

Report of Israel and International Sub-Group of the NCJW, Inc. Trafficking Working Group

September 16, 2013

The focus of effort was how Israel and countries around the world address the problem of human trafficking (HT). The international aspect of this work centers on recent and planned future activities of International Council of Jewish Women (ICJW), which is a member of the NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons.

Methodology and Research

I consulted a variety of web sites to determine the scope of work undertaken by groups working in Israel and to explore ICJW's history of social action to eliminate HT. Shari Eshet provided invaluable materials regarding anti-trafficking work in Israel; she spoke with two leaders of NGOs in the field, with whom we could form future partnerships. In addition, I interviewed ICJW leaders and two team directors at AJWS, and attended seminars in the New York metropolitan area.

Web sites:

U.S. Department of State Trafficking in Persons Report 2013 www.state.gov/j/tip/rls/tiprpt/2013/

ATZUM—Justice Works www.atzum.org

Center for International Migration and Integration (CIMI) www.cimiglobal.org

Haaretz newspaper on line www.haaretz.com

Human Trafficking Search <http://humantraffickingsearch.net>

ICJW www.icjw.org

UN Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking www.ungift.org

UN Gift Box: www.ungiftbox.org

United Nations Blue Heart Campaign: <http://www.unodc.org/blueheart/index.html>

Stop the Traffik : <http://www.stophetraffik.org/>

Shari Eshet interviewed:

Ilan Cohn, director of JDC's Center for International Migration and Integration

Gili Varon legal advisor to ATZUM—Justice Works

Lilach Ben-Chaim, executive director, Turning the Tables

The people I interviewed are:

Shari Eshet, director of the NCJW Israel office

Sharon Gustafson, president, ICJW

Marni Besser, president, NCJW of Canada

Rita Fishman, ICJW representative to NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons (CSTIP) and member of the Business Ethics task force

Judy Mintz, former board director of NCJW, Inc. and UN Observer for ICJW

Rebecca Wasserman, director of campaigns and organizing; Timi Gerson, director of advocacy, American Jewish World Service

Lori Cohen, senior staff attorney, Immigration Intervention project, Sanctuary for Families

I attended the following meetings:

We Were Slaves: The Jewish Community Unites Against Sex Trafficking conference co-presented with UJA-Federation of New York, Sanctuary for Families, Anti-trafficking Initiative and NCJW-New York Section (April 22, 2013)

JDC's Women's Impact Network lunch "Focus on Counter-Trafficking," featuring Ilan Cohn and Daniela Yanai of CIMI, held at the AJDC in New York (July 10, 2013)

Session former MK Orit Zuaretz at NCJW-NYS (August 15, 2013)

NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in persons (September 10, 2013)

Questions

--Identify efforts that build awareness and educate communities in Israel and around the world.

--Identify programs in these countries that treat and rehabilitate survivors of human trafficking, with an emphasis on children and women exploited in the commercial sex trade.

--Explore the issues surrounding End Demand legislation recently presented in Israel.

--Explore how NCJW and ICJW may work together to strengthen the role of the Jewish community in this work.

Findings

With some exceptions, the Jewish community does not see human trafficking as a Jewish problem, although the State of Israel has taken this issue quite seriously.

While not confining ourselves to forming partnerships exclusively with members of the Jewish community, we may take a leading role in raising the collective voices of people of faith. This will require outreach in communities where this issue may not be already addressed by sections and ICJW affiliates, including synagogues, social justice organizations, women's funds and Federations.

Building an awareness of the human trafficking problem—describing the problem, how to recognize it in the community—coupled with education, among members of the general public and young people in school—are points of agreement to create effective anti-trafficking programs. Taking into account cultural differences and social sensitivities, this approach is true for Israel and around the world. Rehabilitation and protection services demand our attention as well.

One of the most powerful things we can do as an organization is to lead by example—at the section level, strengthen sections already doing this work—and add our collective voices to the international organizations that exist by forming coalitions.

To this end, and based on my conversations with a variety of parties, I recommend that a toolkit of community practices be developed and shared with NCJW sections and ICJW affiliates. We should build on methodologies developed by sections already involved in HT work, which could

be adaptable for a variety of needs and circumstances. Chief among the areas to be addressed would be ways to create greater public awareness, through educational forums and school curriculum, and the engagement of committed volunteers. Hearing somebody else's passion for the cause is energizing and contagious, so a speakers' bureau could be one element to the program. This would require some level of NCJW staff support.

Advocacy is another component of that work, especially from the NCJW perspective. The domestic agenda has been covered by other members of this group; however, "end demand" legislation, currently in committee in Israel's Knesset, is something that we must acknowledge, even if we choose to remain neutral on prostitution issues. Because of its complexity, it demands a forum for further consideration if it is to be adopted as part of an advocacy agenda. I have included three resources in the Dropbox for review: two from AJWS and one prepared by ICJW. Suffice to say, there is insufficient data to determine how many women engage in sex work freely and how many began as trafficked individuals and remained in "the life," whether trapped by threatening keepers or lack of economic opportunity (furthered by the accompanying social disapproval). While poverty, lack of education and economic disempowerment are all root causes that propel a woman to prostitute herself, each country has its own context for this to occur.

Israel is now ranked as a Tier 1 country by the U.S. Department of State in its HT ratings; trafficking of people crossing into Israel has largely been eradicated. Trafficking, however, remains an internal concern, notes NCJW Israel Director Shari Eshet. Young girls, including Jewish Israelis, Bedouins, Ethiopians and girls from "good families" are lured by traffickers who employ methods of recruitment that exploit minors' vulnerabilities, whether it is low self-esteem or the desire to seek a better life—through employment or the adventure of living in a big city like Tel Aviv. It may take the form of an offer from someone who proposes a waitress job with free housing. "They get on a bus and end up in a brothel," Shari says. Drug addiction, as in the United States and elsewhere, also forces girls and women to seek money by any means.

Israel adopted a highly cooperative approach to end human trafficking—from prevention to prosecution to victim protection. The Office of National Anti-Trafficking coordinated these efforts of a massive scale. Trafficking coordinators in several government ministries work together and share information. The Knesset enacted legislation in 2011 that prohibits prostitution services ads. Active law enforcement rooted out those "holding a person under conditions of slavery," an effort enabled by coordinated workshops, seminars and special training. The government also undertook public information campaigns and created a national hotline. Two government-sponsored shelters, respectively for men and women, include a spectrum of rehabilitative services; one year is guaranteed, with the option of added rehab time. There are also day and evening centers in cities across Israel for therapy and rehabilitation. A "safe back" program guards against the dangers of re-trafficking after repatriation. The Legal Aid Branch provides free legal assistance. Bilateral agreements with Thailand and Bulgaria, two source countries for trafficked labor, have been enacted, with other countries set to join the effort. This massive campaign enabled Israel to climb from Tier 3 status (the lowest rung) to Tier 1 (the highest) in the two most recent State Department HT rankings. (See the Best Practices document issued by the State of Israel's Ministry of Justice in Dropbox.)

In Israel, money laundering, drugs and weapons all share the same criminal networks with human trafficking, noted former MK Orit Zuretz, who is known for promoting end-demand legislation. This intermingling of nefarious elements encourages law enforcement and border security to take an aggressive stance against trafficking as well.

IGP Projects Confronting Human Trafficking

The Israel Granting Program supported the **Hotline for Migrant Workers** for the funding year 2006-2007 with a grant of \$5,000. The activities focused on preventing trafficked women from

being detained to instead be transferred to the Maagan shelter; they also addressed issues pertaining to legal redress, rehabilitation, lodging legal complaints against sex advertisements and public information. (Report available in Dropbox.)

Turning the Tables, funded by IGP in 2012 (\$10,000) and 2013 (\$15,000), is an innovative rehabilitation program for women who had worked in prostitution, including Israelis and other nationalities trafficked for this purpose. The program centers on vocational training in the fashion industry (it was recently featured in the *New York Times*) and has received accolades from the Israeli government. In 2012, 22 women were enrolled in three vocational training courses—fashion design, sales and styling and professional sewing. In 2013, another 20 women are expected to enter the program. (2012 report in Dropbox.)

Among the program's early successes: establishing a network of connections with both professionals from the fashion world and organizations treating women in prostitution. To date, Turning the Tables offers its services through the Saleet rehabilitation hostel for women in prostitution, the Maagan center for trafficked victims and Elem, the nonprofit organization for at-risk children and youth. From the fashion arena, they established long-term partnerships with the Gertrud fashion house and the boutique chain Story, both of which will be part of a training and internship program, as well as professional advisers for the organization.

The program recently moved into a new studio in Tel Aviv. The women are also producing and selling handcrafts, selling them at fairs and on television.

Most women in Turning the Tables were offered opportunities to stay in Israel with a work permit or were repatriated, based on agreements with Moldavia and Thailand.

The Israeli government has expressed interest in opening similar government-sponsored programs. If the government funds Turning the Tables, NCJW needs to weigh the advantages and disadvantages of working with a government-run program.

Israel Short-Term Recommendations

--Through the Israel Granting Program, fund organizations that support survivors of trafficking through rehabilitation, including vocational programs such as Turning the Tables, and the prevention of trafficking. The IGP committee is in the midst of discussions for the next cycle of funding and will be asked to explore a more significant emphasis on this area.

--Engage the assistant to the Israel director to devote more time to this field; she may devote anywhere from 25 to 50 percent of her time for the next six months, for example, to map out where and how to get involved with existing organizations and attend coalition meetings. Included in that time would be researching organizations that fund HT projects. By September 2014 we would have an Israel action plan in place, which would be funded through the Israel office.

--Explore the means to partner with organizations like ATZUM and CIMI (the Center for International Migration and Integration), including advocacy and partnering as a funder for appropriate, specific projects.

--Research the issue of presenting anti-trafficking curriculum in the Israeli school system, including the role of NGOs and the government.

--Until policy is formulated on whether to advocate for End Demand legislation (in Israel and elsewhere), refrain from taking a position and focus our efforts on rehabilitation and protection. The End Demand bill died in committee last year and though re-introduced during the current session of the Knesset, remains in committee.

Second-Year Recommendations

- In 2014 issue a Request for Proposals for IGP according to trafficking-relevant guidelines. Organizations working in this arena include ATZUM, CIMI and ELEM, which funds a drop-in center for at-risk and sexually exploited minors called Awake at Night, along with a hotline for youth engaged in prostitution.
- Develop a “road show” awareness-building program for school and community-group presentations, specially geared toward vulnerable populations.
- Lobby the Ministry of Education and relevant government officials for the adoption of a public school curriculum centering on awareness and prevention. Shari has offered to meet with MK Adi Koll to discuss a strategy from which to approach the lobbying.
- Include an Israeli component in a trafficking presentation at the 2014 NCJW Convention.
- Screen the documentary *The Price of Sex* at Convention (available through the U.S. Embassy).

Third-Year Recommendations

- Dedicate an advocate working in the New York office that would devote time to researching, developing and overseeing anti-trafficking initiatives at the section level and in Israel.
- Develop a sex-trafficking awareness and prevention curriculum in association with RIFIE that would include lessons pertaining to self-identity and self-esteem, making good choices and role-playing. Presentations may include age-appropriate video programs about the issue, with school assemblies presenting experts in the field and girls who have been trafficked.
- Develop a traveling road show on the issue that would feature a condensed form of prevention curriculum. This could be modified for use by sections in the United States, including panels with local experts and survivors.
- Develop an appropriate awareness curriculum for drug-treatment centers. Many women and minors prostitute themselves because of a need for money to maintain their drug habit.

ICJW AND TRAFFICKING

ICJW “has campaigned on the issue of slavery since its founding,” notes Marni Besser, president of NCJW of Canada and whose article “Human Trafficking and You,” appeared in the June 2013 ICJW Newsletter. Like women from NCJW at the turn of the last century who diverted young women from falling into prostitution when they met ships coming to port in New York, Bertha Pappenheim, founder of the German League of Jewish Women, in the early 1900s, stopped girls from boarding trains to be prostituted abroad.

It is to be determined the exact role of ICJW depending on work group recommendations. Gustafson recommended reaching out to Gila Oshrat, the president of the Council of Women’s Organizations of Israel (CWOI), the ICJW affiliate in Israel and the umbrella group that includes the three largest women’s organizations in Israel. The mission in October 2013 may provide us with an opportunity to meet. We could invite her to the Turning the Tables presentation or to an informal get-together with Shari Eshet, Linda Slucker and a few board members.

ICJW’s anti-trafficking efforts work in conjunction with national and international strategies that address the triad of victim, trafficker and client. Affiliates are encouraged to join anti-trafficking campaigns, and rally their governments to sign and ratify the UN Protocol on Trafficking in Persons (2000) and to develop anti-trafficking strategies for effective prevention, protection and prosecution.

A number of ICJW affiliates provide information and awareness-raising to their communities on trafficking. They are encouraged to confront and seek to change within their own communities the social tolerance of sexual commodification and the exploitation of women and girls.

ICJW urges governments to focus on the rescue, rehabilitation, and social inclusion/reintegration of victims. Governments must develop effective systems for identifying victims early, and supply sufficient specialist care, accommodation and legal advice to victims, who must not be prosecuted.

ICJW advocates that victims be allowed a recovery period of 90 days and guaranteed residency permits, with support for women to return to their country of origin if they wish, or to be assisted to become integrated in their new country.

ICJW also advocates for countries to improve the prosecution rates of traffickers, improve anti-trafficking laws, and train law enforcement officers and judiciaries to enforce those laws.

Anne Morris, chair of the Status of Women Committee for ICJW, prepared a recent report that indicated the priority standing of the trafficking issue, both through the international body and through affiliates, parts of which are paraphrased here:

The trafficking of women and girls is a significant focus of ICJW, both as an international body and through its affiliates. Affiliates received information from Status of Women committee member Marni Besser discussing the 2013 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) report, produced by the U.S. State Department. Marni provided specific information on affiliates' country's rating and indicated what needs to be done to combat trafficking.

To quote Besser: "I have received six responses from affiliate countries, which indicate positive actions generated by my letters. This year's response is more positive than last year. Also, in two cases, I have been asked to provide more specific information and support. Australia is right on board with education through publications; Brazil is planning to talk to government representatives; Canada (Toronto Section) plans to hold an educational forum with Timea Nagy of "Walk With Me," Truckers Against Trafficking (truck drivers) and law enforcement. The Czech Republic will be publishing the information. Georgia has developed relationships with other faith-based groups to share information. And in South Africa, a letter is being sent to the women's ANC league to voice concern."

ICJW encourages affiliates to work on two fronts:

1. Education of communities by contacting key local anti-trafficking organizations (such as Stop the Traffik) and invite speakers for forums educating the community.
2. Protection of victims by joining with anti-trafficking NGOs to lobby the government for improved protection of victims.

Stop the Traffik (STT)

Since May 2013, ICJW's Status of Women Committee is working more closely with STT, a key anti-trafficking organization that works closely with the UN. At present it has coordinators in Germany, Netherlands, Taiwan, Canada, New Zealand, Australia and the United Kingdom.

It also has activist groups, Active Communities against Trafficking (ACT), in the U.S., Spain, Norway and Portugal, and in many parts of the UK and the Netherlands. STT invites people to join existing ACTs or begin such groups in their own area.

The Australian affiliate, National Council of Jewish Women Australia, has been a member of Stop the Traffik for some years and supports their regular campaigns lobbying companies that

use trafficked labor in the cotton and chocolate industries. STT also petitions governments to improve their responses to the victims of trafficking.

The **NGO Committee to Stop Trafficking in Persons (CSTIP)** is comprised of some 40 NGOs and nonprofits, including many religious organizations. Until I joined the committee on Sept. 10 representing NCJW, ICJW, represented by Rita Fishman, was the only Jewish organization at the table. To add my voice to the others in this working group, this serves to underscore human trafficking advocacy and support as a leadership opportunity for NCJW.

CSTIP is dedicated to the eradication of human trafficking in all its forms through education, advocacy, research, and monitoring compliance with United Nations treaties, protocols, laws, and resolutions. The Committee recognizes the urgency of raising awareness of trafficking in persons as a violation of human rights, ensuring action at the UN to address the underlying causes of human trafficking and advocating for provision of services to victims. I plan to attend its monthly meetings through 2013 and in 2014.

Among its recent activities, CSTIP submitted a statement to the Secretary General at the 57th Session of the Commission on the Status of Women, urging UN agencies and States Parties to form strategic partnerships and review progress on their promises to combat human trafficking. (See CSTIP PowerPoint in Dropbox.)

UN GIFT Box: Rita Fishman has been exploring bringing the UN GIFT Box program to New York City. Stop the Traffik and the United Nations Global Initiative to Fight Human Trafficking (UN.GIFT) launched the program during the 2012 London Olympics. The project is currently in Brazil, Slovakia and the United Kingdom. GIFT boxes are walk-in pieces of public art that people encounter at street level; they are enticed to enter with alluring promises. Once inside the truth of HT is revealed—loosely replicating the experience of the trafficked person. Besides teeming with discomfiting images, the boxes include public awareness messages. Rita hopes to bring ten such boxes to New York to coincide with the U.S. Open tennis tournament, set for the summer of 2014. She has been working toward this end for a year. If the project moves forward, it will require 150-200 trained volunteers. The boxes are estimated to cost about \$20,000 each. The campaign could cost \$500,000.

Short-Term ICJW Recommendations

- Seek opportunities to work together with ICJW and use each other's strengths and resources toward common goals.
- Share with ICJW material, information and best practices toolbox growing out of the working group.
- Include ICJW affiliate activities around the world in the NCJW catalog of work.
- Devote 2013-2014 to participating in the NGO Committee Stop Trafficking in Persons, as well as a sub-committee.

Second Year Recommendations

- Add our voices to international organizations that already exist and form coalitions.
- Make trafficking activities through the UN and NGOs more of a priority.
- Consider United Nations resolutions relating to trafficking as advocacy opportunities.

Resources Needed

Because the Israel piece would largely be covered by IGP, fundraising would depend on a campaign identifying NCJW as a leader in anti-trafficking activities. If we are to fully embrace this in our work in Israel, we could conceivably devote \$60-75,000 to funding at least three organizations (ATZUM, CIMI and Elem, for example) for the next funding cycle of IGP. It could go from there.

For the immediate term, the time re-allocated for the assistant to the Israel director would be covered under the current salary. For the first year, \$5,000 for salary would be desired. In years to come, NCJW, Inc. may wish to add a staff member to coordinate the full scope of HT endeavors.

Israeli educational curriculum development expenses could range from \$30,000 to \$100,000, according to Shari's recent estimate. This would be a mid- to long-range goal.

Respectfully submitted by,

Leslie Sternlieb