

# Gender equality news

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Promoting gender equality worldwide



Trafficking of women: a global issue

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## Editorial

This issue of *Gender Equality News* focuses on trafficking of women. It is recognised that we need to look not only at changing the attitudes of the authorities who deal with trafficked victims, but also the prejudices that victims may face within their own communities when and if they return.

Julie Bindel opens the debate by looking at the response in the UK to this problem. Alongside the need to revisit the legislation on prosecution of traffickers and our support for victims, she argues that we need to address the fundamental question of demand.

Judge Nimfa Cuesta Vilches from the Philippines provides an overview of current law provision on trafficking in her own country. A British Council colleague contributes her view of the socioeconomic conditions that make women in Ukraine vulnerable to the professional international traffickers. Other perspectives from Greece and Bulgaria look at bringing together agencies to work on this issue and the need to raise awareness among vulnerable groups and the community at large. Finally, as a departure from our main focus in this issue, we have the wonderful photographs by Nancy Durrell McKenna. In an interview she explains the reasons she set up her charity, Safehands for Mothers.

Our next issue will focus on CEDAW and the progress made 25 years on from its creation, and we welcome articles and photographs on this topic.

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# Trafficking for – a policy dilemma?

The issue of trafficking has long been on the UK government agenda, and there is a growing concern about the gaps in provision for victims and the prosecution of perpetrators.

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In 1996, the Metropolitan Police Service published a report that identified the growing problem of women being trafficked from Malaysia, Hong Kong, Thailand, Russia and Brazil. Since then, trafficked women from many other countries and regions have been identified in growing numbers.

### The current legislation

Under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act, a stopgap measure makes trafficking for prostitution illegal with a penalty of up to 14 years in prison for the trafficker. In January 2004, The Sexual Offences Bill was introduced into the House of Lords. This will make trafficking for sexual exploitation an offence and is due to come into force later this year.

### What is the Government doing? Support for victims of trafficking

In March 2003, the Home Office launched a pilot scheme under which adult female victims of trafficking for the purposes of prostitution are offered protection and a range of support services, such as counselling and health checks in safe accommodation managed by the Poppy Project, an NGO based in London. The pilot scheme ended on 31 December, and protection and support as a service stream of support to victims has now been established until the end of the financial year 2004–5. Although limited, the service will meet the current identified needs in the London area of adult women trafficked into the UK for sexual exploitation.

The White Paper ‘Secure Borders, Safe Haven: integration with diversity within modern Britain’ – published in February 2002 – sets out general proposals for assisting the victims of human trafficking. In particular, a commitment was made that ‘... where such people (victims of trafficking) are willing to come forward to the authorities, we shall make special arrangements for their protection’. But as those involved with Asylum Aid’s Refugee Women’s Resource Project point out, there are problems with using strict criteria for who is included in the assistance programme. These criteria include:

- that the victim must have been involved in prostitution in the UK
- she must have been forcibly exploited to provide labour or services
- she must be currently involved in prostitution or have left in the previous 30 days
- she must come forward to the authorities
- she must be willing to cooperate with the authorities.

Therefore, victims of traffickers identified at port, in transit to another country, or in detention, often incarcerated with their exploiters, will not qualify for the scheme, irrespective of the abuse experienced. It could also exclude those women, thought to be the majority of trafficking victims, who came to the UK knowing that they would be involved in the sex industry in some way – for example, as a stripper or ‘hostess’ – only to find that they are expected to service numerous customers a day and live in the most appalling conditions.

Another issue is the lack of flexibility regarding the victim’s choice as to whether she approaches and cooperates with the authorities. Many women are terrified of reprisals from traffickers, either against themselves or their family back home. The majority will need time in a safe place to consider their options without being under pressure to make a decision. The Government is currently considering allowing trafficking victims a period of reflection.

### Prosecuting traffickers

Very few traffickers have been successfully prosecuted in the UK. On 22 December 2003, one of the biggest trafficking cases heard in the UK was brought to a close. Luan Plakici, a British citizen originally from Albania, was convicted on three counts of kidnapping, one of procuring a teenager to have unlawful sex, an incitement to rape, and three counts of living on prostitution. Plakici was sentenced to ten years in prison after 14 weeks of evidence. The estimated 60 victims from rural areas of Romania and Moldova were promised jobs as waitresses and barmaids. Seven of the young women agreed to give evidence in the case

# prostitution

*Below left:* Police officers check documents of dancers at a nightclub in Pristina, Kosovo.  
*Below:* Interrogation reveals that most of the dancers are from Moldova, Romania and Ukraine.  
 © Panos 2001



against Plakici. Although he was found to have more than £200,000 in his bank account and was the owner of two luxury cars, he claimed he was unemployed.

Plakici married a young Moldovan woman aged 16, but forced her to back to the brothel within hours of the marriage ceremony. During the two years she was under his control, she was forced to have two abortions and estimates that she handed over £140,000. Plakici's premises were raided after a 24-year-old Romanian woman escaped and alerted police.

Plakici's 10-year sentence has been described by NGOs and police officers as 'too lenient', bearing in mind the number of offences and the seriousness of the crimes for which he was convicted.

Before the introduction of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act, there was no specific offence under which people-traffickers could be prosecuted. In 2000, the Government established a multi-agency taskforce, Reflex, to co-ordinate the UK's operational response to organised immigration crime. Under Reflex, a number of organised crime gangs involved in the trafficking of people have been disrupted.

## Where are the gaps?

The UK needs to focus on the abuse and harm inherent in local sex industries *per se*. Currently, the police have few, if any, resources to monitor their local scene. This lack of focus by law enforcers has contributed to the traffickers viewing the UK as an attractive country in which to do business. There is evidence to suggest that, in countries where aspects of prostitution have been legalised (such as the Netherlands, Germany and some states in Australia), trafficking into those countries has increased, not decreased.

It is also apparent that separating trafficking and sexual exploitation from prostitution is

neither possible nor useful. Some organisations concerned with trafficking of women and children have argued that it is 'strategic' to first elicit sympathy for those 'forced' into the situation, without 'muddying the waters' with issues around women in local sex industries. Indeed, it is easier to persuade most people that women and children pimped across borders and held in debt bondage are deserving of the status of 'victim' and therefore deserving of support and sympathy. However, this can be seen as a disingenuous separation of sexually exploited females.

The UK is a signatory to the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, which supplements the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime (CATOC). This specifies that trafficking can occur within and across borders, that the consent of the victim is irrelevant, and that destination countries should take steps to tackle demand.

If we are to assume that local adult women in prostitution who are not pimped are therefore making a 'choice', we ignore the real issues. Of course, some women do say that they have chosen it, especially in public contexts orchestrated by the sex industry. In the same way, some people choose to take dangerous drugs such as heroin, under conditions they did not choose originally and might not choose now, if offered something different. Even when some people choose to take dangerous drugs, it is still recognised that drug use is harmful. In this situation, it is harm to the person, not the consent of the person, that is the issue.

When developing policy and practice around sexual exploitation, placing more emphasis on trafficking of women across borders than those sexually exploited while being moved within borders can be interpreted as creating a hierarchy of victimhood, and can unintentionally make the adult, local woman the scapegoat.

## Specialist training

The Poppy Project monitored Plakici's 14-week trial, and noted the lack of specific knowledge and expertise of lawyers acting for the defence and the Crown. The Poppy Project recommends specialist training for barristers on the topic of trafficking for sexual exploitation, and that a set of protocols be developed for barristers' use in such cases.

## Return and reintegration

Women who have survived trafficking need to be allowed to work while waiting to return or for the case to proceed. They also need assistance to develop transferable skills, and to be offered access and funding to study. Existing return and reintegration programmes should be evaluated as to their long-term effectiveness for women who go home.

## Demand for sexual services

Article 9.5 of the UN Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children, supplementing CATOC, is an obligatory article and states that signatories must put into place measures to discourage demand. This protocol is the first UN instrument to address the demand issue and calls on countries to take or strengthen legislative or other measures to discourage this demand that fosters the exploitation of women and children.

However, the UK has yet to put measures in place to tackle demand. Until demand is recognised as a key component in the growth of the international sex industry, trafficking of women and children will continue to increase.

*Julie Bindel is the founder of Justice for Women and co-editor of The Map of My Life: The Story of Emma Humphreys.*

# Anti-trafficking laws in

In Filipino society, the stereotyping of the roles of women and girls as abused and submissive has led to their exploitation as sex objects. This in turn has led to them becoming easy victims for the international sex-trafficking industry.

## JUDGE NIMFA CUESTA VILCHES

The pejorative expectations that Filipino society has of women and children are compounded by problems of extreme poverty, massive labour export, globalisation, porous borders, aggressive tourism campaigns, the negative portrayal of women by mass media, on-line pornography, internet chat-rooms, the practice of mail-order brides, inter-country adoption, and joint military exercises in the country with visiting forces from abroad. These factors cause women to become easy victims of sex-trafficking and other forms of sexual exploitation either in the Philippines or in countries of destination.

There were around 600,000 prostitutes in the Philippines in the year 2000 and 50,000 of them were children. In the first quarter of the year 2003, there were 2,872 sexually abused and exploited children. Further, the number of girl children in the year 2000, which was estimated at 16.7 million, will significantly increase to 17.4 million in 2005.

## Anti-trafficking in Persons Act of 2003

For a long time, there was little concern in Filipino society about the trafficking and sexual exploitation of women and children. This in turn made it difficult for the victims to seek redress in court for the violence and abuses committed against them. But with the sex trade reaching global proportions, the Philippine legislature was prompted to enact Republic Act 9208 or the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act Of 2003 on 26 May 2003.

## Giving legal focus to victims

The anti-trafficking law is a milestone in the promotion of human dignity and protection of persons, especially women and children, against any threat of violence and exploitation. It seeks to eliminate trafficking and the establishment of necessary institutional mechanisms for the protection and support of trafficked persons, and it provides penalties for violations of the law.

Trafficked persons outside the Philippines fall under the category of 'overseas Filipino in distress', and are entitled to all legal assistance extended by the Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos Act. Additionally, the anti-trafficking law recognises that trafficked persons are victims and, as such, are not penalised for crimes directly related to any act of trafficking. As a consequence, consent of the trafficked person to the intended trafficking is deemed irrelevant.

## International instruments compliant

Various universally accepted instruments and conventions to which the Philippines is a signatory provide a strong framework for the anti-trafficking law. Among these are: the UN Universal Declaration on Human Rights; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; the UN Convention on the Protection of Migrant Workers and Their Families; the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime including its Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons Especially Women and Children; and the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women.

## A comprehensive law

Under the new law, trafficking is interpreted in its broadest sense. It refers to recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons with or without the victim's consent or knowledge, within or across national borders by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, abduction, fraud, deception, abuse of power or of position, or taking advantage of the vulnerability of the person.

Trafficking also means the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person for the purpose of exploitation, which includes, at a minimum, the exploitation or the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery, servitude or the removal or sale of organs.

Nationals of foreign countries who are trafficked in the Philippines come within the purview of the law. Such persons are entitled to the same protection, assistance and services given to trafficked Filipinos. The foreign nationals are permitted continued presence in the country for the time necessary to effect prosecution of offenders.

## Acts of trafficking

The following are deemed acts of trafficking committed either by a person or an entity when done for the purpose of prostitution, pornography, sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, involuntary servitude or debt bondage: (a) to recruit, transport, transfer, harbour, provide or receive a person on the pretext of domestic or overseas employment, training or apprenticeship; (b) to introduce or match for a consideration any Filipino woman to a foreign national for marriage for the purpose of trading her for prostitution; (c) to offer or contract marriage; (d) to undertake or organise tours

and travel plans; (e) to maintain or hire a person; and, (f) to adopt or facilitate adoption.

Any undue recruitment, hiring, adoption, and movement of persons and children for removal or sale of organs or for the children to engage in armed activities in the Philippines or abroad are also considered acts of trafficking.

## Unlawful acts that promote or facilitate trafficking

A person may be held liable under the law for promoting or facilitating trafficking by doing any or a combination of the following acts: (a) knowingly lease space or building; (b) furnish fictitious certificates to comply with government regulatory and pre-departure requirements; (c) publish propaganda materials; (d) assist in the exit and entry of persons from or to the country with fraudulent documents; (e) remove or destroy passports and personal documents to prevent trafficked persons from leaving the country or from obtaining assistance; or (f) knowingly benefit from services from persons held to a condition of involuntary servitude, forced labour or slavery.

## Qualified offenses of trafficking

A penalty of no less than life imprisonment and a fine of not less than P2 million is inflicted on the offender in special instances of trafficking such as follows: (a) when the trafficked person is a child (below 18 years old, or over but unable to take care of him or herself); (b) when adoption is effected under the Inter-Country Adoption Law; (c) when committed by a syndicate (a group of three or more persons in conspiracy) or on a large scale (against three or more persons); (d) when committed by a person exercising parental authority over the victim or by a public officer or employee; (e) when a trafficked person is recruited to engage in prostitution with military or law enforcement agencies; (f) when the offender is a member of the military or law enforcement agencies; and (g) when by reason or on occasion of the trafficking, the victim dies, becomes insane, suffers mutilation or is afflicted with human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) or acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS).

Worthy of note at this juncture is the recent effort of the Philippine government to include child prostitution as a predicate crime under the Anti-Money Laundering Law. Predicate crimes are those that would trigger immediate investigation by the Anti-Money Laundering Council, making it easier to stop the flow of money from illegal activities.



# the Philippines

## The use of trafficked persons for prostitution is an offence

Any person who buys or engages the services of trafficked persons for prostitution is penalised with 6 months of community service and a fine of P50,000 for the first offence. Imprisonment and a fine of P100,000 are imposed for the second and subsequent offences.

## The anti-trafficking law complements other legislations

The anti-trafficking act reinforces related laws, such as Republic Act 7610 on the Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination; Republic Act 7658 Prohibiting the Employment of Children Under Fifteen Years Old; Republic Act 7877 on Anti-Sexual Harassment; Republic Act 8042 on Migrant Workers and Overseas Filipinos; Republic Act 8043 on Inter-country Adoption; Republic Act 8353 or the Anti-Rape Law; and Republic Act 8505 on Rape Victim Assistance and Protection.

## Inter-agency approach

An Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking has been established under the new law. It is chaired by the Secretary of Justice and co-chaired by the Secretary of the Department of Social Welfare and Development. The other members are the heads of the departments of foreign affairs, labour, overseas employment, immigration, law enforcement, and of the commission on the role of women; and three representatives from NGOs.

Among the important functions of the Council are: (a) to formulate programmes that will prevent trafficking; (b) to promulgate rules and regulations to implement the law; (c) to monitor strict implementation; (d) to coordinate inter-agency projects; (e) to conduct public information campaigns; (f) to direct other agencies to respond immediately to problems of trafficking; (g) to assist in the filing of cases against offenders; (h) to formulate programs for the reintegration of trafficked persons; (i) to secure assistance from government and NGOs to implement the law; (j) to share information and continue research on the patterns and schemes of trafficking; and (k) to initiate training programmes.

## Repatriation and extradition

Trafficked Filipinos abroad are repatriated regardless of whether their travel to another country is documented or not. But if repatriation will expose the victim to greater risks, the Philippines make representations with the host country for an extension of residency permit and protection. However, trafficking in persons is included among extraditable offences.

## Prosecution of offenders

Any person with actual knowledge of trafficking may initiate a complaint in the court where the crime was committed or where the victim resides. If the offended party decides to file a separate action for damages resulting from the act of trafficking, no court fees need to be paid.

The victim has a period of ten years within which to commence a criminal complaint. Where trafficking is carried out by a syndicate or done on a large scale, the period to prosecute is 20 years from the time the victim is released from the conditions of bondage.

Pursuant to the Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act, the investigation of offences committed against women must be handled by an all-female team of police officers, examining physicians and prosecutors. Victims are accorded protective measures such as the right to privacy and closed-door investigations.

The personal circumstances of the trafficked victim are not to be disclosed to the public and the investigation is conducted in a language known or familiar to the victim. Every trafficked woman or child enjoys preferential entitlement to the benefits under Republic Act 6981 or the Witness Protection Program.

When the persons trafficked are children, the Special Protection of Children Act and the Rule on Examination of a Child Witness mandate that there must be only a single interview by a multi-disciplinary team recorded in audio or video tape. In this way, the child does not suffer the damaging effect of feeling re-victimised through a series of repeated questioning.

## Justice for the victims

Inside the courtroom, a child victim is presumed to be a competent witness and is entitled to the services of support persons such as a trained child advocate or a guardian *ad litem*. If it is likely that the child will suffer trauma from testifying in front of the offender, alternative ways to testify are provided, such as by live-link television or videotaped deposition.

When women or girls are the offended parties, the 'sexual shield' rule bars the offender from offering evidence that tends to establish the fact that the victims engaged in other sexual behaviours or that shows proof of their sexual predisposition.

Philippine courts are likewise venturing into the use of DNA forensic evidence to prove sexual offences against very young child victims whose testimonial capacities are limited and inadequate. The judges are very open to the idea of knowing how a set of behavioural patterns common to victims of violence against women and children, such as the 'battered woman syndrome' and the 'child sexual abuse accommodation syndrome', would impact on court dispositions towards trafficking offences.



Judge Nimfa Cuesta Vilches, Presiding Judge, Regional Trial Court Branch 48, Manila

When child victims are involved, the Rule on Examination of a Child Witness allows the court to accept hearsay evidence. Medical certificates are not required to commence a criminal case of sexual abuse; neither is such evidence necessary to make a finding of guilt.

The anti-trafficking law clearly outlines the penalty and fine to be imposed on the offender and authorises the court to order the confiscation and forfeiture of the proceeds and instruments derived from trafficking.

Where the offender seeks a reduction of the penalty applied through appeal to a higher court, appellate courts adopt the policy of according weight to the findings of the lower court who were in the best position to observe the demeanour of the parties.

## Trust fund

All fines imposed by the courts on the offender and the proceeds or properties forfeited used in trafficking accrue to a trust fund administered by the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking. The fund is used exclusively for programmes that prevent acts of trafficking or protect and rehabilitate the victim, and for reintegration programmes.

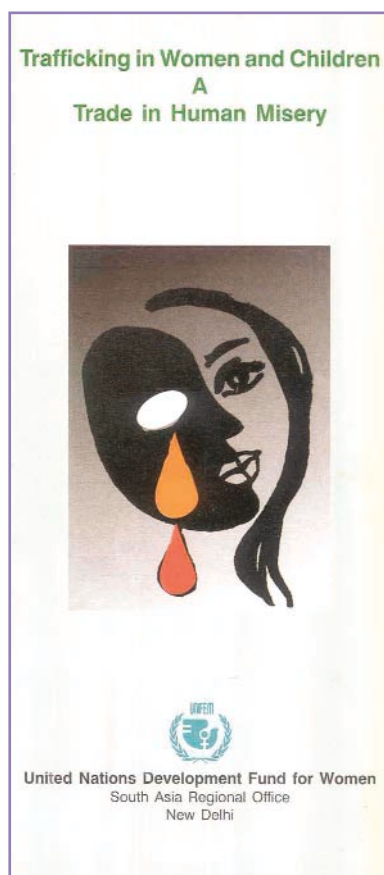
Aside from the mandatory services that have to be made available to victims of trafficking, other priorities of the trust fund are: research and data collection; technical support to government and non-government organisations (NGOs); seminars for consensus building; and awareness-raising regarding trafficking in persons.

## Aftercare

Finally, to ensure victims' recovery and their return to the community, courts direct government agencies to make available the mandatory services under the anti-trafficking law, which are: emergency shelter or housing; counselling; free legal services; medical and psychological services; livelihood and skills training; and educational assistance to a trafficked child. The legislation is still new and needs to be monitored to determine the effectiveness of its implementation.

# Breaking the networks — trafficking in Ukraine

Ukraine is a country in transition. Over the 12 years since its independence, the people of Ukraine have witnessed dramatic social and economic changes. Kyiv, the capital city, and some of the other larger cities have seen an increase in designer shops for clothes, shoes and cosmetics, a mushrooming of supermarkets and food stores, large numbers of new restaurants, cafes, hotels, pubs and bars, and foreign cars on the streets.



**VEENA LAKHUMALANI**  
BRITISH COUNCIL KYIV, UKRAINE

After the first few turbulent years following independence, the country is slowly stabilising. However, the economic benefits have reached only a small number of people who can afford to shop in the fashionable new stores and markets, and for most of the population the reality is quite different. The older generation have seen rising costs but lower pensions, doctors and teachers do not receive salaries for several months at a time, stipends for students are very inadequate, and so-called 'free' health and education services have actually to be paid for in cash or in kind. In addition, high unemployment, rampant drug use among young people, high rates of alcoholism and domestic violence, a growth in single parent families and the twin epidemics of HIV and TB are just some of the many social and

**MANY WOMEN AND ADOLESCENTS ARE DESPERATE TO GET OUT OF THEIR SITUATIONS AND DREAM OF A BETTER LIFE**

economic challenges that confront the government, donors and civil society.

The economic situation for women is far worse than for men. Approximately 75 per cent of the population under the age of 28 who are unemployed are women. Some women hold two or three jobs simultaneously just to make ends meet. Subjected to violence in the home and at the mercy of alcoholic parents, many children run away from home to live on the streets or are placed in poorly resourced orphanages.

Many women and adolescents are desperate to get out of their situations and dream of a better life in Europe, the Middle East – anywhere. This makes them prime targets for the network of traffickers that operate in this part of the world. There are no official statistics on the number of women who have been trafficked out of

Ukraine, but the figure could be as high as 500,000. One police officer in Donetsk, an industrial city in eastern Ukraine, estimated that 500–1000 girls leave for Turkey and other places each month. In some towns, it is reported that 95 per cent of girls have gone to Turkey or Greece to work in the sex industry.

The traffickers use several mechanisms to draw women and girls into working as prostitutes across the borders:

- The young women are lured abroad by false advertisements for attractive jobs in Germany, Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, Italy – as models, waitresses, housekeepers, belly dancers (in Arab countries), secretaries and au pair girls. Lucrative salaries are promised and passports and visas are procured in amazingly short periods of time. When the women get to these countries, their papers are confiscated, they are gang raped and forced to work in slave-like conditions. They get no money as the pimp or trafficker wants to recover the money that he has paid to procure the women, and they live in an atmosphere of fear and terror. Any attempts to escape or complain results in physical abuse and violence.
- Some victims are kidnapped, drugged and taken across the borders illegally. When they regain consciousness, they find themselves in brothels, striptease bars and on the streets.
- Many women respond to advertisements from marriage agencies and tourist offices that claim to arrange for Ukrainian women to meet wealthy foreigners. These are often fronts for traffickers.
- Young, gullible women in their late teens marry men they barely know who promise them a fairy-tale romance and a 'happily-ever-after future'. A 17-year-old girl from south eastern Ukraine was taken by her 'husband' to Belgrade soon after her marriage and sold to two Albanian men. She was repeatedly raped, then taken to



Veena Lakhmalani, Project Officer, British Council Kyiv, outside one of the many 'clubs' in the city.

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Macedonia where she was forced to have ten to 15 clients per night. She had no documents, was given no money, and barely had food to eat. Many of her clients were international peacekeepers from NATO and UN, and it was one Russian peacekeeper who finally came to her rescue. She returned to Ukraine with help from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) – broken, traumatised and psychologically shattered.

Ukraine shares borders with seven countries – Poland, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Russia, Belarus and Moldova. The traffickers use many routes through these countries to take the women to neighbouring western European countries. Only the Black Sea separates Ukraine from Turkey, and from Turkey women are taken to the UAE, Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Israel.

Ukraine is not just a supply country but a receiving and transit country too. Women from Moldova, Uzbekistan and other central Asian countries are sent to other countries through Ukraine and some of them, especially from Moldova, are forced into sex work in Ukraine.

Sadly, many women too are involved in the trafficking network. Frequently they are former victims of trafficking themselves and have been able to get out of the clutches of their pimps by agreeing to be 'frontline' traffickers. These women are, however, largely controlled by the trafficking mafia who see them as a convenient front for their terrible work.

What is the impact of their ordeal on the women and girls who have been trafficked? Those that manage to survive are left with permanent psychological scars. Some commit or attempt suicide. Sexually transmitted infections are common among those women who manage to return, and some are infected with HIV. What hope is there for their future? Many become prostitutes in Ukraine, but they earn so little that they sometimes prefer to risk returning to Turkey or Europe and working independently of their traffickers to earn more money. The physical damage to their

reproductive and sexual health is quite devastating, and some resort to drugs or alcohol as a coping strategy.

A more recent phenomenon is the forced trafficking of young men for cheap labour in Europe. Ukrainian men are taken to Portugal, Spain, UK and other countries to work in factories and in the agricultural sector. They do not get the wages they were promised, they work very long hours, their passports are taken away and they are moved from one job to another when they begin to demand money.

#### A MORE RECENT PHENOMENON IS THE FORCED TRAFFICKING OF YOUNG MEN FOR CHEAP LABOUR IN EUROPE

Although not sexually or physically abused, they are nevertheless victims of exploitation. One young woman in Brody in western Ukraine told me that her husband had gone illegally to Portugal to work on a farm. Six months later she was informed that her husband had died but she was not told the cause of his death. Even worse, because he had gone without official documents, his body was not returned and she could not bury him or have a memorial service. This caused her immense grief and left her feeling very alone and frustrated. She is the mother of a son with disabilities and has struggled to cope with her situation. She found it hard to move on with her life as she could not bring herself to deal with her husband's death without completing the necessary rituals. And she had no words to explain his disappearance to their son.

The scale of male trafficking has yet to be explored, but it is growing. Assessing the problem is difficult as men returning to Ukraine are often reluctant to discuss their experiences.

Many international and bilateral donors are now supporting the efforts of the government to prevent trafficking and reduce its impact on the lives of young people. IOM and La Strada have

set up rehabilitation centres, hotlines and crisis centres, and USAID funded programmes support prevention work through Women for Women centres in several cities. Other *ad hoc* efforts are being made, but there is a lack of co-ordination that could result in duplication of resources and programmes.

The British Council, together with OSCE, UNICEF and USAID, is currently working on a project to provide a mapping of existing services, how these respond to the demand and needs of the young people, gaps that have been identified and recommendations for the future. This project is in response to a request from the State Committee for Family and Youth, which is entrusted with the responsibility for dealing with the problem at a local level. The Government has set up a National Co-ordination Council for Prevention of Trafficking in People under the Ukrainian parliament, and the Cabinet of Ministers approved a comprehensive programme for the prevention of trafficking in women and children in September 1999. However, adequate resources have not been allocated for implementing these efforts and as a result there is no visible impact. Pimps, traffickers, border guards, the police, travel and tourist agencies, all form an incredibly formidable network that successfully by-passes and overcomes all laws, immigration rules and passport legalities of any country.

Meanwhile, the exploitation of women and young girls continues and shows little signs of abating. There is much to do, and many lives to be saved. Women's rights to security, freedom of movement, freedom from slavery and servitude continue to be violated and justice, hope and salvation seem a long way off for many of them. Government and international agencies need to work together to break the trafficking networks and provide support to victims of this insidious trade. Community and education programmes that tackle poverty and unemployment are crucially important, to give real alternatives to potential victims who are otherwise vulnerable to international traffickers.





Above: Women workers in Guangzhou, China find out about their employment rights at a mobile information and advice centre.

# Worldwide update

## China

### Working with women migrant workers

Guangdong Province in China is economically one of the most important provinces in China. This is largely due to the manufacturing region around the Pearl River Delta, which accounts for 34 per cent of China's exports. However, a lot of these industries exploit the cheap labour from the local workforce and a huge migrant population (estimated at 12 million). Conditions for these workers are poor, especially for the migrant workers, 60 per cent of whom are women. Employed on contracts that regularly contravene Chinese employment law, they are underpaid and often have no insurance, pension or medical provision in their contracts.

The British Council in Guangzhou obtained funding from the FCO Human Rights Project Fund to raise awareness among migrant workers of their rights and improve their conditions of employment. Working with local partners Radio Guangdong, the Women and Research Centre at Sun Yat-sen University and Guangdong Province Women's Federation, they carried out a series of activities to provide information and support to these workers. A campaign was launched to promote a series of



Reading up on their rights: women workers in Guangdong province.

programmes on the local radio that would present case studies around the issues of employment rights, a project website. Mobile information and advice centres, information packs and advice hotlines were also set up. UK consultants – the Women's Radio Group and the Active Learning Centre – provided continuing consultancy support and skills training in media and interviewing, setting up advice centres, counselling and campaigning and advocacy for women's rights.

## Azerbaijan

### Leadership training

The participation of women in political and public life in Azerbaijan has been steadily declining ever since the break-up of the Soviet Union. Back then, 40 per cent of the National Assembly members were women, yet now it is down to 11 per cent in the current parliament. The target is 20 per cent for the next elections in two years time. Although the legal framework stipulates full equality, in reality many women continue to be subordinated in day-to-day life. Some of the reasons for this are financial dependence and the traditions of what is still a patriarchal society. To try to address this area of under-representation, the British Council Azerbaijan held a conference entitled Women: Society and Politics in March 2003, in collaboration with a local partner, Leader Women NGO. The information and ideas offered by Christine Chapman (Member of the National Assembly for Wales), Kate Bennett (Director, Equal Opportunities Commission Wales) and Mary-Ann Stephenson (Former Director, Fawcett Society) were invaluable and produced some interesting and lively debate. The next phase of this project is now underway. Working with 40



young women from different regions of the country, this core group of potential women leaders will be trained as trainers to cascade training in leadership and lobbying to build a network of women leaders for the future.

## Argentina

### Women's access to justice

Elizabeth Woodcraft, a barrister specialising in family law, was invited to speak at a seminar on women's access to justice organised by the British Council in Buenos Aires. She reports back on her experiences there:

'I had been invited to speak at the seminar about the British experiences of attempts to obtain justice for women, both within the courtroom (as a barrister myself) and also through the activities of women's voluntary organisations with which I have been involved, such as Rights of Women and Women's Aid. The seminar was a one-day event attended by activists involved in civil rights and women's rights organisations, lawyers, judges and NGO workers. The focus of the seminar was on how women could use the law for their benefit, how they could pay for it and how the legal system could be improved to work for them, including the possibility of having a women judge in the Supreme Court. As well as investigating all manner of human rights abuses, an important part of the work of human rights organisations in Argentina is how to strengthen the democratic system. Feminist organisations such as Mujeres en Igualdad (MEI) have to work hard in the areas of empowerment of women and the development of gender consciousness, as well as the strengthening of democracy. In 1991, MEI among others successfully lobbied for affirmative action legislation that is still in force today.

'There was concern that the current legal situation regarding abortion and violence, as with sexual harassment, may contradict international laws and conventions such as the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Part of the seminar was taken up with discussing how and what test cases might be taken to bring about effective change. The 1994 domestic violence legislation was seen as a positive step. However, there is no legal aid for the preparation of a case and for some women in remote areas there is the question of actually finding a courthouse and being able to afford to get there. The day after the seminar some participants met to follow up proposals from the previous day. A Supreme Court judge had just retired in the face of impending investigations into corruption and there was much speculation as to who would replace him. Would his successor be a woman? I was very pleased that, while I was in Argentina, I received a message from home that Dame Brenda Hale, a senior appeal judge, had just been appointed as the first woman Law Lord in the House of Lords, the highest court in the land. This long-awaited appointment was covered in Clarin, one of the oldest national newspapers in Argentina. Lady Justice Hale was very pleased when I sent her the cutting, a story the Royal Courts of Justice press cutting service had missed!'

## Jordan

### UN award for family protection project

A taboo-breaking initiative in Jordan, which has enabled the country's officials to discuss and prevent violence and abuse against women and children for the first time ever, has won the United Nations' Human Rights Prize for the British Council. The project, which is funded by the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), is unprecedented in a patriarchal Arab society where domestic issues are traditionally closed to non-family discussion, let alone intervention. The project has brought together Jordan's judges, politicians, policemen, NGOs – even its religious leaders – to implement unprecedented reforms including the preparation of a draft law to allow the Ministry of Social Development to provide shelter services for female victims of violence. This represents a significant message given by the Jordanian government to its public – namely, that it will not tolerate the abuse of women's rights and will assert the role of the state in protecting them.

## Nigeria

### Education for all

A community education programme funded by DFID is enhancing learning achievement among primary age and adult learners, particularly girls and women, by improving the quality and access to basic education in the Isukwuto and Umunneochi local government areas of Abia State in eastern Nigeria, and the nomadic groups in Adamawa and Taraba states in northern Nigeria.

## Poland

### Counteracting domestic violence

Since spring 2003, the British Council has been working with the Niebieska Linia (Blue Line) Association of Organisations and Individuals Counteracting Domestic Violence – a Polish umbrella NGO working in the area of counteracting domestic violence, on a project entitled Little Witness. The aim of the project is to provide all those who deal with children involved in domestic violence cases with the knowledge and skills that will enable them to act in the best interest of the child and minimise the harm done to already traumatised and therefore very vulnerable children. It is particularly important that all legal proceedings, from the first police interventions to the court hearing, are conducted with maximum care and an understanding of the psychological needs of those children who themselves may have been victims of domestic violence or have witnessed aggression directed at other members of their family.

The project follows on from a research project carried out by Niebieska Linia to gather evidence about the current situation of children involved in domestic violence cases. The project was initiated with the support of a UK specialist in the area of child protection, Sergeant Julie Hogg from the Northumbria

Police, during Poland's annual national conference on counteracting domestic violence. During the conference, she provided training and awareness-raising sessions for professionals working in this area. Materials from the UK provided during the visit are being translated into Polish and will be used to develop Polish procedures for dealing with children who are victims and witnesses of domestic violence. The multi-agency approaches used in the UK, which encourage agencies to work together to ensure the rights of the child will not be further violated, have been observed with great interest in Poland.

## Middle East

### FOLLOW THE WOMEN – Peddling for peace in the Middle East

While the politicians' 'Roadmap For Peace' appears to be heading for the waste-paper bin, something truly amazing is about to happen on the actual roads of the Middle East. Thousands of ordinary women from all over the world are planning to take part in a bicycle ride to raise awareness of the suffering that the conflict is causing across the region.

Some of these women have never seen a bicycle before, much less taken part in an organised protest, but they are preparing to peddle miles to make the world sit up and take notice and to promote peace.

The sponsored bike rides will take place simultaneously during April 2004 in Beirut, Damascus, Amman and Cyprus as well as in many European countries. So far, women from 20 different countries have signed up to take part, and the number is growing daily. During the rides, women from different backgrounds will learn about each other's lives and form lasting friendships. The power of women when they get together is a force to be reckoned with. If the politicians cannot solve the problems of the Middle East, perhaps women can.

The money raised from sponsorship will be used to provide counselling support and education and training for women and children traumatised by the situation in the region. It will also be used to fund youth projects working with young people to promote tolerance, understanding and a lasting peace.

Further details about this event can be obtained from the website:  
[www.followthewomen.com](http://www.followthewomen.com)

Or contact Detta Regan on:  
0044(0) 118 986 2098



# STOPNOW.

## an anti-trafficking project in Greece

**In Greece today, there are more than 17,000 women and children who are victims of trafficking. Most of them come from Russia, Ukraine, Romania, Moldova, Bulgaria and Albania. They have to deal with rape, beatings and torture, intimidation and psychological abuse, forced abortions, malnutrition, sleep deprivation and no health care.**

**DINA VARDARAMATOU**  
PROJECT CO-ORDINATOR, KEDE CENTRE OF  
RESEARCH AND ACTION ON PEACE, ATHENS

Do trafficked women who arrive in Greece know what they will face? In most cases, no. Most of them come to Greece for work, but have been deceived by organised crime networks and channelled into sexual slavery by means of psychological and physical violence.

A trafficked victim may be brought to Greece against her will and forced into the sex trade. Usually, these women and children are either sold by relatives or abducted and blackmailed by trafficking networks and subjected to psychological and physical violence. Some victims come to Greece believing they will be paid workers in the sex industry. These women are not aware that they will be locked up, threatened, tortured and not allowed to keep the money they 'earn'.

In all these cases, the reality is that these people – some of whom are teenagers or, horrifically, even younger – are slaves.

Trafficked victims do not usually make any attempt to escape. Such attempts would be dangerous and potentially fatal. This is reinforced by threats of harm, the physical impossibility of escape, beatings, torture, confinement, intimidation, confiscation of passports and threats to the victim's family. They cannot speak the language, do not know where to go for help and become increasingly isolated and trapped. The women often fear imprisonment because they may not have legal documentation to stay in Greece. Although recent legislation and the newly established shelters for medical and psychosocial aid provide help for them, they are often not aware of these services.

Revenues from this slavery bring in billions of euros to organised crime syndicates. The client is ultimately responsible for human trafficking for sexual purposes, as he is the motivating force and the financier of this trade in human misery. It is estimated that over one million men in Greece pay for the services of women and children who have been trafficked into the sex industry. Clients who use trafficked women and children are responsible for human rights violations and perpetuating the suffering of the enslaved victims.



Stop Trafficking of People Now (STOPNOW) is a project established in 2001 by a women's NGO, the Centre of Research and Action on Peace (KEDE). STOPNOW has two fundamental objectives: the prevention of trafficking and the provision of assistance to victims of trafficking to facilitate reintegration into society. It strongly advocates voluntary repatriation and social integration, respect for the individual's dignity and protection of human rights. STOPNOW is financed by Hellenic Aid (YDAS – General Secretariat of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

More specifically, STOPNOW focuses on:

**a) Increasing public awareness of human trafficking at all levels of Greek society.**

A key activity is the implementation and management of public awareness and information campaigns. Research indicates that, during the 1990s, approximately 1.3 million men in Greece used trafficked women. This fact, combined with widespread ignorance and misunderstanding (even among people in positions of authority), clearly reveals the need to inform and sensitise the general public as well as specific occupational and social groups about the realities of human trafficking for sexual exploitation. Initially launched in June 2002, the campaigns include television and radio public-service announcements. In order to assess the effectiveness of these campaigns, a public opinion survey has been scheduled for 2004. The aim of the survey will be to identify how Greek society currently perceives human trafficking.

**b) Applying pressure through lobbying and collaboration with other agencies** involved in anti-trafficking activities, to ensure the implementation of the anti-trafficking law 3064/2002 (passed on 15 October 2002). This law makes trafficking a crime and prescribes penalties to pimps and to the users of minors. Presidential

Decree 233 (passed on 28 August 2003) regulates issues such as the establishment of shelters.

**c) Working with NGOs in the countries of origin of victims of trafficking** to secure safe and appropriate conditions of repatriation and to facilitate the process of social inclusion for former victims of trafficking. Work is also going on with NGOs in receiving counties to combat trafficking and point out its consequences.

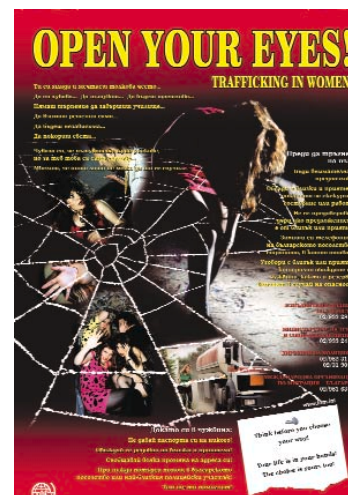
In April 2002, STOPNOW brought together NGOs, representatives of international organisations and governmental bodies in order to share their experiences in anti-trafficking measures. The group, known as the Galatsi Group, consists today of 15 NGOs from all over Greece, from different activist fields (public health, human rights, women's movement, the political sphere, religious groups). The Galatsi Group meets on a monthly basis to discuss the most recent developments in counter-trafficking, establish appropriate action plans and exchange feedback on the activities of each agency. In 2003, the primary goal of the Galatsi Group has been the establishment of shelters and the provision of services to victims.

The Galatsi Group has been the first co-ordinated effort by civil society to tackle trafficking. The group has been a powerful presence since its establishment, but more lobbying for change has to be done. There are still issues to be addressed and the state infrastructure has to be effective in areas such as the vocational training of the victims, residence status, voluntary repatriation procedures and the reintegration of victims into society.

The Galatsi Group does not wish to see 'deportation with a smile' or, even worse, 'humane deportation' become the established norm. Often, victims feel alone and unwanted. Both in the legislation and in court decisions social integration is not a priority – but in fact this should be our first duty. Anti-trafficking should not be seen from an anti-immigration perspective: victims should be given every assistance to become integrated into the country of their choice – be it a country of origin, transit or destination – and they should not be viewed just as potential witnesses.

**d) Documenting the dimensions of human trafficking in Greece.** From July to December 2002, research was conducted by a scientific team under the auspices of KEDE. The aim of the study was to document the scale of human trafficking and forced prostitution in Greece, as it existed in the second half of 2002. The findings and conclusions of the study reveal the magnitude of human trafficking in Greece at that time, examining factors such as populations of foreign adults and children prostituted by force, countries of origin and means of financial and sexual exploitation. It also provides an initial assessment as to what type of assistance a trafficked person might expect from governmental and non-governmental agencies. The results of the study will be soon available in a variety of languages in a printed form and on the internet ([www.stop-trafficking.org](http://www.stop-trafficking.org)).

For further information on KEDE, visit their website at [www.stop-trafficking.org](http://www.stop-trafficking.org)



Above and centre: Scenes from the Geese Theatre Company and Theatre Tseveté productions in Bulgaria. Above right: Poster from the IOM 'Open your eyes' campaign. © IOM

# 'Open your eyes' – counter-trafficking activities in Bulgaria

Approximately 10,000 Bulgarian women, many under the age of 18, may currently be victims of international trafficking operations. A new British Council initiative uses live theatre to raise awareness of this problem.

**EVA ATANASSOVA**  
BRITISH COUNCIL SOFIA, BULGARIA

Women and young girls in Bulgaria are particularly at risk when it comes to the well-organised networks of international traffickers. According to latest UN statistics, Bulgaria ranks first in Eastern Europe in terms of sustained unemployment and impoverishment of women. They have very little access to employment, and even those who are well educated remain excluded from the job market, so grinding poverty forces them to look elsewhere for work. Young girls in poor rural areas and those experiencing extreme hardship in the cities are particularly vulnerable as they seek a brighter future and struggle to escape from the cycle of poverty and hardship.

At the British Council's offices in Sofia, Deputy Director Lisa McManus and Projects Manager Eva Atanassova decided to invite Julie Bindel from CAWSU (Child and Women Abuse Studies Centre, London Metropolitan University) to visit Bulgaria to suggest activities that the British Council could support to tackle this issue. Awareness-raising to alert young girls and women in Bulgaria to the dangers of trafficking recruitment was highlighted as a priority. As a

result of this recommendation, Lisa and Eva decided to contact Geese Theatre Company from the UK to work on a project with them, using interactive performances to convey messages about the hazards of trafficking to two different communities, in Sofia (the capital) and in Rousse (a town near to the Romanian border). The local office of the International Organisation of Migration (IOM) were also invited to work with the British Council as consultants on the project. IOM had already launched a poster campaign called 'Open your eyes', and it was felt that the theatre performance would be an excellent follow-on activity to this campaign.

Geese Theatre Company arrived in Sofia in November to work with a local theatre group, Theatre Tseveté, to develop the scenarios for the theatre performances. They decided to use interactive forum theatre to engage the audiences in the performances and the issues that were being raised. The real challenge was how to develop a theatre piece without dialogue that would communicate powerful messages about the reality and the risks to young girls. They decided to use 'emotive masks', which they felt would successfully convey to the audiences the

feelings of the individuals, their situations and the dilemmas they were faced with. The use of masks and forum theatres is a fairly new concept in Bulgaria, so a further component of the project was training local theatre groups to use this approach to perform future forum theatre plays on social issues.

Working with local partners Theatre Tseveté, Goose Theatre Company developed the scenarios for the performances and a methodology for facilitating discussions at critical junctures. These would enable them to explore with the young audience alternative responses to tackle the situations in which they might find themselves and where they could go for help.

And so December 2003 was a busy month in the British Council's offices in Bulgaria. Two performances took place on the afternoon and the evening of 8 December at the National Theatre in Sofia, with packed audiences at both performances. Two further performances took place on 11 December at the Rousse Theatre in Rousse, with audiences of over 100 people. The performances made a huge impact, and they were also filmed to enable other communities to share the experiences of the actors and the audiences from the live theatre pieces.

A film has now been developed in co-operation with ESET (European Channel for Education and Training) that will bring the messages about the dangers of trafficking to a wider audience. It is hoped that this will be a resource for community groups and schools as part of a future campaign which will continue to raise public awareness on this insidious trade in young girls and women.



# Nancy Durrell McKenna – focusing on safe motherhood



What makes a successful photographer and filmmaker, with an impressive range of award-winning books and films behind her, want to tackle the monumental challenge and hidden tragedy of the number of women who, in the 21st century, die in pregnancy or childbirth?

**VICTORIA RAE SPOKE TO NANCY DURRELL MCKENNA  
IN HER PHOTOGRAPHIC STUDIO IN LONDON.**



**Mother and newborn baby, Mission Hospital, Volta Region, Ghana** (Above left)

This woman is the proud mother of a healthy baby. She had a pair of safe hands to help her at delivery, but for many women across the world this is often not available. In sub-Saharan Africa, one in 16 pregnant women will die. The loss of each woman is felt greatly by her family, and young surviving children are much more likely to die themselves without their mother's love and nurture. Her community loses a valued and unpaid resource and her country loses a young woman who may have been healthy, in the prime of life and with much to give.



**Sitsope, standing on the long road to Safe Motherhood, Volta Region, Ghana** (Above right)

Sometimes the nearest clinic may be three or four days walk away. The condition of the road or the availability of transport can make a world of difference to whether pregnant women are able to make the journey.



**Anaemia check, west Bengal, India** (Right)

Monitoring women during pregnancy is a vital part of protecting maternal health. In India, 88 per cent of pregnant women are anaemic.

As a photographer, I felt pigeonholed and frustrated. I would travel to a country, witness great pain and equal pleasure and keep detailed notes of those women and men who were open or desperate enough to tell me their stories. It has been a privilege and a responsibility to document moments in people's lives. To then know that this body of work would hang in a filing cabinet somewhere, waiting for the odd photo to be used in an annual review, seemed a waste of human as well as financial resources. So I thought: if you have a message, back it up with powerful visuals and use it to get your point across. And I did just that. I started to present 'Safe Motherhood in Focus' at international conferences and the positive feedback echoed the saying 'every picture tells a story'.

'Having worked in the UK and in developing countries on the theme of pregnancy and childbirth, I was passionate and ready to focus my efforts on reducing maternal mortality by telling the story visually.'

And so the new charity Safehands for Mothers was conceived. The focus of Safehands is on producing visual materials that are easy to understand, appropriate for the cultures where they will be used and available to be distributed so that the information can reach even remote areas.

The priority for Safehands is to work in those countries where maternal mortality is highest. While much progress has been made in reducing infant mortality worldwide, the figures for maternal mortality have changed little. The numbers are stark: between 500,000 and 600,000 women die every year from complications of pregnancy and childbirth – 99 per cent of these in developing countries – and as many as 50 times more will suffer physical injuries. An international goal has been set to achieve a 75 per cent reduction in maternal mortality by 2015.

Safehands for Mothers has prominent supporters including Baroness Helena Kennedy QC, Dame Lorna Muirhead, the President of the Royal College of Midwives, and Tony Worthington MP, Chair of the UK All-Party Parliamentary Group on Overseas Development.

And Nancy's final message? 'I believe passionately that it should be every woman's human right to have a safe pregnancy and delivery of her baby. Safehands is young, our task is great and commitment is indefatigable!'

To find out more about the work of Safehands for Mothers, visit [www.safehands.org](http://www.safehands.org).

safeHands  
for mothers



**Hasrawathi, a community midwife, teaches Genoa, a traditional birth attendant, how to feel the position of the baby. Sulawesi, Indonesia. (Above)**

### Good training saves lives

There are still huge numbers of maternal deaths in childbirth throughout the world, but with training these statistics can be lowered.

The use of skilled attendants at delivery in developing countries is increasing year by year, and Nancy is passionate about the impact training and education can make to saving lives. As she says, 'If we take

something so basic which we call the Three Cleans – clean hands, a clean surface on which to deliver the baby and a clean implement to cut the cord – these can help save two lives: that of a newborn baby and his or her mother.'

A priority for Safehands is to work in partnership with other agencies – such as the Family Guidance Association of Ethiopia (FGAE), which has included safe motherhood in its budget for the first time in 2004.

While in Ethiopia, Nancy met Telanish, a young girl whose story is featured in her film *Fistula Pilgrims*, produced for the International Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecology



**Telanish, a young woman in Gojam Province, Ethiopia (Above)**

(FIGO). Says Nancy: 'Telanish is so typical of many young women around the world. She was married at 10, pregnant at 11 and gave birth to a stillborn child at 12. As a result of an obstetric fistula from a long and obstructed labour, she is incontinent and an outcast from her community, living a life of shame. There are around two million women who suffer from fistula around the world. With training, the complications that cause fistula can be avoided and young women can be spared the debilitation and misery that Telanish and other women have suffered.'



# Book reviews

## Global Woman: Nannies, Maids and Sex Workers in the New Economy

EDITED BY BARBARA EHRENREICH AND ARLIE RUSSELL HOCHSCHILD

ISBN 186 207 5883 GRANTA BOOKS 2003

The commodification of women's labour is illustrated vividly in this discussion of the ever-increasing numbers of female migrants whose 'hidden' labour underpins the economy of wealthy countries. The feminisation of migration has been actively encouraged by some governments who recognise that these women are more likely to send home their wages than the males of the family. The authors explore other factors that have influenced this new demand for labour and the worrying trends of continued exploitation of women from developing countries by cities in the west. Questions are posed that rest uneasily on the conscience of many in the West: the maltreatment of women in domestic servitude, the organised crime networks that trade women for sexual services and the burgeoning business of 'mail-order brides'. This account challenges us to look at globalisation and the exploitation of an increasingly mobile female workforce.

## Realizing Rights: Transforming Approaches to Sexual and Reproductive Well-being

EDITED BY ANDREA CORNWALL AND ALICE WELBOURN

ISBN 1 85649 969 3 ZED BOOKS 2002

This book brings together a collection of innovative approaches and experiences from around the world from those working with individuals whose sexual and reproductive health needs and rights have long been ignored. The case studies serve to demonstrate the need for better communication and openness, and a less judgmental attitude to high-risk groups. Peer-group education programmes, changing societal conditions and recognising that individuals often feel more empowered to speak out in groups are some of the approaches examined.

## Global Prescriptions: Gendering Health and Human Rights

ROSALIND POLLACK PETCHESKY

ISBN 1 84277 007 1  
ZED BOOKS IN ASSOCIATION WITH UNRISD 2003

From her background as an activist and academic, the author has brought together current debates around reproductive health and rights and the influences of an increasingly volatile political environment on these rights. Dismayed by the echoes of war and the relentless advances of global capitalism she argues for broader coalitions between civil society and NGOs to bring pressure on governments and international bodies to protect and legislate for the monitoring of these rights. The HIV/AIDS pandemic and the struggle for life-saving drugs to be made available to some of the poorest people in the world illustrates the inequalities in access and the influence of corporate pharmaceutical giants. Her arguments are rooted in the belief that transnational women's organisations need to keep in touch with grassroots and community bodies to ensure that the reality of dealing with these issues is not lost in rhetoric.

The author has written an eloquent analysis and brought a feminist perspective to the struggles for reproductive and sexual rights in a changing global climate.

## Women In Islam: The Western Experience

ANNE SOFIE ROALD

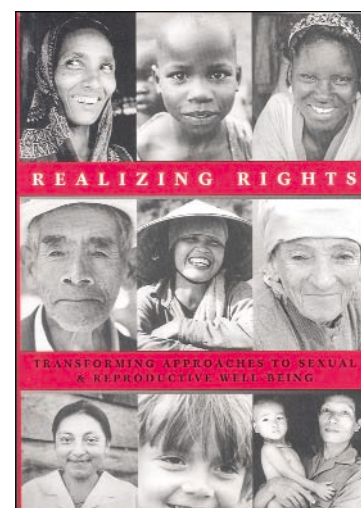
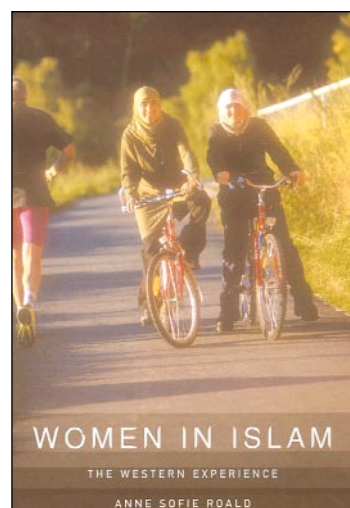
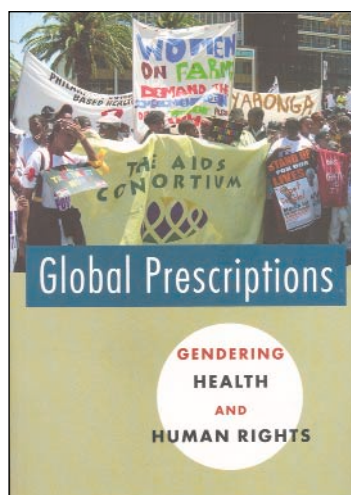
ISBN 0-41-524895-7 ROUTLEDGE 2001

'Islamic' attitudes towards women have increasingly become the focus of emotive and at times politicised public debate about Islam, within both Muslim and non-Muslim societies.

In her cross-cultural study, Anne Sofie Roald explores this contentious issue in detail, discussing gender relations, polygyny, divorce, child custody, women's political participation, female circumcision, and female 'veiling', through the prism of the Islamic sources themselves (the Qur'an and the Hadith). The commentaries of historical and modern Islamic scholars, and the perspectives of Arab Sunni Islamist activists living in Europe, allow her to investigate the reconstruction of gender roles in Islam.

Her study highlights the misconception of a homogeneous Islamic presence in Europe. It details the intense and divergent debate on these issues among Islamic scholars and activists and the continued significance of culture and context in the interpretation of social issues, just as during the formative period of Islamic thought.

She also provides a valuable framework by defining such misused terms as 'fundamentalism', and gives a useful account of the spectrum of Islamic activism in Europe, and an introduction to 'Sharia' Islamic law.





# RESOURCES

## Child and Women Abuse Studies Unit at London Metropolitan University

Currently working on the following projects:

- In partnership with the International Organisation for Migration, a training-for-trainers project in the Balkans to enhance good practice in counter-trafficking. A further aim is to extend this project to destination countries
- A study of self-defence courses for women and girls across Europe

For further information, contact:  
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E-mail: [cwasu@londonmet.ac.uk](mailto:cwasu@londonmet.ac.uk)

[www.cwasu.org](http://www.cwasu.org)

## Crime reduction toolkits: Trafficking of People

This toolkit is part of a pilot project to address the scale of trafficking in the UK, the needs of victims and how to ensure effective multi-agency co-operation at local level. It is hoped that the toolkit will evolve as more evidence of good practice emerges and as the needs of those using it develop.

[www.crimereduction.gov.uk/toolkits/tp02070202.htm](http://www.crimereduction.gov.uk/toolkits/tp02070202.htm)

## Coalition Against Trafficking in Women

The Coalition Against Trafficking in Women (CATW) is a non-governmental organisation that promotes women's human rights. It works internationally to combat sexual exploitation in all its forms.

[www.catwinternational.org](http://www.catwinternational.org)

## SIDA (Swedish International Development Co-operation Agency)

SIDA have been funding an information campaign against trafficking in women in the Baltic states

The website provides an excellent resource with access to research, reports, legislation, assistance for victims and links to other useful sites.

[www.focus-on-trafficking.net](http://www.focus-on-trafficking.net)

## UN Global Programme against Trafficking in Human Beings

The Global Programme against Trafficking in Human Beings (GPAT) was designed by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) in collaboration with the United Nations Interregional Crime and Justice Research Institute (UNICRI) and launched in March 1999. GPAT assists member states in their efforts to combat trafficking in human beings. It highlights the involvement of organised criminal groups in human trafficking and promotes the development of effective ways of cracking down on perpetrators. GPAT's overarching objective is to bring to the foreground the involvement of organized criminal groups in human trafficking and to promote the development of effective criminal justice-related responses.

[www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking\\_human\\_beings.html](http://www.unodc.org/unodc/en/trafficking_human_beings.html)

## The International Organisation for Migration

### Trafficking in Persons: An Analysis of Afghanistan

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) conducted a one-year study to examine trafficking of Afghans, particularly women and children, within and from Afghanistan, and of third-country nationals into

and through Afghanistan. The research findings have been compiled into a report, *Trafficking in Persons: An Analysis of Afghanistan*.

[www.iom.int//DOCUMENTS/PUBLICATION/EN/Afghan\\_trafficking.pdf](http://www.iom.int//DOCUMENTS/PUBLICATION/EN/Afghan_trafficking.pdf)

## United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNICRI)

**Research and report:** *Coalitions Against Trafficking in Human Beings in the Philippines*

[www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/human\\_trafficking/coalitions\\_trafficking.pdf](http://www.unodc.org/pdf/crime/human_trafficking/coalitions_trafficking.pdf)

## Other organisations working to tackle trafficking of women and children

### Anti-Slavery International

Thomas Clarkson House, The Stableyard  
Broomgrove Road, London SW9 9TL  
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7501 8920  
Fax: +44 (0)20 7738 4110  
E-mail: [info@antislavery.org](mailto:info@antislavery.org)

[www.antislavery.org](http://www.antislavery.org)

### International Women's Rights Centre

A non-governmental organisation in Ukraine with a dual goal: working to prevent trafficking in women and helping the victims of trafficking.

'LaStrada-Ukraine'  
PO Box 246, 01030 Kyiv, Ukraine  
Telephone/fax: (380-44) 224-04-46  
E-mail: [lastrada@ukrpack.net](mailto:lastrada@ukrpack.net)

[www.brama.com/lastrada](http://www.brama.com/lastrada)

### Global Alliance Against Trafficking in Women

The International Co-ordination Office  
P.O.Box 36, Bangkok Noi Office  
Bangkok 10700, Thailand  
Telephone (662) 864-1427/28  
Fax (662) 864-1637  
E-mail [gaatw@mozart.inet.co.th](mailto:gaatw@mozart.inet.co.th)

### ECPAT

ECPAT is a network of organisations and individuals working together for the elimination of child prostitution, child pornography and trafficking of children for sexual purposes.

[www.ecpat.net/eng/index.asp](http://www.ecpat.net/eng/index.asp)

## Acknowledgements

The Gender Equality Team at the British Council would like to thank the following contributors to this edition of Gender Equality News:

### Julie Bindel

Child and Women Abuse Studies Unit  
London Metropolitan University  
Email: [cwasu@londonmet.ac.uk](mailto:cwasu@londonmet.ac.uk)

### Judge Nimfa Cuesta Vilches

Presiding Judge, Regional Trial Court, Manila, Philippines

### Veena Lakhumani

British Council Ukraine

### Lisa McManus and Eva Atanossova

British Council Bulgaria

### Dina Vardaramatou

Project Co-ordinator, Centre of Research and Action on Peace (KEDE), Athens, Greece

### Nancy Durrell McKenna

Safehands for Mothers  
[www.safehands.org](http://www.safehands.org)

## Seminars and conferences

### Race, Gender and the Criminal Justice Process

**Friday 28 May 2004 9.30 am to 5.00 pm**

Venue: St Alban's Centre, Baldwin's Gardens, London EC1

Cost: £70

Chair: Michael Gordon

#### Programme:

- Black People & the Criminal Justice System  
Courtney Griffiths QC (UK)
- Black Deaths in Custody - Current Issues  
Deborah Coles (Inquest, UK)
- The Over-Representation of Black People in USA Prisons  
Prof. Yaw Ackah (Delaware State University, USA)
- The need to improve Mental Health Services' provision for Black People  
Dr Dele Olajide (Maudsley Hospital, UK)
- What Works? Black Women and Offending  
Annal Smith (London Probation Area, UK)

Further information on the conference can be obtained at: [www.Ruthchigwada-Bailey.inuk.com](http://www.Ruthchigwada-Bailey.inuk.com)

### Gender, Development and Public Policy in an Era of Globalization

**11–12 May 2004, Bangkok, Thailand**

Host/sponsor: Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), Institute of Social Studies (Netherlands), Centres of Development and Inter-Disciplinary Gender Studies at the University of Leeds (UK)

Four sub-themes will be addressed at the conference:

- Gender, conflict, migration and human security
- Gender, human rights and social policy
- Gender, economic development, technology and enterprise
- Gender and environmental resources management

Further details: [www.serd.ait.ac.th/gds/asialink/](http://www.serd.ait.ac.th/gds/asialink/)

### Gendered Borders: International Conference on Women and Immigration Law in Europe

**30 September–2 October 2004  
Amsterdam, Netherlands**

Host/sponsor: Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, Dutch Ministry of Social Affairs

The purpose of the conference is to analyse and evaluate immigration law in Europe from a gender perspective.

Further details: [www.rechten.vu.nl](http://www.rechten.vu.nl)

### First Asia Pacific Women, Girls & HIV/AIDS Best Practices Conference

**4–6 October 2004, Islamabad, Pakistan**

Host/sponsor: AMAL Human Development Network

The conference aims to look at the impact of HIV/AIDS on women and girls in the Asia and Pacific region, to review strategies to reverse current trends in transmission and to identify emerging issues of concern.

Further details: [www.amal-hdn.org](http://www.amal-hdn.org)

## International search for 1000 women for the Nobel Peace Prize in 2005

In 2003, an exciting initiative to obtain the Nobel Peace Prize for 1000 women in 2005 was launched by a group of Swiss women led by Ruth-Gaby Vermot-Mangold, a member of the Swiss parliament and the Council of Europe. A thousand women all over the world working for peace in their countries, communities and neighbourhoods will be identified and nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize. Their work in the cause of peace and human security will be made visible and their biographies and effective strategies academically documented.

The idea is to call the world's attention to the vital but largely unheralded role of women in peacemaking and peace-building. In the 102 years of the Nobel Peace Prize, only 11 women have been acknowledged by the committee for their peace work. The Swiss women who led the initiative have formed an international network of coordinators to find the 1000 women.

If you are interested in supporting this campaign or would like to receive further information, please contact:

1000 Women for the Nobel Peace Prize 2005  
Bern, Switzerland  
Telephone +41 31 330 10 85  
[www.1000peacewomen.org](http://www.1000peacewomen.org)



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You can view *Gender Equality News* online at our website: [www.britcoun.org/governance/gendernew/network\\_newsletter.htm](http://www.britcoun.org/governance/gendernew/network_newsletter.htm)

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