

WORLD DAY AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING
NEWSLETTER

PRESENTED BY: THE MODERN SLAVERY AND LABOUR EXPLOITATION ADVISORY GROUP



**WE SEE FROM
WHERE WE STAND**

JULY 2021

COLLABORATING TOGETHER TO ADDRESS MODERN SLAVERY & LABOUR EXPLOITATION
WITHIN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND



THEME 2021: "VICTIMS' VOICES LEAD THE WAY"

THIS YEAR'S THEME PUTS VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING AT THE CENTRE OF THE CAMPAIGN AND WILL HIGHLIGHT THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING TO AND LEARNING FROM SURVIVORS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING.

The campaign portrays survivors as key actors in the fight against human trafficking and focusses on the crucial role they play in establishing effective measures to prevent this crime, identify and rescue victims and support them on their road to rehabilitation.

Many victims of human trafficking have experienced ignorance or misunderstanding

in their attempts to get help. They have had traumatic post-rescue experiences during identification interviews and legal proceedings. Some have faced revictimization and punishment for crimes they were forced to commit by their traffickers. Others have been subjected to stigmatization or received inadequate support.

Learning from victims' experiences and turning their suggestions into concrete actions will lead to a more victim-centred and effective approach in combating human trafficking.

Hashtag

Please use the hashtag #EndHumanTrafficking on all digital platforms.

WANTING TO CONTACT THE ADVISORY GROUP?

We would welcome hearing from you, please contact:

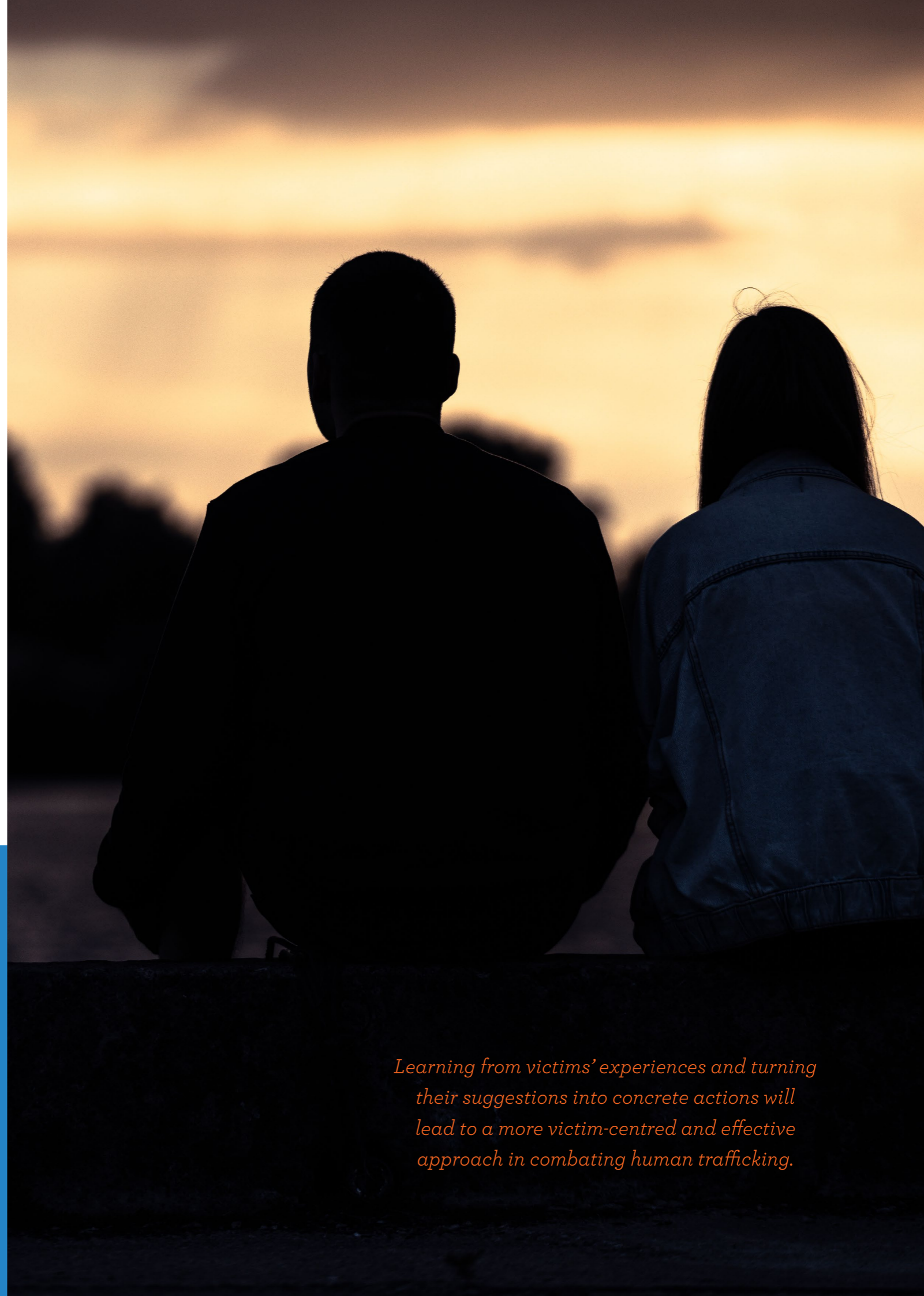
Rev. Chris Frazer,

Anglican Diocese of Wellington

Email: chrisf@anglicanmovement.nz

Phone: 027 442 5065

Learning from victims' experiences and turning their suggestions into concrete actions will lead to a more victim-centred and effective approach in combating human trafficking.





EDITORIAL

COLLABORATION: EASY TO SAY, FAR MORE DIFFICULT TO DO

ANDREW WALLIS, OBE, CEO OF UNSEEN

There is an oft used word when discussions on how we are going to effectively tackle modern slavery and human trafficking occur. That word is collaboration. It is easy to say, but a far more difficult and different reality when we try and collaborate. The dictionary definition – work jointly on an activity, especially to produce or create something - is something we all desire to sign up to, to end the evil of modern slavery. Of course, we all desire a world free of slavery and exploitation and having been engaged in this arena for nearly fifteen years it is an opportune moment to stop, reflect and consider lessons learnt so that we can achieve far more in the next fifteen.

Human trafficking and exploitation affect every country, every area of society. It is agnostic to socio-economic status, creed, educational level and nationality when it comes to victims, and it requires a whole society response. That means no one sector can be the solution provider on its own and therefore we need to listen, learn from one another, and work together with humility and a desire to improve our collective performance. A commitment to high challenge but also high support is key. We need to acknowledge that we have little time left – less than nine years if we are to achieve the ambition of Sustainable Development Goal 8.7 – the eradication of modern slavery.

After fifteen years I do see the first encouraging embryonic signs of a willingness to collaborate and to think about the problems we face strategically. Historically there has been little ambition or recognition of the need to bring together all of the key players as equal stakeholders. This cannot be any government's fight alone and yet governments must learn how to work with others effectively. Business, media, statutory authorities, law enforcement, faith communities, funders, those with lived experience and NGOs must begin to effectively work together as well as with governments. Each stakeholder has specific roles and must stop acting in isolation from each other. Some of the reasons for this are historical but the time for blame and mistrust is over. The time for properly and respectfully listening and learning from one another is now. Unless we can come together, break down the walls of our silos and give focus to our combined efforts we will not defeat modern slavery.



Simultaneous responses at both the macro and micro levels, the individual and the systemic are needed. Concurrently we must work to prevent as well as prosecute and protect and fully reintegrate survivors. We need business to ensure its supply chains and business practices are transparent and free of slavery, but governments must lead. California, often at the forefront of socio-political development and thought, legislated and enacted the Transparency in Supply Chains Act, followed by the UK, Australia and Canada and others in the drafting wings. Others in Europe have gone even further with mandatory due diligence reporting.

NGOs must develop a more intelligent model of engagement with business, law enforcement and government that is less adversarial. Governments must give political leadership but realise their limitations and be open to innovation and leadership outside of their cloistered walls of privilege. In-depth knowledge and solutions exist beyond the ken of their respective civil servants and politicians.

Media must move beyond the desire for yet another sensational case study and use its influence to both educate and change perceptions about the realities of modern slavery and how it erodes our society. The shocking truth is that modern slavery would not exist unless there was a demand for it, but societies and individuals fuel this trade and human beings are commoditised as a result. We must address and break our addiction to cheap labour, goods and services.

We have it within our grasp to eradicate modern slavery globally. But, do we have the imagination, ambition, coordination and most importantly the leadership to do so? The connections between underground markets in designer clothes, human beings, drugs, weapons, and endangered species, show that the variety of illicit markets constitute a unified phenomenon that has been growing at a startling rate. Aided by globalisation and advances in technology, the international black market is moving faster, evading officials more easily, and earning more than ever. So we must collaborate to stop this.

Child Matters

EDUCATING TO PREVENT CHILD ABUSE

OUR OPPORTUNITY TO ACT

JANE SEARLE, CEO, CHILD MATTERS

Aotearoa New Zealand is currently grappling with how we address generations of harm caused by family violence, sexual violence, child abuse and institutional abuse. The Royal Commission of Inquiry into Historical Abuse in State Care and in the Care of Faith-based Institutions, the public debate regarding Oranga Tamariki, and an increased focus on online offences are reported on by the media daily.

Media coverage is often a determinative factor in how the public perceive an issue. As organisations that work with victims of violence abuse will attest to, if the circumstances of a case being reported are distressing, there can be a tendency to disengage from the issue, due to the complexity and scale of the problem. The issue of Human Trafficking faces this same dynamic, as the exploitation of vulnerable people surely exhibits human nature at its worst. The concept of removing the self-determination and rights of a person for the gain (often financial) of another, is a concept many New Zealanders struggle to comprehend.



In the same way family violence, sexual violence and child abuse is often misunderstood, the issue of human trafficking generates similar misconceptions. The power and control used to abuse thousands of New Zealanders in their home environment has similarities with the power and control dynamic used when people are trafficked. The fear and grooming used to induce what is often misunderstood as compliance, is also a similar dynamic and the consequences are as traumatic and far reaching.

Debate about how to combat family harm, sexual violence and child abuse should also include discussion on how human trafficking interrelates with these social issues. Training within Government agencies and community organisations needs to include human trafficking training as part of that capacity building. Government contracts with community organisations need to allow for work done with victims of trafficking to be included in the contract delivery, instead of these organisations doing this work ad hoc and without funding, as is often the case.

Within that discussion we must be careful not to lose focus on the children and young people who are also victims of these offences. As with all social issues, unless we are intentionally keeping a focus on children and young people, their voices will be silenced in the debate.

Human Trafficking is the epitome of a covert offence, secretive and reliant on creating fear and exploiting the vulnerability of its victims. It will take an intentional and planned body of work at both a governmental and societal level to ensure we are able to combat the issue on Aotearoa's shores. With the work currently underway to build better systems to combat family harm, sexual violence, and child abuse in Aotearoa we have an opportunity to encompass the issue of human trafficking in those discussions, and therefore build a more cohesive and co-ordinated response that works to protect victims.

Human Trafficking is the epitome of a covert offence, secretive and reliant on creating fear and exploiting the vulnerability of its victims.

LEARNING FROM VICTIMS

DR CHRISTINA STRINGER,
CENTRE FOR RESEARCH ON MODERN SLAVERY AT
THE UNIVERSITY OF AUCKLAND BUSINESS SCHOOL

TEMPORARY MIGRANT WORKERS SACRIFICE A LOT TO COME TO NEW ZEALAND. SOME COME TO STUDY OR WORK FOR THE SHORT TERM; OTHERS ULTIMATELY HOPE FOR PERMANENT RESIDENCY. MANY HAVE INCURRED DEBT AND HAVE FAMILY OBLIGATIONS TO MEET.

Unfortunately, for some temporary migrant workers, their experience is not what they dreamed it would be. Once in New Zealand, they become vulnerable to exploitation. Difficulties in finding work, debt obligations, or being tied to an employer-sponsored visa can leave them vulnerable. Some employers recognise and tap into their vulnerability. They control the migrants through various means, including threats of reporting them to Immigration New Zealand, the non- or under-payment of wages, and, in some extremes, physical and sexual abuse.

The excessive hours many are required to work continually, coupled with the emotional stress they are under, can lead to health and safety implications. Many become exhausted, traumatised and depressed.



BUSINESS SCHOOL

Regardless of their trauma and pain, some are committed to improving the path for future migrants. In my research over the past decade, I have heard highly distressing accounts from those I have interviewed. They spoke frankly about their exploitation, not because they would benefit from doing so, but in the hope that the system would change and prospective migrants would not have a similar experience to them.



Listening to the victims also led to successful prosecutions by the Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI) against officers from four South Korean vessels fishing in New Zealand's waters for the illegal dumping of fish. In 2011, the Indonesian crew from one of these vessels were being sent home. The fishing company had not paid them, and their South Korean officers had physically abused some. While waiting to board their flight, an MPI officer approached some of the crew. He asked if they would be willing to remain in New Zealand to assist MPI in prosecuting the South Korean officers for illegal fishing practices. One recalled, 'I felt obliged to the New Zealand government and said yes ... I'm ready to help the Government of New Zealand'. Notwithstanding, there were no charges laid against the officers for the abuses the crew had suffered.

We can learn a lot from victims. They can provide in-depth insight into patterns of exploitation, business models used by exploiters, patterns of extortion and the networks that operate in this space.

New Zealand has had two successful prosecutions for people trafficking. The first case came to the attention of authorities because one of the victims talked about her experience to others at church.

The voices of victims matter.



NEW SUPPORT FOR NEW ZEALAND MIGRANTS

STEVE SYMON, CHAIR

EXPLOITATION HAS BECOME AN INCREASING REALITY FOR MIGRANTS WHO HAVE COME TO NEW ZEALAND SEEKING A BETTER LIFE. THIS SAD REALITY HAS DRIVEN THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE MIGRANT EXPLOITATION RELIEF FOUNDATION (MERF).

Officially launched in June at a function hosted by the Minister of Immigration, Hon. Kris Faafoi, the Foundation took its first steps to put an end to the cycle of exploitation.

New Zealand is reliant on a migrant work force, and as visitors to this country, they should be afforded the protections and benefits of all employees. However, for a variety of reasons, this is increasingly not the situation. Whether through isolation by culture, language, poverty or even employment terms, there is growing despair of ever escaping the situation these workers find themselves.

The concept of MERF was first developed by Cameron Bower after working with victims as an investigator with Immigration New Zealand. Gathering together like-minded individuals, the Foundation has identified the gap that exists for victims of exploitation. And what needs to be done is to create a wrap-around solution.

MERF provides necessary education and knowledge to migrants, making sure there is a clear pathway to follow in order to escape exploitation and make sure they never find themselves again in the same situation.

Beyond this, there is a drive to deliver accountability to exploitative employers and to build awareness of the situation that exists so that genuine change can be achieved. It is a priority for the Foundation to ensure that this type of business practice does not become an accepted norm for business in New Zealand.



“Facing this reality is the first step,” says MERF Chair Steve Symon, “without this service migrant workers are left feeling cornered. Our experience shows us that they often do not know if they should share the experience and risk deportation or continue with the mistreatment and abuse.”

The Foundation is reliant on charity to fund the work needing to be done. The more that is raised the more effective MERF will be in breaking this cycle. Corporations that are committed to putting into action policy statements around corporate social responsibility can support this important work. More information can be found at www.merf.co.nz.

Exploitation and unethical labour practices not only damages the lives of employees but also undermines good businesses who are trying to compete with non-compliant employers.

“Our work means higher standards of practice will be required from everyone so that legitimate businesses, who are being undercut, are not harmed”.



TURNING AWARENESS INTO ACTION

FATHER JEFF DRANE,
SEAFARERS WELFARE BOARD NEW ZEALAND

All of us heard in March the news of a huge container vessel stuck in the Suez Canal for a week. It was high drama with media coverage because of blocking a vital shipping route. But not far away was another ship abandoned for the past four years, on which Mohammed Aisha has been living. In recent months, he's been completely alone. The number of abandoned crews is on the rise, according to Lloyd's List (an international shipping journal), leaving seafarers in precarious situations.

The BBC's Paul Adams has been in touch with Mohammed for weeks, learning about his isolated, off-shore life. He is living with rodents; no power or fresh water, and he must swim to shore for food and water and for topping up his phone. There were over 250 cases of seafarer abandonment last year according to Lloyd's of London.

Though this is a worst case scenario, we have all heard of the seafarers within New Zealand waters who have not been off a ship since the COVID-19 lockdown in March 2020. They could not get shore leave anywhere. Though community health is paramount, there is also a serious human rights issue because of mental and physical health. No physical contact with

family or others, along with no opportunity to return home, is serious. It is, as Mohammed Aisha said, like being in a total metal prison with no respect from shipping companies, shipping agents, or governments which leads to a loss of self-respect and abandonment.

The global pandemic has, however, generated a shred of light for services to seafarers in this country. After being supported entirely by generous faith-based organisations and humanitarians within New Zealand for a hundred years, now the Crown is beginning to take responsibility for seafarer welfare more seriously, because of the pandemic and because of signing the Maritime Labour Convention in 2016.

The Seafarers Welfare Board of New Zealand [SWBNZ] was recognised by the government as the official deliverer of services to seafarers back in December 2017, and only last September was it asked by the Government to be part of the preservation of community health against COVID-19. Working collaboratively with port authorities, maritime trade unions and local governments for seafarers, they have continued in a radically changed way with the COVID-19 pandemic, to balance seafarers' human rights to have shore leave for essential goods and services. The Ministry of Transport was able to offer a trial funding contract to SWBNZ, to pay a wage to at least one nominated ship visitor per port. This ship visitor needed to be traceable and tested fortnightly. The funding enabled a ship visitor and to cover the expense of purchasing consumer goods and services for the seafarer until delivered and recovered. Finally, funding covered administrative and training costs in delivering these services.



Photo by Cameron Venti on Unsplash

Overnight, seafarer rights were slightly more balanced with the maintenance of community health. Ship visitors had to be trained and provided with proper Personal Protective Equipment. Port Authorities were mandated by the government to work more closely with SWBNZ, a relationship that had always been difficult as Ports saw themselves for decades as solely providing shipping to support regional economies, and therefore having no responsibility for the well-being of foreign seafarers. Again, New Zealand has led the world in these human rights issues and set a precedent that other governments are considering copying.





EMBASSY OF
THE UNITED STATES
OF AMERICA

"FROM WORDS TO ACTION."

REMARKS FROM U.S. MISSION TO NEW ZEALAND CHARGÉ D'AFFAIRES KEVIN COVERT AT TANGO I TE KAUPAE MURI/TAKE THE NEXT STEP ANTI-TRAFFICKING CONFERENCE
TUESDAY, MARCH 16, 2021

Every year, traffickers deny around 25 million people their fundamental rights to freedom, forcing them to live enslaved and to toil for their exploiters' benefit and profits. And every day, many of you fight to change that. We acknowledge that work, and we are all here today to help continue that fight. Today's conference theme, "Taking the Next Step", echoes discussions I have had with many of you, when I have heard the common refrain that, "Words are fine, but we need action." All governments, including my own, must take the next step – from words to action. We must work harder to increase prosecutions of human traffickers, to expand our efforts to identify and care for trafficking victims, and to ensure victims are not being punished for crimes that traffickers have compelled them to commit.

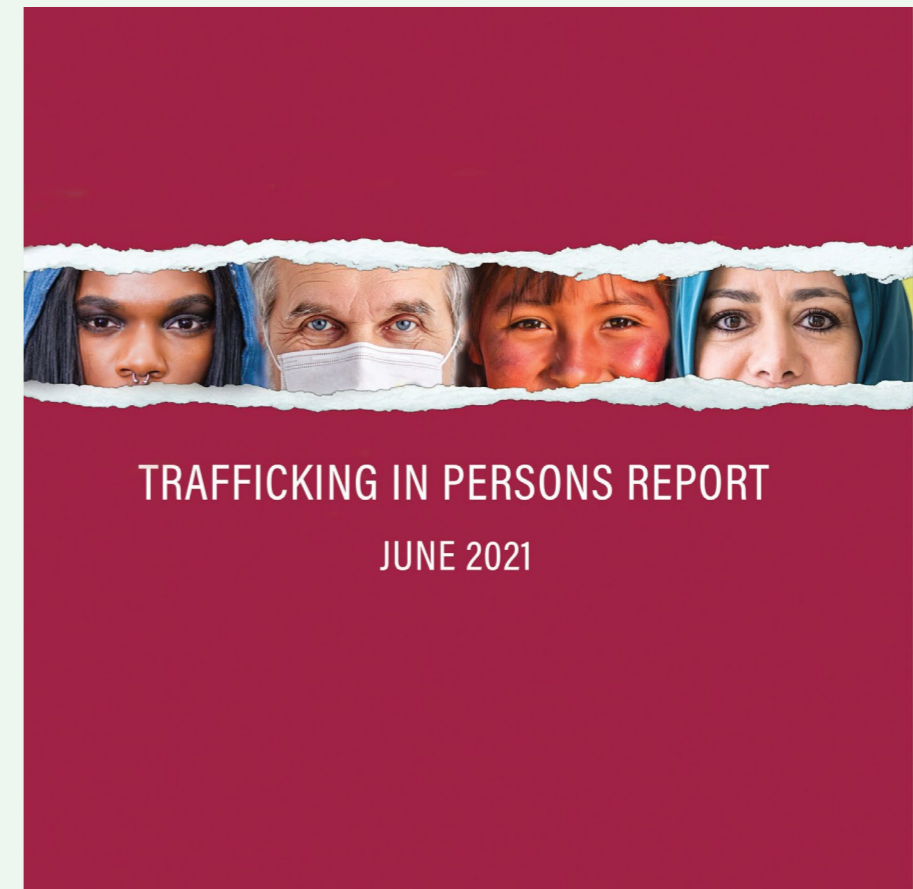
I am proud that, in creating the annual Trafficking in Persons – or "TIP" – Report 21 years ago, the United States Congress took the global lead to act against this abhorrent crime. For twenty years, this international benchmark report has demonstrated the United States' enduring conviction that human trafficking is a global threat, requiring a global response.

No country's perfect – not the United States, not New Zealand – but the TIP Report arms our governments with the concrete data they need to increase investigations, prosecutions, and convictions of traffickers, and to provide the most appropriate protection for trafficking victims. Now more than ever, the COVID-19 pandemic has magnified the need for us all – international partners, governments, faith communities, NGOs, business leaders – to work together in the fight. COVID has exacerbated economic instability and lack of access to critical services, and the number of people vulnerable to exploitation by traffickers worldwide has grown dramatically.

When governments take the lead they really can change things. Recently U.S. and New Zealand trafficking investigators and prosecutors shared best practice and case studies during a two-day webinar. The virtual information exchange between senior officials from the U.S. Department of Justice and the New Zealand government's Trafficking-in-Persons Operations Group covered areas of shared concern – from emerging global trends in traffickers' operating methods; to victim-centred approaches to investigations; to how to work within different cultural norms. Despite significant differences in our two countries' trafficking profiles and legal systems, the challenges of combating human trafficking showed we have more in common than we have differences.

But governments need help from civil society. TIP cases present particular challenges to law enforcement agencies, where the focus is normally on the short-term goal of "solving" the crime. All of us here recognize the need for trafficking victims to have access to long-term services that address common issues such as traffickers' continuing influence over their victims, and the survivors' long-term physical and mental health needs. This is why I was particularly heartened to see the victim-centered approach outlined in the Plan of Action, which we have all been keen to see for some time. Neither of our governments are complacent about the global scourge of human trafficking. We are making progress, but we know we must do better.

And with your help, we can do better.





"WE SEE FROM WHERE WE STAND"

REV. CHRIS FRAZER,
CHAIR OF THE MODERN SLAVERY AND LABOUR EXPLOITATION ADVISORY GROUP
THE ANGLICAN DIOCESE OF WELLINGTON

Vision though, is not only about being able to see - it is about where we choose to look, where we choose to show up, and how we decide to respond.

In 2000 the World Bank undertook a ground breaking research project. The three part series was based on an unprecedented effort to gather the views, experiences and aspirations of more than 60,000 desperately poor men and women from 60 countries. Research teams headed out into these countries sitting and listening to the people in the places where they lived and worked. Gathered in community groups with the researchers, their voices guided and informed their lived reality. In the introduction to part two of the research 'crying out for change', the point was made clear that at the time of the research there were 2.8 million poverty experts. Who were these experts? **Those living with the reality of poverty.**

Yet, it goes on to point out that the development discourse surrounding poverty is dominated by the perspectives and expertise of those who are not poor - the professionals, politicians, and agencies. Using open participatory methods, the research aimed to give voice and agency to those adversely affected, so they could share their experiences and perspectives of poverty, its causes and how they felt it could be reduced.

In a chapter focussing on elements of a strategy for change it states, "When interventions and government performance are approached from the perspectives and experiences of people who are poor, the world of development assistance looks different. The challenge for outsiders is to look at the world through the eyes and spirit of those who are poor, to start with their realities and then trace upwards and outwards to identify and then make the changes needed to impact poor peoples' lives."

July 30th marks the World Day Against Trafficking in Persons and this year's theme and intention is to give priority and focus to those who are experiencing first-hand the harsh reality of being trapped within situations of serious exploitation and trafficking.

The theme, "**Victims' Voices Lead the Way**" puts victims of human trafficking at the centre of the campaign and will highlight the importance of listening to and learning from survivors of human trafficking. The campaign portrays survivors as key actors in the fight against human trafficking and focusses on the crucial role they play in establishing effective measures to prevent this crime, identify and rescue victims and support them on their road to rehabilitation.

Many victims of human trafficking have experienced ignorance or misunderstanding in their attempts to get help. They have had traumatic post-rescue experiences during identification interviews and legal proceedings. Some have faced re-victimisation and punishment for crimes they were forced to commit by their traffickers. Others have been subjected to stigmatisation or received inadequate support.

Learning from victims' experiences and turning their suggestions into concrete actions will lead to a more victim-centred and effective approach in combating human trafficking.

Presently the trafficking discourse is still largely overwhelmed by the 'feeling good about feeling bad' syndrome, rather than endeavouring to take the harder less glamorous route of unravelling the myriad of complex issues which see such criminal activity growing unabated.

Many articles written, whether by news media or concerned organisations, have a tendency to slant towards the saints, sinners, and saviours' paradigm with the emphasis on raids and rescue, **the goody versus the baddie**. Whilst not decrying vital efforts to rescue a child or adult trapped in exploitative conditions, further work needs to be done to identify and address causal contributing factors which perpetuate such criminal activity.

Dramatic pictures used to promote the latest anti-trafficking campaign, or the sensationalised news clip, does little to stem the crime, indeed such theatrical presentations have the potential to cause far more harm than good.

As we continue to address, and build on, Aotearoa's response to all forms of trafficking in persons and labour exploitation we need to step across the road, to listen and to learn, in order to widen our view.

Can we do this? Collaborating effectively together I believe we can!





34,000 KIWIS AND 110 BUSINESSES HAVE TAKEN A STAND

MICHELIA MILES,
TRADE AID DEVELOPMENT MANAGER.

ON JUNE 29TH MORE THAN 34,000 NEW ZEALANDERS AND 110 NEW ZEALAND BUSINESSES TOOK A STAND. THEY CHOSE TO OPEN THEIR EYES AND THEIR EARS TO WHERE WE AS NEW ZEALANDERS ARE IMPLICATED MOST IN THE PREVALENCE OF MODERN SLAVERY. THEY CHOSE TO SHOW UP AND REACT THROUGH THEIR SIGNATURES ON A PETITION ASKING FOR CHANGE, AND BUSINESSES CHOSE TO ADD THEIR LOGOS TO A JOINT LETTER. THEY URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO TAKE ACTION AGAINST MODERN SLAVERY IN PRODUCTION, LETTING THEM KNOW THAT BY NOT HAVING A MODERN SLAVERY ACT, WE ARE LAGGING BEHIND IN RELATION TO WHAT IS THE MOST SERIOUS LABOUR RIGHTS ISSUE OF OUR TIME.

The Sign For Freedom campaign raises awareness of the 25 million people globally in conditions of forced labour – providing goods or services for little or no gain to the producers. This is where Kiwis have come to understand that they are connected to the plight of those being seriously exploited, and that they can and should exert their pressure as consumers and citizens in a democracy.

The legislation that the campaign urges the government to pass exists already, or is being drafted, in 18 countries around the world. The petition with 34,000 signatures is evidence that New Zealanders know that they need to catch up. It demonstrates that consumers don't want to purchase goods whose production involves modern slavery. But, without legislation, there is no obligation for our businesses to understand where their products are coming from. Without legislation, our increasingly complex global supply chains will remain opaque, with no visibility as to who is making the products and in what conditions.

The 110 businesses who have signed a joint letter requesting that the government pursue the work required for a Modern Slavery Act are helping to lead the charge. It's not often that you hear businesses urging the government for additional legislation, but in this case, it is because they recognise that transparency in supply chains is the future of business.

The world is small and interconnected. Every time we purchase a product there is a chain reaction felt around the world. At Trade Aid we seek to make that impact a beneficial one, but not all businesses have this goal at the forefront.

Transparency is the first step to identifying problems. Without knowledge of a problem, it cannot be addressed, and this has been the issue with global trade until now. Several companies have seen their responsibilities ending at their own borders. A Modern Slavery Statement changes the focus at a board level to recognising that a business is accountable for its entire supply chain, that its demand for a product makes it accountable for the conditions in which that product is made.

One opportunity New Zealand has, due to being late to the party, is an understanding of what effective legislation looks like. This gives us the chance to develop world leading legislation, customised to New Zealand's unique business landscape.

Consumers have realised that just because trade is global, our expectations of the conditions in which a thing is made should not be any different than if it was made in a neighbouring town. We wouldn't tolerate slavery in our production if it affected our brother, sister, cousin or neighbour. Yet 40 million people globally are in modern slavery. They are making our clothing, producing our sugar and mining materials for our electronics. So New Zealanders have called time on it. It's time to make slavery in our products history.

For further information on the campaign that urges our government to pass a Modern Slavery Act check out: www.signforfreedom.nz

FINDING WORKERS' VOICES TO END HUMAN TRAFFICKING

The release of the *Plan of Action against Forced Labour, People Trafficking and Slavery* in March 2021 is a good reminder of how far behind Aotearoa is on regulating these horrendous acts. A recent World Vision report has highlighted that in 2019 an estimated \$3.1 billion in "risky goods" – those produced under conditions of forced labour or child labour – were imported into Aotearoa and sold to consumers.

For decades, FIRST Union has been working on the interconnected issues of migrant worker exploitation and globalisation; pushing into areas around human trafficking and forced labour is a natural choice for a union made up of workers in industries like retail, distribution and logistics. A good proportion of risky goods that enter Aotearoa are likely handled by our union; the industrial power we can exert in these supply chains is crucial.

Our union is determined to ensure our members understand how human trafficking and forced labour connect to Aotearoa. Many would have been shocked in July 2020 when Joseph Auga Matamata was sentenced to both human trafficking and modern slavery charges for luring dozens of Samoan workers to Aotearoa over a twenty-four year period, exposing them to degrading humiliating behaviour in the horticulture industry.



We know this will not be the last case of human trafficking in Aotearoa, but we need to treat instances of human trafficking and forced labour that happen beyond our borders with the same sense of disgust, and use whatever power we have - as workers, and consumers and as active citizens - to prevent it.

Since 2018 FIRST Union has been actively highlighting forced labour and human trafficking in the Malaysian rubber glove industry, a sector that received a major boost since the COVID-19 crisis began as demand for rubber gloves increased. Our advocacy meant the New Zealand Government made a commitment not to purchase gloves from Top Glove (the world's largest glove manufacturer that was subject to allegations of debt bondage, workers forced to do long hours, passport confiscation and poor accommodation), and ensured that their products were dropped by their two largest New Zealand purchasers – EBOS and Foodstuffs (both FIRST Union sites).

In addition, in 2021 we have partnered with UnionAID to implement a programme that helps Nepali migrant workers from Malaysian rubber glove companies who paid recruitment debt to have that debt remediated by their former employers. One of the project workers – Yubraj Khadka - is a former Top Glove whistleblower who had raised concerns about inadequate

health and safety protocols at the factory where he worked, a factory that was subsequently home to thousands of COVID-19 cases. As a result of that project, so far around 50 former workers have had the equivalent of around six months of wages repaid to them in a lump sum. For migrant workers, that payment is life-changing.

We think that workers' voices have been missing from the discussion in Aotearoa, and that until we can build this common understanding – that we are all workers, and that workers acting together can change the course of history – discussions about human trafficking and forced labour will remain something that we deny is part of our economy and part of our culture.

It is ugly and it is there, but it is by fighting together that we can change the status quo.





THE UNITED KINGDOM'S COMMITMENT TO ERADICATING MODERN SLAVERY, HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND CHILD LABOUR INTERNATIONALLY.

SAM PASS, DEPUTY BRITISH HIGH COMMISSIONER TO NEW ZEALAND

A victim's story begins well before exploitation and trafficking, and often starts with children. 2021 is the [UN year for the elimination of child labour](#) and the UK has pledged its support to take action at the national and international level. The COVID-19 pandemic threatens to stall progress on a reduction in child labour due to the poverty effects of the crisis. Recent estimates, published by the International Labour Organization (ILO) and UNICEF (the UN Children's Fund) indicate there has been an increase to 160 million children in child labour, nearly 10% of the world's children. Children are one of the most vulnerable groups exploited by perpetrators of forced labour and modern slavery and require specifically tailored solutions to protect them from harm. Some examples of the UK's work to tackle child labour include:

- In 2019, the UK appointed a new Modern Slavery Envoy, Jennifer Townson, who is working with governments, multilateral organisations and NGOs to support regional and national responses, and share best practice to tackle modern slavery, including the worst forms of child labour.

- In June 2021, the UK chaired the G7 Summit in Cornwall, where G7 leaders committed to a pledge of at least US\$2.75 billion funding over the next five years for the [Global Partnership for Education](#). As part of that, the UK pledged £430 million. Child labour deprives children of their childhood, and impacts on their education. Access to an education can empower children and reduce their risk of becoming a target for child labour, forced labour and other violations of labour within supply chains.
- The UK has adapted child protection programming to respond to Covid-19. For example, providing support to the UN Global Programme to End Child Marriage which is working in 12 countries to strengthen national child helplines, the social welfare workforce and raising awareness on child marriage risks.

Eradicating modern slavery from our economies and global supply chains is a top priority for the UK to meet Sustainable Development Goal 8.7. The [Global Estimates on Modern Slavery](#) (2017) indicate that the majority of forced labour today exists in the private economy. This underscores the importance of partnering with the business community – alongside employers' and workers'



organisations, and civil society organisations – to eradicate forced labour in supply chains. Some examples of the work the UK is doing, working with international partners and NGOs, include:

- Working with businesses to eliminate forced labour in global supply chains through the 'Call to Action to end Modern Slavery, Forced Labour and Human Trafficking'. The UK is using key multilateral events such as the G7, G20 and UNGA to forge international consensus and drive action on supply chain issues.
- Supporting victims of modern slavery through the UN Trust Fund, which aims to support 15,000 victims of modern slavery and their families, in 33 countries in 2021.

The British government is committed to tackling modern slavery within the UK. Actions taken include:

- The introduction of [The Modern Slavery Act 2015](#). The Act provides tools with which UK law enforcement agencies can tackle modern slavery and give enhanced protection for

victims. It provides legislation and guidance on [how to identify and support victims of Modern Slavery](#). The Act also requires applicable commercial organisations to publish an annual modern slavery statement. In March 2021, the Government launched an online modern slavery statement registry, which in future will be mandatory for in-scope organisations to submit to.

- In March 2020 the UK published the world's first [Government modern slavery statement](#) detailing the steps government is taking to prevent modern slavery in its own supply chains. Ministerial departments will publish individual annual statements from 2021 onwards.

Collaboration is vital in making a difference and preventing child exploitation. The UK will continue to work with governments, businesses and NGOs to combat modern slavery, human trafficking and child labour in global supply chains.

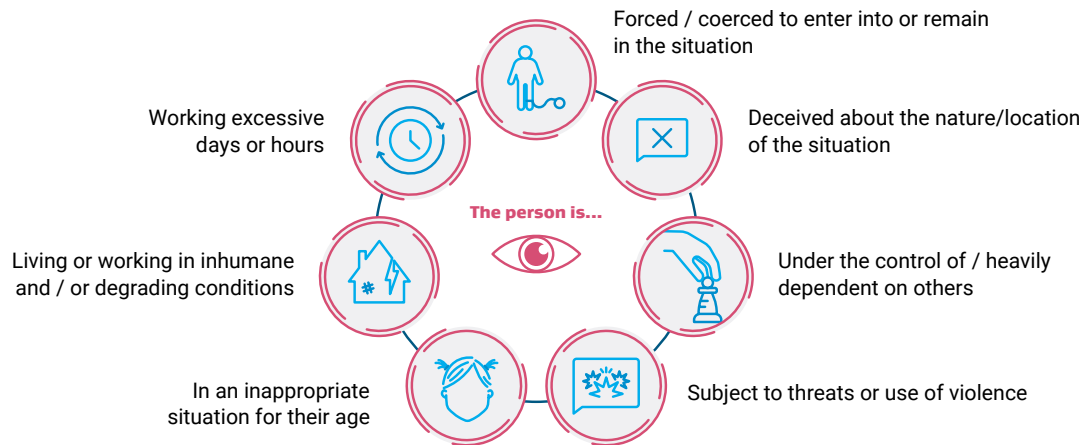
*Source: [International Year for the Elimination of Child Labour \(endchildlabour2021.org\)](#)

WHAT IS PEOPLE TRAFFICKING?

People trafficking is the process of moving someone using coercion or deception. The purpose is usually to exploit them. It doesn't have to be across borders and often happens entirely within a country. It doesn't just happen to migrants; New Zealand citizens and residents can be victims too.

People do not choose to be trafficked. Sometimes people may agree to some degree of exploitation only to find out once they are unable to leave or resist, that the actual situation is much worse.

When a person is unable to leave an exploitative situation they are likely to have been trafficked.



Victims of trafficking often suffer severe mental and physical harm. The behaviour and physical state of a person can indicate they are a victim of trafficking.

Psychological state and behavioural signs:

- refuses to make eye contact;
- appears anxious, depressed, submissive, fearful, tense, nervous;
- reluctant to talk about or discuss injuries

Physical signs of mistreatment and/or neglect:

- signs of physical abuse;
- deprivation of food, water, sleep, medical care or other life necessities;
- poor hygiene due to lack of access to washing and/or sanitary facilities;
- drug or alcohol dependency

WHO CAN I CONTACT?

If you suspect someone is a victim of people trafficking, contact the New Zealand Police:

- Call 105 or 111 (in an emergency)
- Go online to [105.police.govt.nz](https://www.105.police.govt.nz)

If you suspect someone has been exploited at work, contact MBIE:

- Call 0800 20 00 88 or fill at a form at www.employment.govt.nz/migrantexploitation

If you want to remain anonymous and suspect someone has been trafficked or exploited:

- Call CrimeStoppers 0800 555 111
- Go online to www.crimestoppers-nz.org