level* involves training police and educating journalists as well as educating community members that to-good-to-be-true offers will likely lead to illegal debt bondage, and 4) *sustain freedom* is a survive and thrive model involving counseling, skills training, and financial assistance (Free The Slaves, Dec. 2005 video).

Free The Slaves also has an online Information Kit that not only defines the problem of slavery and lists the organization’s specific impact, but provides solutions and results for issues within multiple countries (Free The Slaves, 2016). These countries include Ghana, Haiti, India, Nepal, and Congo; with slavery issues raised for child labor in mining and fishing, marriage, domestic servitude, debt bondage, and labor exploitation (Free The Slaves, 2016). Primary solutions generally involve raising awareness within poverty-stricken communities, community-based education, and advocating for increased law enforcement (Free The Slaves, 2016).

Challenges to NGO Support

Survivors face extreme challenges in being accepted within their former communities due to the stigma associated with prostitution (Crawford and Kaufman, 2008). One woman at Shakti

Samuha stated that even six years after being recovered, not only had she not been back to her village or talked to her parents, but her parents were unaware that she was trafficked in the first place (Shah, Brar, Rana, 2002). This same woman sends money back to her family via her brother and appreciates having the option of staying with Shakti Samuha as a peer educator (Shah, Brar, Rana, 2002). The notion of needing to be ostracized due to the trafficking experience is a common theme mentioned in literature. Dahal, Joshi & Swahnber (2015) discuss how survivors face a profound lack of support and extreme social rejections within mainstream Nepalese culture. It is believed to be a bad omen even to drink a glass of water that a survivor has touched because the survivor is considered to be unclean (Dahal, Joshi & Swahnber, 2015).

According to Crawford and Kaufman (2008), outcome evaluation of shelter interventions for survivors are limited and questionable at best. After conducting a study of 80 girls, they received primarily positive outcomes for rehabilitation interventions, yet they see a need for a systemic assessment to be created (Crawford and Kaufman, 2008).

Interview with a Survivor of Domestic Abuse

On April 26, 2015, two women entered a pizza parlor for some cheap wine and an interview. The first woman, Master of Social Work student author Jess, had known the woman who will be known as Rachel for approximately 18 months. Both women had acquired a dog as a companion animal, helping to offset the challenges of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and had bonded quickly in the dog park outside the Section 42 apartment complex in which they both resided. Rachel has been struggling to find an ear, nose, throat doctor today since she changed insurance companies recently. She suffers from fibromyalgia which leads to chronic and inconsistent pain. She has been unable to swallow for most of the day, today, and she requested a visit to a pizza parlor in order to start back on solid foods.

Rachel does not seem bothered by the noise of the pizza parlor or by sharing her personal affairs in a public place. After being seated she launches quickly into detailed accounts of her abuse and her journey. She had been married for seven years when she finally left. She states how her ex-husband had been emotionally and mentally controlling and abusive. She started distributing Mark Kay products one year to have a sense of purpose and when one of her house-parties ran late, her former husband would call to yell at her for her tardiness. She repeats multiple times that the party-members could hear this shouting, alluding to the fact that she was uncomfortable with the situation and the members reactions. She started having seizures due to stress about a year before she left her marriage and her husband would try to do chest rubs to calm her, yet eventually started hurting her by pressing too hard.

Rachel and her former husband spent many months in counseling trying to get his temper and controlling behavior under control. She reports constant fighting and she obtained a dog during this time to help get her out of the house. The ex-husband used primarily emotional and verbal abuse towards Rachel and demanded to know where she was at all times. It was her aunt, who worked at a women's shelter, who finally convinced Rachel to end the marriage. She got the help of a lawyer at the shelter to file divorce papers and lived with her aunt during this transition. She was moved to tears when talking about how she could possibly tell her aunt thank you for getting her out of her marriage. Her aunt caring for both Rachel and the aunt's mother seemed an extreme burden to carry and Rachel feels embarrassed at being so dependent on her aunt during this time. Rachel had many suicidal thoughts after her divorce. When she saw someone she knew commit suicide, though, she saw how it affected everyone around the friend, and she discovered that it was not the option for her.

Rachel suffers from PTSD and mentions the difficulty of living without knowing what trigger is coming next. After multiple years away she seems yet very fearful of how she will react when a negative memory is triggered. When asked what works best for healing she says, “my mom”. This answer, though, leads to mixed feels because Rachel again feels like she is a burden to her mother, whose husband is retired and expected to be spending more time with his wife. Her mother is currently in the process of applying to be Rachel’s personal care attendant in order to get paid for some of her care-taking. Rachel is self-training her service dog Maple and Maple goes nearly everywhere with Rachel. One of her final thoughts is “No matter how bad it gets, I’m no longer locked in a room with a gun-wielding psycho.” On this thought, the two women exit the pizza parlor and Rachel heads home to Maple in the hopes of finding an ear, nose, throat doctor tomorrow.

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