

Landas

JOURNAL OF LOYOLA SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY
Vol. 27, No. 1 (2013)
ISSN 0116-4856

The Church's Vision in the Fight Against Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery
BRODERICK S. PABILLO, D.D.

A Reflection on the Experience of Missioning in Areas of Prostitution
JAMES MCTAVISH, F.M.V.D.

The Lingha *Boys of Siem Reap: A Baseline Study of Sexually-Exploited Young Men in Siem Reap, Cambodia*
JARRETT DAVIS
GLENN MILES

Developmental Ministry among Women in Prostitution
JONATHAN NAMBU

Finding Hope in a Broken World: The Response of the Church to Human Trafficking
ABRAHAM GEORGE

Repairers of Broken Walls
BLAIR BURNS
ANDREY SAWCHENKO

From the Margin to the Mainstream: Reintegration into Community Life of Prostituted Women through Non-formal Education
MA. JUSTINIANA J. DEDACE

Landas



Landas

EDITOR
Felipe Fruto L. Ramirez, S.J., S.T.D.

EDITORIAL BOARD
Arnel dC. Aquino, S.J., S.T.D.
Enrico C. Eusebio, Jr., S.J., J.C.D.
Manuel V. Francisco, S.J., S.T.D.
Peter O. Pojol, S.J., S.T.D.
Joseph J. Smith, S.J., S.T.D.
Joaquin C. Yap, Jr., S.W., D.Phil.

MANAGING EDITOR
Susan Isorena-Arcega

EDITORIAL ASSISTANT
Josemaria Roberto V. Reyes



Landas (The Way), Journal of the Loyola School of Theology, is published twice a year by the Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights, Quezon City. The Landas postal address is: Loyola School of Theology, P.O. Box 240, U.P., 1144 Quezon City, Philippines. Editorial matters are the responsibility of Felipe Fruto L. Ramirez, S.J. (fllramirez@gmail.com). Circulation and business matters should be addressed to Susan Isorena-Arcega (siouxstar@gmail.com). Domestic subscription rates: one year, 400.00 PhP; single copy, 250.00 PhP. Elsewhere: one year US$ 40.00; single copy US$ 25.00.

The Journal is not responsible for statements and opinions expressed in signed articles and reviews. Such statements and opinions are the author's own, and do not necessarily reflect the opinion of the editors.

© 2013 by the Loyola School of Theology.
All rights reserved. ISSN 0116-4856

Contents

Landas
Vol. 27, No. 1 (2013)

1 *The Church's Vision in the Fight Against Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery*
Broderick S. Pabillo, D.D.

11 *A Reflection on the Experience of Missioning in Areas of Prostitution*
James McTavish, F.M.V.D.

27 *The* Lingha *Boys of Siem Reap: A Baseline Study of Sexually-Exploited Young Men in Siem Reap, Cambodia*
Jarrett Davis
Glenn Miles

73 *Developmental Ministry among Women in Prostitution*
Jonathan Nambu

103 *Finding Hope in a Broken World: The Response of the Church to Human Trafficking*
Abraham George

111 *Repairers of Broken Walls*
Blair Burns
Andrey Sawchenko

121 *From the Margin to the Mainstream: Reintegration into Community Life of Prostituted Women through Non-formal Education*
Ma. Justiniana J. Dedace

EDITOR'S PREFACE

"Human trafficking is an open wound on the body of contemporary society, a scourge upon the body of Christ. It is a crime against humanity."—These are the strong words that Pope Francis addressed to the participants at the 2nd Conference on Combating Human Trafficking held at the Vatican last April 10, 2014.[1] In his apostolic exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, the Pope laments the fact that "human beings are themselves considered consumer goods to be used and then discarded."[2] Trade in humans is a contemporary form of slavery. The manner by which persons are traded and exploited has metamorphosed in recent times with greater sophistication and cruelty.

The *United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto* defines human trafficking as

> the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms

[1]Pope Francis' address to the participants at the Conference on Combating Human Trafficking, as found at http://www.news.va/en/news/pope-francis-human-trafficking-an-open-wound-on-so (accessed April 10, 2014). This is the second anti-human trafficking conference, held at the Vatican last April 9–10, 2014, for church workers helping victims and law enforcement authorities. It was organized by Cardinal Vincent Nichols, sponsored by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales, and hosted by the Pontifical Academy for Social Sciences. To underline its importance, Pope Francis attended the meeting and delivered his speech.

[2]Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* 53.

> of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of 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. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.[3]

The term "trafficking" is a misnomer because the crime (e.g., cyberporn) may not necessarily involve the movement of the victims from one place to another.

According to the *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons*, "trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation accounts for 58% of all trafficking cases detected globally, while trafficking for forced labour accounts for 36%."[4] Trafficking for the purpose of organ harvesting, while constituting only 0.2%, has been detected in 16 countries. Cases of trafficking for the purpose of illegal adoption have been uncovered in 15 countries.[5]

Most of the victims are women (59%) and girls (17%). Some of the victims are men (14%) and boys (10%).[6] Of every three young victims, two are girls and one is a boy. In the Philippines alone, there are thousands of victims of human trafficking every year. "From 2005 to 2012, there were 1,693 human trafficking cases officially recorded in the country, 364 of which took place in 2011 alone."[7]

---

[3]*United Nations Convention on Transnational Organized Crime and the Protocols Thereto* (UNODC, New York: United Nations, 2004), 42.

[4]*Global Report on Trafficking of Persons* (UNODC, New York: United Nations, 2012), 7.

[5]*Global Report on Trafficking of Persons*, 37.

[6]*Global Report on Trafficking of Persons*, 10.

[7]Lila Ramos Shahani, "Situating Human Trafficking in the Philippines: Global, National and Personal Context," keynote address at the conference

Between 2007 and 2010, about 12,000 persons were prosecuted for trafficking in persons worldwide. Most of the culprits were male (8,100), but a good number were female (3,800).[8] In some cases, former victims became perpetrators. Women offenders are sometimes involved in trafficking girls. Although 134 countries and states have criminalized various trafficking offenses in line with the *UN Protocols on Trafficking in Persons*, the number of convictions for human trafficking is very low. Of the 132 countries surveyed, 16% did not record a single conviction between 2007 and 2010.[9] The Philippine legislature has enacted the "Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003"[10] which was further expanded in 2012.[11] Despite these laws, "the prosecution of buyers is done with much reluctance. Up till now, we have yet to witness a conviction of a customer in the Philippines, despite several charges filed."[12]

In the face of such human tragedy, Pope Francis expresses his personal anguish and invites all to help alleviate the situation:

> I have always been distressed at the lot of those who are victims of various kinds of human trafficking. How I wish that all of us would hear God's cry: "Where is your brother?" (Gen. 4:9). Where is your brother or sister who is enslaved? Where is the brother and sister whom you are killing each day in clandestine warehouses, in rings of prostitution, in children used for begging, in exploiting

---

Human Trafficking in an Era of Globalization (University of Washington: January 11–12, 2013), 2.

[8]*Global Report on Trafficking of Persons*, 28, footnote no. 4.

[9]*Global Report on Trafficking of Persons*, 7.

[10]Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003 (Republic Act No. 9208).

[11]Expanded Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2013 (Republic Act No. 10365).

[12]Jean Enriquez, "The Demand Side of Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation in the Philippines," http://catwap.wordpress.com/resources/speeches-papers/the-demand-side-of-trafficking-and-sexual-exploitation-in-the-philippines-focus-on-the-role-of-korean-men/ (accessed April 7, 2014).

> undocumented labour? Let us not look the other way. There is greater complicity than we think. The issue involves everyone! This infamous network of crime is now well established in our cities, and many people have blood on their hands as a result of their comfortable and silent complicity.[13]

In a message to the faithful in Brazil on the occasion of their annual Lenten Fraternity Campaign, which has for its theme *Fraternidade e Tráfico Humano*, the Pope made a similar appeal:

> It is not possible to remain indifferent before the knowledge that human beings are bought and sold like goods! I think of the adoption of children for the extraction of their organs, of woman deceived and obliged to prostitute themselves, of workers exploited and denied rights or a voice, and so on. And this is human trafficking. It is precisely on this level that we need to make a good examination of conscience: how many times have we permitted a human being to be seen as an object, to be put on show in order to sell a product or to satisfy an immoral desire? The human person ought never to be sold or bought as if he or she were a commodity. Whoever uses human persons in this way and exploits them, even if indirectly, becomes an accomplice of this injustice.[14]

Responding to Pope Francis' appeal, *Landas* has devoted this issue to the topic of human trafficking. Its aim is to promote public awareness of this heinous crime against humanity. The articles presented here are more pastoral than academic in orientation. They set examples of how committed Christians can help rehabilitate the victims of human trafficking and bring the perpetrators to justice. The authors come from various Christian churches and non-governmental organizations engaged in anti-trafficking advocacy and pastoral care of those oppressed and exploited by traffickers. The hands-on experience of the authors

---

[13]Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* 211.

[14]"The Pope Urges Action Against Human Trafficking," http://visnews-en.blogspot.com/2014/03/the-pope-urges-action-against-human.html (accessed April 7, 2014).

in helping the victims as well as their faith-based reflections on the multifaceted issues of human trafficking is a rich source for the kind of contextual theology the Church needs today.

Felipe Fruto Ll. Ramirez, S.J.

Landas 27:1 (2013) 1–9

THE CHURCH'S VISION IN THE FIGHT AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND MODERN DAY SLAVERY[1]

Broderick S. Pabillo, D.D.

The Situation

In this conference, we have heard how grave the problems of human trafficking have become. We are lulled to believe that slavery is of the past. I hope that this conference has made us realize that human trafficking is the modern-day version of slavery. It has the same basic motivation: *pangangalakal ng tao*—people, fellow human beings, are being used as merchandise. And it is not a small merchandise. There are more slaves today than ever before in human history—approximately 20 to 30 million slaves in the world today. Globally, the average cost of a slave is Php 3,700.00. Thus, in our time, slaves are cheaper than they have ever been in history. The population explosion has created a great supply of potential victims, and globalization has made it easy to reach and entice people who are vulnerable and easily enslaved because of ignorance and poverty. Hence, human trafficking has now become the second largest international criminal industry (behind illegal drugs and tying up with arms trafficking). It reportedly generates a profit of Php 1.3 trillion every year! Of that number, Php 650 billion is made in industrialized countries. A 2003 study in the Netherlands found

[1]Talk delivered at the University of Asia and the Pacific on February 28, 2014.

that, on average, a single sex slave earned her pimp at least Php 15.5 million a year! That is how lucrative it can be.

Trafficking primarily involves exploitation which comes in many forms, including:

1. Forcing victims into prostitution.
2. Subjecting victims to slavery or involuntary servitude.
3. Compelling victims to commit sex acts for the purpose of creating pornography. Cyber-sex is a new phenomenon and a rapidly growing market. It is said that the Philippines is the 10th biggest source of cyber-sex.
4. Misleading victims into debt bondage.
5. People, especially children, are also trafficked for organ harvesting.
6. The Taliban buys children as young as seven years old to act as suicide bombers. The price for child suicide bombers is between Php 300,000.00 to Php 600,000.00. That is very big money that can blind poor families!
7. Less shocking but nonetheless equally reprehensible are the 300,000 children younger than 18 years old estimated to be trafficked to serve in armed conflicts worldwide. These are the so-called child-soldiers. We have cases of them in the conflicts in Mindanao.
8. Human traffickers are trafficking pregnant women for their newborns. Babies are sold on the black market, where the profit is divided between the traffickers, doctors, lawyers, border officials, and others. A mother might receive as little as a few thousand pesos for her baby.
9. Sex trafficking plays a major role in the spread of HIV. It is estimated that 80% of trafficking involves sexual exploitation, which easily transmits HIV.

10. It is when people are most vulnerable that they are easily trapped by human traffickers. When people are hit by calamities, like typhoons and earthquakes, confusion ensues. Many are disoriented when deaths occur in their families and their means of livelihood are destroyed. Children and women are vulnerable to promises of work or schooling, or just simply to get out of the chaos. They are easily enticed by human traffickers.

Invitation by the Pope

This information is staggering. The Church cannot close its eyes to this reality. In his address to new diplomatic representatives on Dec. 12, 2013 at the Vatican, Pope Francis commented that there are millions of victims of forced labor, of the trade in persons for the purposes of manpower or for sexual exploitation, and he exclaimed,

> [T]his cannot continue; it constitutes a grave violation of the human rights of the victims and an offence to their dignity, as well as a defeat for the global community. All persons of good will, whether they profess a religion or not, cannot allow these women, these men and these children to be treated as objects, deceived, violated, often repeatedly sold, for various purposes, and at the end either killed or ruined physically and mentally, to end up discarded and abandoned. It is shameful.
>
> The trafficking of persons is a crime against humanity. … It is necessary to accept our common responsibility, and demonstrate more decisive political will to be victorious on this front. We have responsibility towards those who have fallen victim to trafficking, to protect their rights, to ensure their safety and that of their families, and to prevent the corrupt and criminals from eluding justice and having the last word. Adequate legislative action in the countries of origin, transit and arrival, also in order to facilitate the regularity of migration, may reduce the problem.[2]

[2]See http://visnews-en.blogspot.com/2013/12/human-trafficking-is-crime-against.html (accessed January 15, 2014).

To fight this scourge is the responsibility of each one of us. Pope Francis invites the diplomats—and ourselves—to examine our consciences, asking ourselves

> how many times do we accept that a human being is considered as an object, displayed to sell a product or to satisfy immoral desires? The human person must never be bought and sold like merchandise. Whoever uses and exploits human beings, even indirectly, becomes complicit in their oppression.

"I wanted to share with you my reflections on a social wound of our times, because I believe in the value and the strength of concerted commitment in combating it," the Pope explained.

> Therefore, I exhort the international community to adopt an even more unanimous and effective strategy against human trafficking, so that in every part of the world, men and women may no longer be used as a means to an end, and that their inviolable dignity may always be respected.

Basis of Our Christian Convictions

Together with the Holy Father, we are appalled at the merchandise of persons. It is not just an economic activity. We cannot take this as normal. It is a grave abuse. Why? Because of our belief that each human person has an inviolable dignity. On what is this dignity based? It is not based just in a human convention or agreement. For us Christians it has a much deeper root—the very intention of the Creator. No one of us wills to be, to exist. Our existence is a gift. God has willed us, each one of us, and according to St. Paul, "He chose us before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). God created each person in the image and likeness of himself! "God created man in His own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them" (Gen. 1:27). Each is therefore unique, and loved from the first moment of his/her existence.

But not only that. Each is redeemed by Jesus. Christ did not suffer and die for a collectivity, for the human race in general. He lived, suffered, died, and rose again for each and every one of us! Each is

worth the price of his blood. That is how important each person is. Because I am important, you are important, she is important, then all of us are equally important. The Incarnation of the Son of God shows the equality of all people with regard to dignity: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. 3:28).

There is a third reason for the inviolable dignity of each person: each is called to be with God forever in heaven. Each is destined for eternity! This is the grand plan of God for us all. If we are all to share heaven together, should we not respect and care for each other here on earth?

From the Christian point of view, then, "in no case … is the human person to be manipulated for ends that are foreign to his own development, which can find complete fulfilment only in God and his plan of salvation: in fact, man in his interiority transcends the universe and is the only creature willed by God for itself."[3]

Our Christian Response

As Christians, we simply cannot be indifferent to this great injustice done to the weak and ignorant members of our society. This is the reason for this conference. We are made aware of this grave situation and we discuss how we can properly respond to this as followers of Christ.

Our first response is to make ourselves and to make others aware of this problem of human trafficking and modern-day slavery, of the gravity of the problem, and of the seriousness of this evil in our midst. As all evil, human trafficking thrives in darkness. As long as the problem is not recognized, the evil doers can continue and expand their activities. Truth, then, is our powerful weapon. Let us talk about this problem, warn families of the dangers in entrusting their young children to people they do not fully know, and make the young aware

[3]Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 133.

so that they would not be easily enticed. Most especially, let us make our faithful value their human dignity and not be carried by material desires. Not a few take chances because of the lure of material gains without valuing their dignity as persons.

Awareness is already a great help to preventing human trafficking. Prevention strategies, however, should still be set in place. Let us tell our people to protect one another. Instruct them to inquire when people who behave strangely enter their communities. Let them check on youngsters and women who blindly and innocently follow certain people. Tell them to report to the police suspicious behaviours. We should be concerned. Let us not allow this evil to happen in our midst.

An ounce of prevention is better than a pound of remedy. But remedies have also to be applied since the plague has spread. So let us help in the prosecution of the abusers. If we happen to be in a position to help in the prosecution process, let us not shrink from this responsibility. As good citizens, let us also know the law: the Philippine Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act or Republic Act 9208. This will equip us to address the problem legally.

Justice is not simply prosecuting and punishing the offenders. It also calls us to give aftercare and rehabilitate the victims. People, and especially youngsters, are deeply affected by abuse. It takes a lot of protection, understanding, and love to give them back their dignity. In some cases, they have to be reconciled back to their families. They are also to be helped to be productive members of society—hence provision for education and job training.

Prevention, prosecution, and protection. These are key words in our response to this menace. We add another P—Partnership! Yes, the problem is all encompassing. It is too great for any one person or any one group to address. Fortunately, when we look around we see that already there are many people and many groups who are concerned and who are doing something. There are Sisters who are running homes for abused girls. There are groups advocating protection for minors. There are journalists who are concerned and readily report on this issue. There are government officials who go out of their way to be

effective in addressing this plague. There are faith communities and churches who are active in making awareness programs. We partner with all these initiatives so that all these small streams can become a river that can sweep away this evil. Hence, the buzz words for our response are the 4P's—Prevention, Prosecution, Protection, and Partnership! This is the same paradigm that is outlined in the United Nations Protocol on Trafficking in Persons (UN TIP).

Where Do We Go From Here?

It is not my task to summarize what has been shared in this conference. So mine is not a definitive word. I just venture a few suggestions on what we can do from here on as Church.

1. Let us continue the work of awareness making. As much as possible, this conference has gathered representatives from all the dioceses in our country. All of us here should pass on what we have heard to our dioceses and organizations. Let us share the materials we get to as many people as possible. Catholics have to be engaged and made responsible. When God asked Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?", his answer was, "I do not know. Am I my brother's keeper?" (Gen. 4:9). May this answer never enter our mind and our heart! We are to take care of one another!

2. When we go back to our dioceses, let us map out our resources. Are there groups there who are engaged in various aspects in the fight against human trafficking? Let us team up with them. Identify the government agencies in your area that can help or are tasked by law to fight this scourge.

3. Organize fora and conferences in schools and parishes to bring out the problem of human trafficking and our Christian response to it.

4. Make use of the structures of the Church and our society for your advocacy. There is the Episcopal Office for Women, the Episcopal Commission on Youth, the National Secretariat of Social Action (NASSA) of the CBCP, the Episcopal Commission on Migrants and Itinerant Peoples, the Philippine Interfaith Movement against Human Trafficking (PIMAHT), and the Inter-Agency Council Against Trafficking (IACAT) of the government, among others. Be in touch with them; get information and materials from them. You can even get resources from them.

5. Let us organize prayer and reflection sessions that raise awareness of human trafficking. In our churches and chapels let us include, time and again, prayers for the victims and conversion of the perpetrators. As men and women of faith, let us not belittle the power of prayer. We need heavenly aid in this fight.

6. Let us be responsible consumers. If we are not discerning enough, we may be contributing to the enslavement of peoples. We may buy products that are cheap because they have been made by enslaved children in another country. Do not patronize consumer goods made from bonded labor.

7. Let us never stop fighting poverty by improving the lot of the poor and fighting structures and processes that impoverish people, like corruption, patronage politics, and abuse of the environment. Poverty is the breeding ground of human trafficking. Many are pushed to this crime because of great material need.

Conclusion: The Cry of the Poor, the Cry of God

In a few days' time, we shall start again the season of Lent. It is a season of penance, prayer, and almsgiving. This season of grace will remind us of these passages from the Sacred Book:

> Wash yourselves clean! Put away your misdeeds from before my eyes; cease doing evil; learn to do good. Make justice your aim: redress the wronged, hear the orphan's plea, defend the widow. (Is. 1:16–17)
>
> This is the fasting that I wish: releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke; sharing your bread with the hungry, sheltering the oppressed and the homeless; clothing the naked when you see them, and not turning your back on your own. (Is. 58:6–7)
>
> Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained by the world. (James 1:27)

All these texts tell us that the true practice of our faith calls for responsibility to those who are in need and are oppressed. In our midst, we have brothers and sisters—human beings like us—who are being sold and used as objects. Can we keep quiet as if everything is alright?

Pope Francis is not quiet. He voices out a strong appeal, a cry that comes from a heart that truly feels:

> I have always been distressed at the lot of those who are victims of various kinds of human trafficking. How I wish that all of us would hear God's cry: "Where is your brother?" (Gen. 4:9). Where is your brother or sister who is enslaved? Where is the brother and sister whom you are killing each day in clandestine warehouses, in rings of prostitution, in children used for begging, in exploiting undocumented labour? Let us not look the other way. There is greater complicity than we think. The issue involves everyone! This infamous network of crime is now well established in our cities, and many people have blood on their hands as a result of their comfortable and silent complicity.[4]

Let me end with these simple words from the Word of God:

> Open your mouth, decree what is just, defend the needy and the poor! (Prov. 31:9)

[4]Francis, *Evangelii gaudium* 211.

Landas 27:1 (2013) 11–25

A REFLECTION ON THE EXPERIENCE OF MISSIONING IN AREAS OF PROSTITUTION

James McTavish, F.M.V.D.

> Then the LORD answered me and said: Write down the vision; make it plain upon tablets, so that the one who reads it may run. For the vision is a witness for the appointed time, a testimony to the end; it will not disappoint. If it delays, wait for it, it will surely come, it will not be late. (Habakkuk 2:2–3)

The first part of this essay, entitled "Experience," will focus on various experiences of missioning in the area of prostitution. The second part, entitled "Reflection," will attempt to deepen and seek some meaning and direction from these experiences, drawing some conclusions as to how to approach the issue of prostitution as well as giving some suggestions for a possible on-going ministry in this area.

Part 1: Experience

A Mustard Seed is Planted

Around two years ago, I received a phone call from a group of Sisters in Manila. They had begun to do some outreach for women involved in prostitution in KTV music bars near their house and wanted some advice about what to do. I told the Superior that I actually had no experience in this area. She said, "Isn't prostitution a

moral issue?" "Yes," I replied hesitantly. "Well," she said, "if you are a moral theologian, and prostitution is a moral issue, then you are just the right person to ask. Anyway, our Sisters are causing quite a stir because when we arrive in our habits all the male customers seem to want to make a quick getaway!"

I have Heard the Cry of My People

I brought this episode to prayer. I remembered the moment in chapter 3 of Exodus when God spoke to Moses: "But the Lord said: I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt and have heard their cry against their taskmasters, so I know well what they are suffering. Therefore I have come down to rescue them from the power of the Egyptians" (Exodus 3:7–8). Perhaps the first thing we should do when confronted by challenging issues is to pray. When Jesus was moved by the large crowds who were lost and helpless, the first action he advised his disciples to do was not to go to them but instead to pray and ask for answers from the owner of the harvest (see Matthew 9:38).

Listening to the call of the Lord in this dialogue, I realized that the least I could do was to become more familiar with this reality. However, since I could find no up-to-date overview or "situationer" regarding prostitution and trafficking in the Philippine context, I resolved to write a simple overview of the reality, but first I would need to inform myself—theoretically but also practically. I began to read about the topic and to get a feel for the different organizations working to combat prostitution. Some NGOs seemed to be doing sterling work, but others appeared, to me at least, to be working in isolation from other groups. Various groups of religious Sisters were also involved but hardly any priests or male religious in general seemed to be working in these areas.

Organizing a Mini-conference

An idea came to organize a forum or mini-conference on prostitution and trafficking. Each year, the novices of Exodus (an inter-congregational group of around 80–100 religious novices from

about 25 different countries) had a module called "Church of the Poor." It was felt that if young religious could become more aware of these issues, it might plant a seed in their hearts, helping them be more sensitive, and perhaps one day in the future this seed could grow into a full-fledged ministry. In 2011, the Verbum Dei community took charge of a whole-day session on prostitution. We asked Jonathan Nambu from Samaritana Transformation Ministries to share with us about rehabilitation of prostituted women, and Jean Enriquez of the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women - Asia Pacific (CATW-AP) to discuss human trafficking in Asia. We also watched the interesting documentary film called "Born into Brothels" which is set in India. It follows the fascinating story of an American photographer who tries to empower children of prostituted women by teaching them the art of photography. The session was enjoyed by all and we were invited to host it again in 2012, but this time the session was extended to two days. We incorporated a talk by Mr. Sam Inocencio, the Field Office Director of International Justice Mission in Manila, on the legal efforts to break up trafficking rings. Another input was given by Prof. Simone Lorenzo of the Ateneo de Manila University on "Prostitution in the Light of Theology of the Body." One of the Verbum Dei missionaries gave a talk on chastity as the response of a consecrated person, two other missionaries organized a prayer vigil for victims of prostitution and trafficking, and I gave the closing homily.

Outreach to Contact the Reality

The theologian Fr. Ronald Rolheiser, O.M.I., once said that good theology is not meant to be a safe non-contact sport. Theology needs to get bruised by reality, especially by suffering. Thus, different experiences of outreach helped me to know more about the extent and tragedy of this huge industry of selling flesh. The first outreach experience of mine was in Cubao with the CATW-AP where we met and talked to women involved in street prostitution. It was quite challenging to meet 14-year-old girls who sold themselves to make ends meet as their babies lay on sheets of cardboard on the street. What kind of evangelizer can keep quiet about such situations of injustice? "For Zion's sake I will not be silent, for Jerusalem's sake I

will not keep still. Until her vindication shines forth like the dawn and her salvation like a burning torch" (Isaiah 62:1–2). It was Christmas time, and the streets were full of gleeful shoppers, the latest bargains stuffed under their arms. I was struck listening to the Yuletide songs blaring out over the loudspeakers with the lyrics "Christ our Saviour is born, Christ our Saviour is born." As I gazed upon the little baby on the ground, I realized that baby Jesus was not going to be born in the mall or in a comfortable manger in a house; instead, he was lying there on the street, sleeping soundly in his cardboard manger and worthy of all my love and attention.

A few months later, we went out on the streets with the Sister Adorer nuns in Malate. The nuns are very familiar with this area, having worked there for around 2–3 years already. We entered the bars and clubs with them at around 6pm, before the girls started work. When the girls realised that I was a priest and not a customer, they asked for my blessing. We listened to their stories, prayed a decade of the Rosary with them, and gave them small cards with Bible quotes written on them. One young woman, dressed to impress, read the words of Isaiah 54:10 on her card and started to cry: "Though the mountains may crumble and the hills be shaken, my love for you will never fail." I saw that they were so hungry for the Word of God that they were happy to eat "the crumbs falling from the table" (see Mark 7:28).

A Recollection for Prostituted Women

Later we had a Christmas recollection in the Malate and Baclaran areas of Manila. Around 30 women attended each activity which was held in conjunction with the Missionaries of Charity and the Sister Adorers. I gave them a talk in Taglish (Tagalog and English), and we had time for reflection as well as for Christmas carols, games, and gift giving. In the Baclaran recollection, two lay women volunteers from the Verbum Dei community joined me. The recollection lasted for around three hours. I heard that after the recollection, twenty of the women working in Baclaran KTV bars left their work in order to look for alternative sources of livelihood.

We also did some outreach with the Mary Queen of Heaven Missionaries (MQHM) in the Cogon market area in Cebu, talking to the girls on the streets as well as the handlers ("pimps"). I enjoyed the experience with the MQHM. One Sister told me her vocation story. She was a student at a local university (USJR). She would walk to school and hear some young women offering mangoes or "mangga" in the local Cebuano dialect. The Sister noticed one day that there were no fruits to be seen. She asked the sellers where their fruits were. They told her that they were not selling mangoes but their bodies, and that "mangga" was short for "manggamit ka," meaning "you can use me," as a code word for prostitution. The future Sister was shocked not just because they were not selling fruit but because she had walked down that street so many times while oblivious to their cry.

Publishing an Essay on Prostitution

Earlier this year, as a fruit of my study on prostitution and pastoral exposure, an essay of mine on prostitution was published in *Landas*, the journal of the Loyola School of Theology, Ateneo de Manila University. The essay was entitled "Prostitution in the Philippines—A Time for Change." I was also recently asked to give a talk on prostitution at the University of the Philippines. I took the opportunity to share with the thirty students or so the situation of prostitution in Europe and in the Philippines. Many of them were shocked to hear that many of the shocking scenarios that occur in Amsterdam are also taking place on streets not far from their University.

I have at times also attended workshops on human trafficking to which prostitution is tightly linked, seeing as most people are trafficked for sexual purposes. It was rare before to see any Catholics involved in these events. This is sad, seeing as the other Churches are so active. We as a Catholic Church need to start pulling our weight. I was delighted to see an impressive Catholic contingent led by Bishop Pabillo in the most recent major forum on trafficking (Freedom Forum, Sept. 5, 2013). This was jointly organized by the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), and the Philippine Council of Evangelical

Churches (PCEC), together with other partner organizations such as International Justice Mission (IJM).

From Red Light to Green Light

Following this, there was a workshop entitled "From Red Light to Green Light" involving an outreach to prostitutes and customers along P. Burgos St., Makati. I had previously done a prayer walk here, going down the street and praying for the various realities, but this event was actually an outreach activity. The event was organized by Glenn and Wendy, two British NGO workers based in Cambodia. They came to teach the participants how to do outreach in red light zones. Their 90-minute input was excellent.

Glenn shared an experience of outreach in a red light zone where he met a man who boasted of having been with one thousand women. Glenn decided not to tackle the man head on but with much tact asked him, "If tomorrow you were to wake up next to woman number one thousand and one, would you prefer she was just another one night stand or, instead, a faithful partner who would want to spend the rest of her life with you?" The man looked surprised and was taken aback. His face changed and he said with a tone of sadness, "I would love to meet the love of my life but who would accept me now after all I have done?"

Following a time of prayer, there was an hour of accountability where all the men (and the women, too, in a different group) shared where they were on their journey. This created bonding in the group and helped me to see that Jesus is not sending out supermen and -women but rather wounded healers. There were around nine male and eighteen female participants. Four of the group were Catholic but most were from the United Methodist Church. I must say that I was most impressed by the commitment of the latter group and their determined prayerful desire to reach out. I wondered why I had rarely encountered this in my own Catholic Church. The many recent exhortations of Pope Francis to get out of our comfort zones and stop being a Church that is so comfortable rang in my ears. Instead, he is asking us to get out there on the streets where Jesus is.

For the outreach, we split into small groups of three—one male with two females—in order to balance numbers and for safety. We then headed out into the rain at 10 P.M. to do our street outreach. Walking along P. Burgos Street in the heart of the red light district, one sees a place so alive with a bustling flesh trade, massages being offered, club doors seductively held slightly open, and many men smiling and enjoying their night escapades, perhaps oblivious to the ruin they were doing to their souls. After one pass through the streets and not dialoguing with anyone, my team (with Ms. C and Ms. Ch) and I decided to talk to some women offering massage. The first two were young girls, siblings from Mindanao, aged 21 and 19 years old. They were very friendly when they realised I was actually a priest, and they shared about how hard their work was. Next were two ladyboys (males who appeared to be women) who again were so welcoming when they knew we were not there to buy them but to talk to them. One of them immediately recognized that I was British. "I have so many British clients, that's why I can recognize your accent so fast," he told me gleefully.

A Lonely Man

Further along the street, we met an Indian man. He seemed lonely and perhaps was there only looking for company. Nearby were three German men looking for fun. They did not have to travel far because near us, I was told, was a club offering full sex in front of all, where customers would watch live midget boxing and have sex with different women. Apparently the men were quite drunk and did not mind having physical intimacy in full view of other customers. Dear oh dear what a world we are in! An interesting evening to behold in our Catholic country, so please, let us work for a more humane Philippines! At 12:30 A.M., we went back, a bit tired and wet, to the meeting point for the 30-minute debriefing. Overall, the evening had been a positive experience for the participants, and we all came back safely. It strengthened my belief in the urgency of no longer ignoring this reality, of heeding the advice of our good Pope Francis and to get out there with Jesus on the streets. Amen.

During a recent retreat, I gave a homily to priests wherein I made reference to the above experiences. Four priests told me afterwards that in their parish, literally outside their churches, there are many women involved in prostitution, and asked for my help and advice as to what to do.

Part 2: Reflection

Reaching Out to the Lost Sheep

My various experiences have strengthened my belief in the urgency of reaching out to this reality. The Church is called to imitate the Good Shepherd and reach out to the lost sheep. I have not seen any more lost than those men caught in the lure of the sex trade as well as the women who are selling themselves. The seriousness which groups such as the United Methodist Church take with this mission is commendable, and so lamentable is the indifference of many in the Catholic Church. To overcome the great social evil of prostitution, we need to work together as the Body of Christ. As Sr. Mary Pilar Verzosa, R.G.S., Foundress of Pro-Life Philippines, said, "No single organization, person, or entity can address single-handedly the issues hurled against the pro-life movement, much more to stop the assault against life. Let us all work together as one community."

As evangelizers, I think this reality should be on our radar screen. I question if our mission is only to wait in our centers or parishes for people to come to our activities. Pope Francis is calling each one of us, as individuals and as Church, to reach out.

The Second Vatican Council

The Second Vatican Council was so clear in its condemnation of prostitution: "Whatever is opposed to life itself, such as … prostitution, the selling of women and children … are infamies indeed. They poison human society, and they do more harm to those who practise them

than to those who suffer from the injury. Moreover, they are a supreme dishonour to the Creator" (*Gaudium et spes* 27). The Catechism of the Catholic Church is equally clear:

> Prostitution does injury to the dignity of the person who engages in it, reducing the person to an instrument of sexual pleasure. The one who pays sins gravely against himself: he violates the chastity to which his Baptism pledged him and defiles his body, the temple of the Holy Spirit. Prostitution is a social scourge. It usually involves women, but also men, children, and adolescents (The latter two cases involve the added sin of scandal.). While it is always gravely sinful to engage in prostitution, the imputability of the offense can be attenuated by destitution, blackmail, or social pressure. (CCC 2355)

All Christians need to be concerned about this reality, examine their conscience, and see what they can do to respond. Many Church groups would advance more in the Lord's favor if they turned away from selfish interests and turned their hearts, minds, considerable resources, and energies to combat this great evil. Let us stop washing our hands! Let us not waste more time!

Obstacles to Outreach—"Indifferent Christians"

At times, the indifference of many to this reality can make one feel somewhat frustrated. Upon reading the words of Pope Pius XII from 1948, I realized that this indifference is not new:

> The most formidable obstacle to your action [against prostitution] is neither the declared hostility of the enemies of God and souls, nor that of the libertines, nor that of the traffickers in the white slave trade who shamelessly enrich themselves. This hostility is completely understandable …. What is odd is that it is necessary to vanquish the careless, ironic, even indifferent Christians who believe themselves to be upright, convinced and practicing Catholics.[1]

[1]Pope Pius XII, from September 1948, quoted in Théodule Rey Mermet, *Moral Choices: The Moral Theology of Saint Alphonsus Liguori*, trans. Paul Laverdure (Liguori, Missouri: 1998), 120–121.

Pastoral Care for the Liberation of Women of the Street

In the First International Meeting of Pastoral Care for the Liberation of Women of the Street, organized by the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of Migrants and Itinerant People and held on June 20–21, 2005, some of the recommendations for Church action were:[2]

1. A call for increased education and awareness about the reality of prostitution in order not to allow a sense of embarrassment to prevent such dialogue; rather, there is a need for renewed solidarity in the Church and among religious congregations, lay movements, institutions, and associations in giving greater "visibility" and attention to the pastoral care of women exploited by prostitution. The Church must prophetically denounce the injustices and violence perpetrated against women.

2. The need to form those in the Church, including priests, seminarians, religious, and lay, so that they have the skills and attitudes necessary to work compassionately with women and "clients" and to be effective pastoral agents in this area. The Church should endeavor to develop the Christian and social conscience of people through preaching the gospel, teaching, and various formation initiatives.

"All Will be Well"

One day, while praying about the relative indifference of many to this reality, I was reassured by the words of Jesus to Mother Julian of

[2]First International Meeting of Pastoral Care for the Liberation of Women of the Street, www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/migrants/documents_1/rc_pc_migrants_doc_20210605_Iinc-past-don-strada-findoc_en.html (accessed October 10, 2013).

Norwich: "All shall be well," and "You shall see for yourself that all manner of things shall be well." Mother Julian understood the former to refer to our daily realities and the latter to refer to the end times and the big social evils—that God is a just God and in his own time he will make all things well. But in the meantime, we still need to act. As the pastor and theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer noted, "Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act."

We are fortunate that we can always pray and seek wisdom from above. When we pray, we create a space in our hearts and minds for God to work. The next step is to be faithful to the light of the Spirit who will guide the way, asking us to take small steps. If we are faithful in the small, perhaps then we can be faithful in the bigger ones. And Jesus himself advised us to walk while we have the light (John 12:35). Challenges will come but Psalm 27 is consoling: "Though an army encamp against me my heart would not fear. Though war break out against me even then would I trust."

I believe that as we work patiently and trust in the paradox of the mustard seed, Jesus can slowly change, through us, the ethics and values of society in order to show that it is wrong to buy the body of another for pleasure. We also need to take care of our spiritual lives in order not to burn out or be overwhelmed with the task at hand. If I forget this (which I do sometimes!), the Lord reminds me that it is HIS work and that I am just a co-laborer. St. Paul planted, Apollos watered, but God is the one who makes the seed grow (1 Corinthians 3:5–7). I remember reading about the life of Mother Teresa of Calcutta. A city was damaged by a strong earthquake and many went to help. But Mother Teresa instructed her nuns, in addition to helping the rescue effort, to spend some time in daily prayer and reflection in order to give them strength for the arduous work. She was highly criticized by many who wanted pure action. Mother Teresa continued to insist on that daily moment of prayer with Jesus to remind the nuns who they were working for. The work of rescue and rehabilitation in the earthquake zone was so hard that little by little many groups started to leave. After six months only one group remained—Mother Teresa and her nuns!

Blessed Gennaro Maria Sarnelli, C.Ss.R.

In the challenge to curb prostitution, an inspirational character for me is Blessed Gennaro Maria Sarnelli, an Italian Redemptorist (1702–1744) who dedicated himself to stopping the spread of prostitution in Naples, Italy. St. Alphonsus Liguori, founder of the Redemptorists and the patron of moral theology, wrote a commentary on the concern of Gennaro for women caught up in this predicament:

> In Naples, his zeal on behalf of the prostitutes was well known; everyone spoke about how much he worked on their behalf. To free them from their shameful life, he collected alms and preached on this evil in order to lessen the number of prostitutes. Every feast day he would preach in the busy square opposite the Church of S. Matteo for this purpose. He also persuaded the archbishop's confraternity to engage in a retreat on this topic. As for himself, he held back nothing of his own, even to the point of exhaustion, to help these poor women caught in this sinful life or those in danger of falling into it. He helped many of them escape from it at his own expense. He looked everywhere there might be a chance he would find one of these pitiful women and free her. There were two for whom he gave special help for more than two years; he relocated them and provided them a place to live and even bought furniture for them. Besides these, there were many others for whom he found places to live. It was for this work that he sought donations in many homes, not only in religious places, but also at some houses where he was so unwelcome that he once said he felt like he would die. In all this, he suffered insults, doors slammed in his face, and the typical risks that come with asking for alms. He also suffered a great deal of persecution and personal injury.[3]

St. Alphonsus spoke further of the danger Gennaro exposed himself to in this mission:

> This work caused our Don Gennaro to often live in mortal danger, liable to being killed by the pimps of these poor women. Because of the danger, his parents kept trying to stop him out of fear of what might befall him, and perhaps the whole family. Nevertheless, he protested that he was ready to suffer any consequence and, in fact, would consider

[3]Ivel Mendanha, C.Ss.R., "Gennaro Maria Sarnelli," www.redemptoristspirituality.net/eng2/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=383&Itemid=111 (accessed October 10, 2013).

> it his good fortune if, for a work that gives such glory to God, he even had to lose his life![4]

Changing Attitudes in Society

Sarnelli also realized that to effectively combat the problem of prostitution, a change of attitude of society was needed. For this he armed himself with his pen and wrote two works to sensitize and assist in the conscientization of the public about the wrongness of permitting prostitution. In 1736, he published his first work, "Catholic and Political Reasons in Defence of the States Ruined by Blatant Prostitution." A year later, "Further Thoughts on the Particular Ways of Lessening and Permanently Maintaining a Brake on Prostitution," "On Rehabilitating the Repentant," "On Saving Young Girls in Danger," "On Keeping the State Forever Free from Carnal Dissolution," and "With Responses to Objections" followed.

Fr. Ivel Mendanha, C.Ss.R., commented that

> Fr. Sarnelli's efforts produced two important results. He changed the way the Church and civil society looked upon the problem of prostitution, and he drew everyone's attention to the degradation into which one is led by poverty, and by the exploitation of women. Further, Sarnelli's style of never giving up reminds us that we should not allow even impossible odds to defeat us.[5]

Gennaro's awareness of the necessity to go public, to focus on changing attitudes in society, is very consistent with today's movement to cut the so-called demand side of prostitution.[6]

Courage and Perseverance

An additional comforting thought is something I read about the fight for a culture of life in the world of today. The author, Kateryna

---

[4]Mendanha, "Gennaro Maria Sarnelli."

[5]Mendanha, "Gennaro Maria Sarnelli."

[6]See James McTavish, F.M.V.D., "Prostitution in the Philippines—A Time for Change," *Landas* 24:1 (2010): 127.

Fedoryka Cuddeback, said that when confronting big evils in society, they can seem so big as to be overwhelming. But she also did say that its big size is actually its weakness. I was very encouraged and enlightened! Meaning to say that if a problem or evil is vast, like the extent of the sex industry, then it can be "attacked" on many fronts: a prayer, one dialogue with a person, an outreach activity, the encouragement shared between us, one customer who is provoked to examine his conscience. Little by little, we chip away at the reality, and as the drops of water hit the stone, eventually, with time, a huge immovable rock can be split in two. We need much patience and a healthy dose of courage if we desire to change or work to transform structures of sin![7]

The Example of Sweden

I also like to believe and hope that as we change as individuals we help to change the world, and so a real task is to seek a humble daily conversion of ourselves, for the good of all. Change is possible—people's attitudes can change and so can the attitudes of nations. For example, ever since Sweden introduced legislation criminalising the buying of sex, there has been a marked change in public perception, with 80% of the public now viewing prostitution as unacceptable compared to 49% in 1999. Later in 2009, Norway and Iceland also criminalized the purchase of sex. Within one year, prostitution in Norway, both indoor and outdoor, was reduced by 50%.

Prophets of a Future Not Our Own

Finally, when confronting any big challenge in society, I am comforted by the prayer of Oscar Romero.

> It helps, now and then, to step back and take a long view. The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts, it is even beyond our vision. We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of the magnificent enterprise that is God's work. Nothing we do is complete, which is a

[7]Pope John Paul II wrote that to destroy structures of sin "and replace them with more authentic forms of living in community is a task which demands courage and patience" (*Centesimus annus* 38).

way of saying that the Kingdom always lies beyond us. No statement says all that could be said. No program accomplishes the Church's mission. We cannot do everything, and there is a sense of liberation in realizing that. This enables us to do something, and to do it very well. It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way, an opportunity for the Lord's grace to enter and do the rest. We may never see the end results, but that is the difference between the master builder and the worker. We are workers, not master builders; ministers, not messiahs. We are prophets of a future not our own.

Landas 27:1 (2013) 27–72

THE *LINGHA* BOYS OF SIEM REAP

A Baseline Study of Sexually-Exploited Young Men in Siem Reap, Cambodia

Jarrett Davis[*]
Glenn Miles

Executive Summary

The sexual exploitation of women and girls in Southeast Asia continues to be the subject of much research and remains a central concern among NGOs and anti-trafficking organizations. As these concerns remain central, sexual violence against men and boys is often little understood or acknowledged. This study aims to provide a baseline of information of young men working in the male to male sex industry in Siem Reap, Cambodia. It serves to uncover some of the vulnerabilities of the young men working in this industry in order for NGOs and social service providers to understand them better. Structured interviews were conducted with 50 young men from numerous massage establishments within a 1-km radius of the Siem Reap town center. The vulnerabilities of these young men regarding a number of areas, including financial security, sexual history and health, violence, faith, and future plans, were assessed. This information was collected to determine the needs these young men may have and to provide initial data as a basis for understanding and future research.

---

[*]Field Researchers: Derek Collard, Stacey Panozzo, Kang Sopeak, Phuong Sophorn.

This study serves as one of the few attempts to understand the situation of young males in potentially sexually exploitative careers in Cambodia, and serves as a complement to a similar study conducted in Phnom Penh in 2011.[1] This previous research focused exclusively on sexual exploitation within male to male massage parlors. The present study expands that sampling to males working in both male to male and mixed gender massage establishments (locations having both male and female masseurs catering to both male and female clients). This was done, in part, to provide a broader understanding of the situation of males working in potentially exploitative careers, as well as to provide a comparison of the potential vulnerabilities of men working in both types of establishments. A recent surge in nightclubs, gay bars, and internet chat rooms where young Cambodian men can be "picked up" for paid sex seems to indicate a surge in demand for male sexual service. The research team believes that the data in this study provide merely a glimpse of the "tip of the iceberg." It is their hope that this data will serve to provide a clearer picture of the male sex industry and provoke numerous questions for future research.

Literature Review

A Gender-Exclusive Approach to the Global Sex Trade

Sexually exploited males are visible around the world. They advertise as escorts, masseurs, models, or openly as sex workers. They are found hanging out on street corners, at train stations, and at public parks the world over. Thousands of male sex workers are available in online directories, searchable by physical attributes, services provided, and price. However, despite their global presence, males in the sex industry are often ignored by social services, administrative bodies,

[1]G. Miles & H. Blanch, *What about Boys?: An Initial Exploration of Sexually Exploited Boys in Cambodia* (2011), http://love146.org/wp-content/uploads/drupal_migrated/What%20About%20Boys_Miles%26Blanch.pdf (accessed October 14, 2013).

mass media, and social research.[2] In a 2008 review of 166 scholarly articles on the global sex industry, 84% exclusively discussed female sex workers and made no mention of males.[3] This is sometimes attributed to a Western worldview, held by those funding such research, which views young men as resilient and able to take care of themselves, while young women seem vulnerable and in need of rescue.[4]

A similar neglect is found in the media discussions of human trafficking. The traditional narrative talks about "women" or "girls" to describe—often in explicit detail—occasions when men enslave and sexually abuse females.[5] The discussion is usually framed as good versus evil in a story about misogyny and the sexual exploitation of women, while ignoring the significant number of male victims of forced labor and sex trafficking. An article in the Utah Law Review suggests that, "to some extent, men and boys have become the victims of this media-driven, socially constructed conception of maleness."[6]

Part of this conception of males may stem from a significant portion of scholarship on the global sex trade which has been led by feminist theorists who take a strong gender-centric approach to this issue.[7] Melissa Farley is a leading expert on prostitution and the global sex trade. In a Cambodian study entitled "A Thorn in the Heart: Cambodian Men who Buy Sex," Farley and her research team describe the social function of sex workers in Cambodian culture. Their research

---

[2]Jeffery P. Dennis, "Women are Victims, Men Make Choices: The Invisibility of Men and Boys in the Global Sex Trade," *Gender Issues* 25 (2008): 11–12.

[3]Dennis, "Women are Victims, Men Make Choices," 13.

[4]G. Miles & H. Blanch, *An Initial Exploration of Young Men Who Work in the Male-to-Male Massage Industry in Phnom Penh, Cambodia* (Phnom Penh, Cambodia: Love146, unpublished), 2.

[5]Samuel Vincent Jones, "The Invisible Man: The Conscious Neglect of Men and Boys in the War on Human Trafficking," *Utah Law Review* 4 (2010): 1144.

[6]Jones, "The Invisible Man," 1145.

[7]Ruth Graham, "Male Rape and the Careful Construction of the Male Victim," *Social and Legal Studies* 15:2 (2006): 187–208.

details the kinds of violence that are perpetrated against Cambodian women in the sex industry by their buyers, brothel owners, pimps, and even police officers.

Furthermore, this research discusses the implications of violent or hard core pornography in Cambodian society. Farley notes that 79% of the men in her study noted that their sexual acts had changed over time and that the majority of these changes were due to a desire to imitate the styles and positions that they had seen in the pornographic materials that they had viewed.[8] While Farley's discussion does little to discuss the men who are exploited in the sex industry, she *does* discuss the dangers that male clients pose to prostituted females as they use hardcore pornography as a kind of "script" for their sexual acts. This raises some important questions with regard to gay pornography and the demand for male sex workers in Cambodian society. Farley notes that nearly 1 in 5 men in the study had viewed pornography depicting adults having sex with boys. Of that 19%, 5% had seen boys under the age of 5, 36% had seen boys age 6–12, and 85% had seen boys aged 13–17.[9] Drawing from Farley's conclusions on the links between hardcore, heterosexual pornography and the abuse of Cambodian women in the sex industry, it may also be useful to ask what impact hardcore, homosexual pornography has on Cambodian male sex workers and men who have sex with men in Cambodian society.

Little has been written about the lives of men used in gay male pornography and its impact on prostituted males. In fact, contrasted to similar discourse on heterosexual pornography, gay male pornography is often viewed as harm-free and even a source of gay male liberation and identity formation.[10] Christopher Kendall argues that gay male

---

[8]Melissa Farley, et. al., *A Thorn in the Heart: Cambodian Men Who Buy Sex* (San Francisco, CA: Prostitution Research & Education, 2012), 9, http://www.prostitutionresearch.com/Cambodia%20Project%20Final.pdf (accessed October 14, 2013).

[9]Farley, et. al., *A Thorn in the Heart*, 26.

[10]C. N. Kendall & R. E. Funk, "Gay Male Pornography's 'Actors': When Fantasy Isn't," in M. Farley, ed., *Prostitution, Trafficking, and Traumatic Stress*

pornography and its implications for men who have sex with men (MSM) are just as harmful as heterosexual pornography and its effects on women. Kendall cites a 1985 study which exposes the emotional vulnerability of young men in this industry and discusses the strong, adverse, and sometimes fatal effects that such depictions have on the actors' self-identities. The result is that feminine, soft, or "bottom" men are degraded as "queer" and "faggots" and are dehumanized in the same ways as a woman who is degraded as "bitch," "cunt," or "whore."[11]

A Matter of Choice vs. Victimization

Another consideration within present research is the terminology used to discuss males and females in prostitution. The term "prostitute" was preferred in 66% of the studies dealing with women and in only 25% of the studies pertaining to men. On the other hand, "sex worker" was the term of choice for 75% of the studies dealing with men in the sex industry.[12] In the cited study, it is believed that the term "prostitute" implies coercion and degradation, whereas "sex worker" implies more of an active choice of participation. This seems to imply that women are forced to participate in sexual exchanges, whereas males are not. Female sex work is thought of as degrading and dangerous, whereas male sex work is not.[13] Does this preclude, then, that females in the sex trade are in need of action and activism, whereas their male counterparts are not?

Noted feminist Andrea Dworkin encapsulates the gender-exclusive view of prostitution in a speech entitled "Prostitution and Male Supremacy." She says,

> Prostitution: what is it? It is the use of a woman's body for sex by a man, he pays money, he does what he wants. The minute you move

---

(Binghampton: The Haworth Maltreatment & Trauma Press, 2003), 95.

[11]Kendall & Funk, "Gay Male Pornography's 'Actors': When Fantasy Isn't," 95.

[12]Dennis, "Women are Victims, Men Make Choices," 19.

[13]Dennis, "Women are Victims, Men Make Choices," 19.

> away from what it really is, you move away from prostitution into the world of ideas.[14]

In this framework, prostitution is exclusively understood as a male's abuse of a female. Throughout this and other narratives of its kind, males and females seem to be dichotomized as predator and prey. While this may be true in a number of cases, this kind of discussion is unhelpful and may lead to a greater neglect of males who also suffer from abuse and exploitation.

MSM and Sexual Identity in Cambodia

In Cambodia, there is a significant level of denial that sex between men takes place.[15] Male to male sexuality is often an issue of great shame and discrimination. A 2004 USAID report notes that stigma and discrimination against men who have sex with men in Cambodia cause them to "hide their faces."[16] The report states that consequences of being known as an MSM include violence, ostracism, rejection, and dismissal from employment. Thus, many of these groups are forced to remain underground.[17]

Discussions on sexual identity in Cambodian society are often difficult to have. Sexual identity is a more recent concept coming out of Western thought and scholarship.[18] In Cambodia, the concepts of

---

[14]Andrea Dworkin, "Prostitution and Male Supremacy," *Prostitution: From Academia to Activism*, symposium (University of Michigan Law School: Michigan Journal of Gender and Law, Oct. 31, 1992).

[15]Kha Sovannara & Chris Ward, *Men Who Have Sex with Men in Cambodia: HIV/AIDS Vulnerability, Stigma, and Discrimination* (Phnom Penh: Policy Project, January 2004), 4, http://www.policyproject.com/pubs/countryreports/CAM_MSM.pdf (accessed October 15, 2013).

[16]Sovannara & Ward, *Men Who Have Sex with Men in Cambodia*, 5.

[17]Sovannara & Ward, *Men Who Have Sex with Men in Cambodia*, 12.

[18]Chou Meng Tarr, *Study of Contextual Factors Affecting Risk-Related Sexual Behaviour Among Young People in Cambodia* (Phnom Phenh: UNAIDS, 1996), 27.

"heterosexual" and "homosexual" are still not common distinctions to be made. Tarr notes that most Cambodians "do not consciously reflect on their sexual identity, but rather on themselves as females and males living in Cambodian society."[19] Men who have sex with men are commonly divided into two categories: MSM "Short Hair" and MSM "Long Hair." MSM "Short Hair" are men who identify themselves as men and display common masculine characteristics and appearances, whereas MSM "Long Hair" are men who display more feminine characteristics and who may sometimes fall into a Western "transgender" category.[20] A 2008 UNESCO ethnography of Cambodian male to male sexuality notes that the sexual identity of a man in Cambodian society is not based upon sexual behavior but rather on his having a masculine or feminine character.[21] Thus, it can be possible for a man to have sexual attractions to, and even sexual relations with, other men and, yet, still not categorize himself with the Western concept of "homosexual."

The Cambodian Male Sex Industry

In Phnom Penh, there are reported to be hundreds of "massage" parlors featuring female masseurs who provide sexual services for male clientele. However, there is a growing number of similar services in which young males provide similar sexual services for male clientele.[22] A 2011 study, conducted in Phnom Penh, focuses on male masseurs working in the male to male sex industry. As a precursor to the present study, this report aims to provide an initial understanding of the

[19]Tarr, *Study of Contextual Factors Affecting Risk-Related Sexual Behaviour Among Young People in Cambodia*, 3.

[20]Sovannara & Ward, *Men Who Have Sex with Men in Cambodia*, iv.

[21]Phong Tan, *HIV/AIDS Prevention Programme: Ethnography of Male to Male Sexuality in Cambodia* (Phnom Penh: UNESCO, 2008), 24–26, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001630/163077e.pdf (accessed October 14, 2013).

[22]Miles & Blanch, *An Initial Exploration of Young Men Who Work in the Male-to-Male Massage Industry in Phnom Penh, Cambodia*, 5.

vulnerabilities, demographics, and potential resiliencies of the young men in this industry.[23] Of the respondents interviewed, 42.8% have had sex with multiple clients at the same time. 2.2% said that they did this often, or 6–10 times, and 6.7% reported that they did this frequently, or more than 10 times.[24] Additionally, out of the 45 masseurs interviewed, 5 reported that they have "occasionally" been forced to have sex and one stated that he was "sometimes" forced to have sex.[25]

A 2004 Cambodian policy report suggests that indirect sex workers are more common in Phnom Penh than direct sex workers due to discrimination mitigated by direct sex work. An indirect sex worker is a male who will not openly solicit sex but will usually ask for money after sex.[26] These kinds of sex workers may be found in restaurants, parks, or other public areas. They are reported to find clients by striking up conversations which usually lead to the subject of sex.

Male Sexual Abuse

Recent studies have indicated the need for further research into the connection between male sexual abuse and the male sex industry. A Canadian study of male sex workers[27] reports that 70% of the male sex workers studied had a history of sexual abuse prior to entering the industry. Additionally, over 75% had been physically violated and witnessed aggression during childhood.[28]

---

[23]Miles & Blanch, *An Initial Exploration of Young Men Who Work in the Male-to-Male Massage Industry in Phnom Penh, Cambodia*, 9.

[24]Miles & Blanch, *What about Boys?*, 15.

[25]Miles & Blanch, *An Initial Exploration of Young Men Who Work in the Male-to-Male Massage Industry in Phnom Penh, Cambodia*, 9.

[26]Sovannara & Ward, *Men Who Have Sex with Men in Cambodia*, 19.

[27]S. McIntyre, *Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men* (Calgary, Alberta, Canada: 2005).

[28]McIntyre, *Under the Radar.*

While the sexual abuse of girls has been given much attention in research, studies concerning boys and male sexual abuse are limited. Holmes and Slap claim that the "sexual abuse of boys is common, underreported, under recognized, and under treated."[29] Research in North America indicates that the sexual abuse of boys is less likely to be reported due to fear of punishment, loss of independence, and homosexual labeling.[30] Depending on what group is studied, prevalence of male childhood sexual abuse in North America ranges from 4%–16%.[31] A 2005 study of Health Management Organization (HMO) members in San Diego, California found that 16% of males had been sexually abused before the age of 18.[32]

A number of studies document the negative effects of sexual abuse on male psychological development. David Lisak, in a content analysis of 26 male survivors of sexual abuse, reports that victims experienced common feelings of worthlessness, emptiness, and inferiority which tended to worsen with time to become deeply ingrained negative identities.[33] A 2005 literature review on the psychological consequences of male sexual abuse reports disrupted development of gender identity, self-esteem, and self-concept as common effects of male sexual abuse.[34] Males are reported to cope with the trauma of sexual abuse through denial, self-hypnosis, dissociation, and self-mutilation.[35]

---

[29]W. C. Holmes & G. B. Slap, "Sexual Abuse of Boys: Definition, Prevalence, Correlates, Sequelae, and Management," *Journal of the American Medical Association* 280:21 (1998): 1855.

[30]Holmes & Slap, "Sexual Abuse of Boys," 1860.

[31]Holmes & Slap, "Sexual Abuse of Boys," 1856.

[32]S. R. Dube, et. al., "Long-term Consequences of Childhood Sexual Abuse by Gender of Victim," *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 28:5 (2005): 434.

[33]D. Lisak, "The Psychological Impact of Sexual Abuse: Content Analysis of Interviews with Male Survivors," *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 7:4 (1994): 544.

[34]S. M. Valente, "Sexual Abuse of Boys," *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing* 18:1 (2005): 10.

[35]Valente, "Sexual Abuse of Boys," 11.

Prevalence and Understanding of Sexual Abuse in Asia

In Asian societies, issues of male sexual abuse have also been given little attention. In South Asia, young boys are assumed to be capable of protecting themselves. The existence of male sexual abuse and even male to male sexuality is often ignored or denied. This traditional narrative seems to presuppose that males are not at risk of abuse or exploitation.[36] Thus, societies are less vigilant, cases of abuse are less likely to be reported, and boys may be placed at greater risk of abuse and/or exploitation. These prevalent conceptions of male invulnerability further complicate the issue of male exploitation and abuse because they reinforce the idea that males are "stronger" and thus more psychologically resilient, are able to readily protect themselves, and more easily recover from trauma than adolescent girls.[37]

In Cambodian society, there is an adage which states that women are like cloth and males are like gold. When a cloth is soiled, it is no longer useful; however, if gold is soiled, it only needs to be polished again. Based upon this belief, girls and young women are seen as unrecoverable, and are therefore carefully protected, whereas much less vigilance is afforded to boys and young men and they are not thought to require any serious follow-up in cases of abuse.[38]

Male Sexual Abuse in Cambodia

In 2008, Hilton and associates published a qualitative study of 40 Cambodian boys and young men who had been victims of sexual abuse and interviewed 100 staff members from a range of NGOs about their

---

[36]J. Frederick, *Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Boys in South Asia—A Review of Research Findings, Legislation, Policy and Programme Responses* (Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2010), 6.

[37]Frederick, *Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Boys in South Asia*, 15.

[38]Miles & Blanch, *An Initial Exploration of Young Men Who Work in the Male-to-Male Massage Industry in Phnom Penh, Cambodia*, 5.

experiences of working with male victims of sexual abuse.[39] This was the first study of its kind.

Several risk factors emerged from this study, including poverty, loss of a parent and/or sibling, and experiences of domestic violence. Most had very low levels of education and commonly described drug and alcohol abuse within their home lives.[40] Cambodian males who had been victims of sexual abuse commonly described mockery, jokes, and further discrimination from people within their communities when they were discovered to be victims of sexual abuse, which resulted in further isolation and marginalization.[41] Additionally, a number of older boys who identified themselves as men who have sex with men (MSM) described a number of violent accounts of sexual abuse and even gang rape.[42]

In Cambodia, more is known about boys who are abused by foreigners in urban and tourist locales.[43] This is due to current child protection initiatives which focus on such incidents. Stories featuring Khmer perpetrators of sexual abuse against boys are rarely featured.[44] However, *Action Pour Les Enfants* (APLE) reports that child sexual exploitation is more often committed by Cambodian nationals than foreigners.[45]

---

[39]A. Hilton, et. al., *I Thought It Could Never Happen to Boys* (Phnom Penh: Hagar & World Vision, 2008).

[40]Hilton, et. al., *I Thought It Could Never Happen to Boys*, 8.

[41]Hilton, et. al., *I Thought It Could Never Happen to Boys*, 9.

[42]Hilton, et. al., *I Thought It Could Never Happen to Boys*, 10.

[43]R. Renault, *Survey on Street-based Child Sexual Exploitation in Cambodia: Overview of 7 Provinces* (Phnom Penh: Action Pour Les Enfants, 2006); Hilton, et. al., *I Thought It Could Never Happen to Boys*, 8.

[44]Hilton, et. al., *I Thought It Could Never Happen to Boys*, 8.

[45]Renault, *Survey on Street-based Child Sexual Exploitation in Cambodia*.

Some cultural factors can complicate research seeking to understand the prevalence of male sexual abuse. In Cambodian society, it is common to soothe or show affection to very young male children by touching or kissing the genitals.[46] A 2005 report studied Cambodian boys ages 12–15 and asked about sexual touching before and after the age of 9. The research found that 18.9% of Cambodian boys aged 12–15 admitted to being sexually touched on the genitals after the age of 9 and 15.7% admitted to being sexually touched *before* the age of 9.[47]

Methodology

In July and August of 2012, a questionnaire based survey of male masseurs employed in male to male massage parlors and other establishments (e.g., barbershops) in Siem Reap, Cambodia was conducted.

Survey Instrument

The survey used for this study was previously used in a similar study of male masseurs conducted in Phnom Penh, Cambodia.[48] This survey was adapted from a similar survey instrument developed by Jasmir Thakur (Samabhavana Society) and used with male masseurs in Mumbai, India.[49] Adaptations were made by the researchers to make the survey more relevant to the cultural and economic context of Cambodia.

---

[46]Hilton, et. al., *I Thought It Could Never Happen to Boys*; G. M. Miles & V. Sun, *"Stop Violence against Us!": Cambodian Children's Perceptions of Violence*, Part 2 (Phnom Penh: Tearfund, Child Welfare Group, 2006).

[47]G. M. Miles & V. Sun, *"Stop Violence against Us!": Cambodian Children's Perceptions of Violence* (Phnom Penh: Tearfund, Child Welfare Group, 2005).

[48]Miles & Blanch, *What about Boys?*

[49]G. M. Miles & J. Thakur, *Baseline Survey with Masseur Boys in Mumbai*, unpublished report (Mumbai, India: Love 146 & Samabhavana Society, 2011).

The survey was a combination of multiple choice and open-ended questions and covered the following areas: demographic details; family background and income; issues of prejudice, stigma, and discrimination; migration; sexual identity and sexual history; sexual health; substance abuse; sexual violence and abuse; income generation; spirituality; dignity; future planning.

Massage Establishments and Respondent Recruitment

A total number of 20 massage, spa, and other establishments employing male masseurs (i.e., barbershops, hotels) were included in the study. A field research methodology with purposeful and snowball sampling methods[50] was used to identify the male masseur respondents working within the following types of massage establishments within an approximate one kilometer radius of the Siem Reap town center:

- Massage establishments advertising massage for males by male masseurs;
- Massage establishments that included both male and female masseurs advertising to the general public;
- Other places of employment that include massage services by male masseurs (e.g., barbershops, hotels).

The locations of the massage establishments were determined by identifying available websites and advertisements, general in-person enquiries at massage establishments, and follow-up on referrals provided through previous interviews with participants (also referred to as "snowball/referral sampling.")[51]

[50]J. Overton & P. van Diermen, "Using Quantitative Techniques," in R. Scheyvens & D. Storey, eds., *Development Fieldwork: A Practical Guide* (London: SAGE Publications, Ltd., 2003), 37–56; P. Nichols, *Social Survey Methods: A Field Guide for Development Workers* (Oxford: Oxfam Publications, 1991).

[51]Nichols, *Social Survey Methods.*

Contact was made with either managers or owners of the establishments and permission was granted for surveys to be conducted with employees during off-peak hours, or through contact with individual masseurs who were informed of the research and invited to participate at a time and venue convenient for them. Care was taken to schedule and conduct interviews with respondents during off-peak working hours or before or after work hours. All survey interviews were conducted in a quiet and private area within the respective massage establishments or at a quiet café/restaurant, seeking to avoid/limit interruption and ensure that others did not overhear the interview. Where survey interviews were conducted away from the respondent's place of employment, drinks and/or snacks were provided. Respondents were not compensated for their participation in the study. No images were recorded during the survey interview process.

Survey Interviews

There were a total of 50 surveys completed. Survey interviews were conducted by two local Cambodians and one expatriate. Interviewers were provided with training to ensure that they provided respondents with respect and used culturally appropriate language before, during, and after the survey interview process. Survey interviews were conducted in pairs to ensure safety and accountability, with each interviewer accompanied by an expatriate researcher who observed the interview and made notes where appropriate. All survey interviews were conducted in the local Khmer language without the assistance of a translator. Interviewers also sought to establish rapport with respondents prior to the survey, providing each respondent with an explanation of the research and its purpose, the personal nature of several questions to be asked of them, their right to choose not to answer any question and/or stop the survey and/or withdraw from the study at any time, and an assurance of anonymity and confidentiality. Two potential respondents declined the invitation to participate in the study. No respondents chose to stop the survey, withdraw from the study, or refrain from answering questions.

Data Preparation and Analysis

Descriptive analyses of the survey results were undertaken using SPSS 20.0 (SPSS Inc). Thematic analysis was used to explore the responses to open-ended questions included in the survey, with key features of this data coded and sorted in a systematic manner to reflect patterns in the data and inform themes and sub-themes relevant to the questions used in the survey.[52]

Ethical Considerations

Ethical guidelines were adhered to throughout the research process.[53] The respondents were informed about the purpose of the survey before giving consent to participate. The respondents were informed prior to engaging in the survey that they could choose not to answer any question or to stop the survey at any time. Interviewers visited the locations in pairs to ensure safety and accountability. Interviewers sought to establish rapport with respondents by explaining the research and its purpose. Care was taken to ensure that others did not overhear the interviews. All surveys were kept confidential. Respondents were informed that their individual responses would not be given to their employers. No visitors were allowed during the interview process and no images were taken during the process.

Results

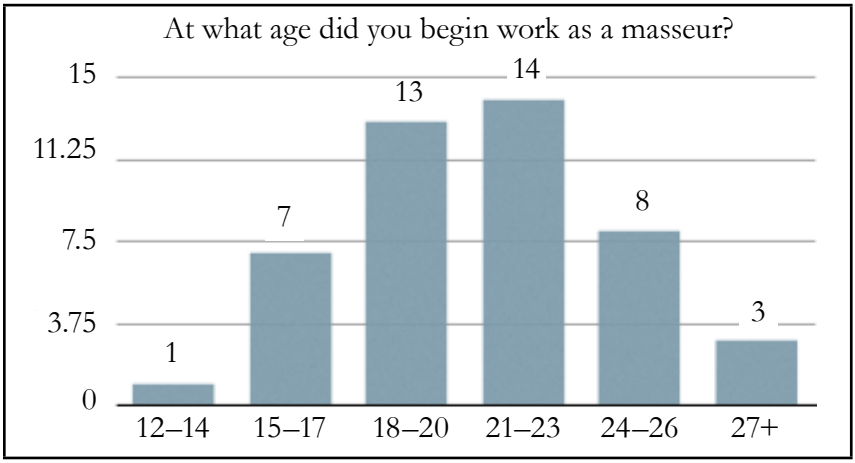
Demographics

The ages of the respondents had a range of 14 years, the youngest reporting to be 18 and the oldest 32. The median age of respondents

[52]Richard E. Boyatzis, *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis & Code Development* (London: SAGE Publications, Ltd., 1998).

[53]J. Ennew, et. al., *The Right to be Properly Researched: How to do Rights-Based, Scientific Research with Children* (Bangkok: Black on White Publications, 2009); Thomas M. Steinfatt, *Measuring the Extent of Sex Trafficking in Cambodia—2008* (Bangkok: UNIAP, 2008).

was 23.5 years. A few masseurs appeared to be very young; however, all respondents reported to be at least 18 years old at the time of the interviews. The ages at which respondents reported beginning their work as masseurs ranged 16 years, 30 being the oldest age to start working as a masseur and 14 being the youngest. The median age for the masseurs interviewed was 21 years. A total of nine masseurs indicated beginning work as a masseur before the age of 18. Eight of these started as masseurs between the ages of 15 and 17, and one reported starting at the age of 14. A similar study conducted in Mumbai, India of 77 male masseurs found that 9% of the young men surveyed were aged 10–12 years old and 55% were aged 13–15 years old.[54]

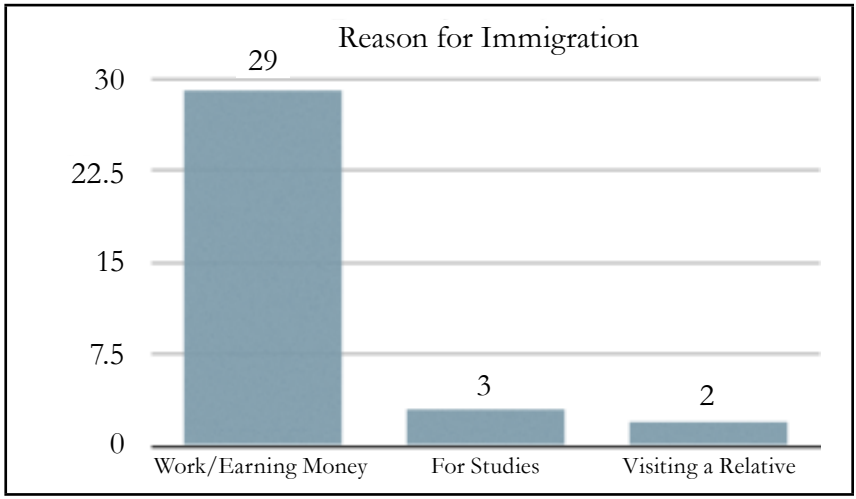


A significant number of respondents indicated that they had only recently come into the massage industry. Of the 50 respondents in the study, 33 (66%) had been working as masseurs for less than three years—nearly a third of which (10 people) had been working for only a matter of months (less than one year). This seems to suggest a high turnover rate among males in the massage industry. Throughout the interviews, a number of respondents seemed to indicate seeing massage work as a source of quick and/or easy income, with many citing tips as an incentive for coming into the industry. In addition to these figures, nine respondents (18%) reported that they had been

[54]Miles & Thakur, *Baseline Survey with Masseur Boys in Mumbai.*

working as masseurs for 3–5 years, and eight (16%) had been working for more than six years.

Nearly half (42%) of respondents reported to have come from the Siem Reap area, either from within the city or just outside of it. Another significant number of respondents came from Kampong Cham (six people or 12%) and Takeo (5 people or 10%) provinces. Four respondents (8%) came from other cities (two from Battambang, one from Phnom Penh, and one from Sihanoukville).



The remaining respondents came from various provincial areas.

Over three-fourths of respondents had immigrated to Siem Reap. A predominant number of these respondents (29 people or 78.4%) had immigrated to Siem Reap for the purpose of finding work or earning money. This is about 20% higher than what was found among masseurs working in Phnom Penh. Furthermore, only three masseurs in Siem Reap (8.1% of respondents) had come to Siem Reap for the purpose of their studies, which is nearly 20% lower than for those working in Phnom Penh. In addition, five masseurs in Siem Reap (or 13.6% of respondents) reported immigrating to Siem Reap for the purpose of staying with friends or relatives.

With regard to living arrangements, 32.7% of respondents were presently living with immediate family members and 12.2% reported

living with distant relatives. Slightly more than one-fifth (20.4%) of respondents lived with friends and nearly one-fourth (24.5%) lived alone. A predominant number of masseurs had immigrated to the Siem Reap area. Among this group, slightly under one-fourth lived with friends, the same number lived alone, and one-third of immigrants lived with relatives, either immediate or distant. For those native to Siem Reap, over half lived with immediate family members, nearly 11% lived alone, and 6.5% lived with friends.

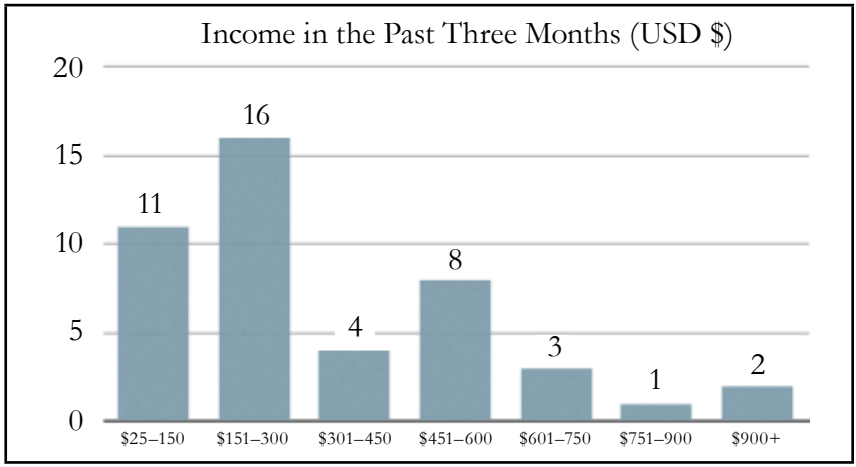
The educational levels of respondents were diverse. Well over one-fourth (32%) of respondents had completed the 11th grade. A predominant number, 40% of respondents, had a 7th to 10th grade education, 20% had a 5th to 7th grade education, 4% had completed up to the 4th grade, and another 4% had no schooling at all. These figures are somewhat lower than what was found in Phnom Penh where nearly 50% completed the 11th grade; however, they are still slightly higher than the national average.

Entering the Massage Industry

The means through which the respondents had come into the massage industry were diverse. The largest group, 40%, stated that they came into the massage industry through a friend. Another 24% said that a member of their family, either immediate or distant, was responsible for their being in the massage industry. A slightly smaller group, 22% of respondents, said that they came into the massage industry after seeing an advertisement. Some respondents cited having friends or family members already working in the massage industry who provided them with free training. A number of others also cited receiving free training at the massage establishment.

Respondents were asked why they became a masseur instead of taking on another profession. As with the Phnom Penh study, low education and lack of skill remain the predominant reasons cited for becoming a masseur. Nearly half of respondents cited that they lacked the education or skills necessary for other employment. A significant portion of these respondents also cited inabilities in speaking English as a factor in entering the massage industry instead of other

employment in Siem Reap, since massage did not require a great deal of verbal interaction with clients. More than one-fourth of respondents specifically cited financial benefits in being a masseur. Nearly half of those citing financial benefits specified that they came into the massage industry because they could earn tips as a masseur. Lastly, three respondents indicated that they wanted to become masseurs, and another three stated that they came into the industry because it was "easy work."

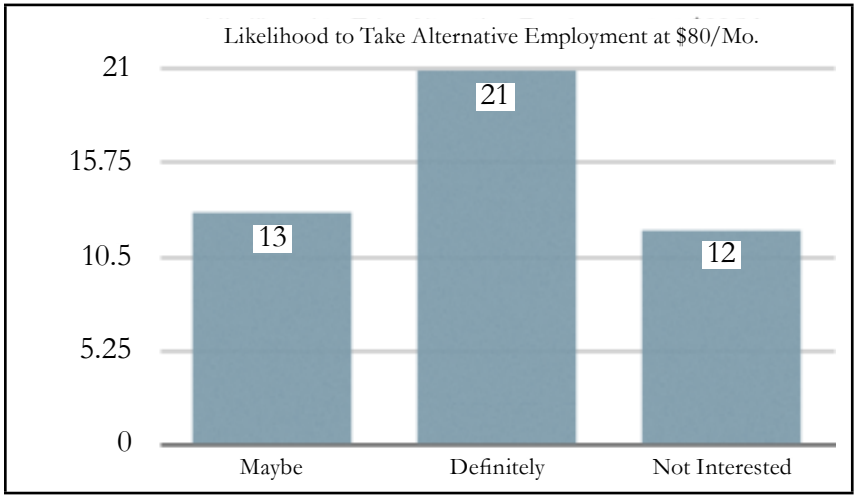


Financial Implications

Income and debt were significant considerations for young men working in this profession. Reported incomes for the last three months ranged from $25 to $3000 with a median income of $300. The mean income over the past three months was $409.59. The largest portion of incomes over the past three months ranged from $25 to $300. A total of 29 people or 60.4% of respondents reported to be within this range. Of this group, 18 respondents or 37.5% of total respondents reported incomes between $151 and $300 for the past three months. This would indicate average incomes to be between $50 and $100 a month. Additionally, 11 respondents or 22.9% earned between $25 and $150. There were 6 respondents who reported three-month earnings of less than $100. Of those who earned less than $100 in three months, four lived with either immediate family or relatives and the remaining

two had sources of secondary income. Additionally, 13 people (27.1%) reported earnings between $301 and $600, four people (8.4%) reported earnings between $601 and $900, and two reported earning more than $900 over a three-month period. The incomes most frequently reported over a three-month period were $300 and $600, respectively.

The range of incomes for the past three months was $2,975. This large number seems to be due to a few respondents who reported significantly higher incomes than others. One respondent, 22, from a male to male oriented establishment, reported a 3-month income of $1,000. This is $700 greater than the average income for this sampling. Another respondent, 24, also from a male to male oriented establishment, reported a 3-month income of $3,000, which is $2,700 greater than the average. Each of these respondents reported that they had met clients for sex. Within the past week, they reported meeting with 6 and 20 clients for sex, respectively.



The average income for an unskilled laborer (in Phnom Penh) was determined to be $80 a month, which is about $20 less than the average monthly income for masseurs in this study. Respondents in this study were asked if they would be interested to take another job which offered only $80 a month if it were offered to them. Nearly half of respondents (45%) indicated that they would "definitely" be interested in taking such a job and over one-fourth (28.3%) stated

that they might be interested. Overall, nearly three-fourths would definitely take, or would consider taking, a job that paid $80 a month as an alternative to their present employment.

Savings and Debts

Respondents were asked about their savings. If they saved money, they were asked where they kept it. 25 respondents, or 51%, reported that they did not save any money. Of those who did save, 11 respondents or 22.4% kept their money in a bank, five respondents or 10.2% gave it to a family member for safe keeping, and one masseur kept his money with his peers. Additionally, nearly half of the masseurs interviewed came from families who had debts to repay. Among the 16 respondents who disclosed amounts, their families' debts ranged from $100 to $2000. The average debt owed was $737 and the median was $700.

In comparison with male masseurs in Phnom Penh, male masseurs in Siem Reap appeared to be less likely to save money. Three-fourths of male masseurs in Phnom Penh were reported to have some form of savings, whereas less than half in Siem Reap were able to save. The median debt in Siem Reap was somewhat higher than the median debt found in Phnom Penh ($700 compared to $625); however, the range of debt in Phnom Penh ranged from $200 to $20,000, which is much greater than reported by masseurs in Siem Reap.

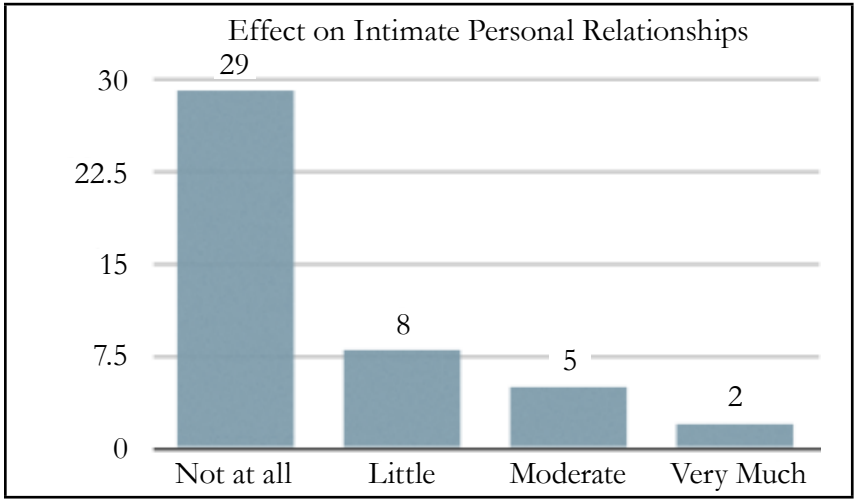
Six masseurs or 12% of respondents indicated that they were the only member of their family who had income. Nearly half of masseurs indicated that they were earning money along with at least one sibling, another six or 12% indicated that they were earning along with one parent, and ten or 20% reported that all members of their family were earning money.

Effects on Relationships

Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their personal relationships and whether others in their communities were aware that they were working as masseurs. Nearly half of respondents (51.1%) indicated that the people in their communities were not aware

that they were working as masseurs. A number of reasons were given for this. Nine respondents indicated having shame in telling people that they were working as masseurs. One indicated that people in his community do not like male masseurs because they are associated with prostitutes. Another stated that he does not tell his family, or even his roommates, because he does not want them to talk badly about him. Another cited fears of mockery and laughter if he is found out to be a male masseur. Four respondents indicated that they lie to their families about their profession, or would lie to them if they were asked about it. A number cited half-truths such as telling family members that they are working at a hotel, but not sharing that they are providing massage services. One respondent stated that he does not tell people of his work because it is "not a good job."

The majority of respondents, 86.5%, stated that they have a best friend. A significant portion of this group, 61%, stated that their best friend is another masseur. 9.8% indicated that their best friend is another boy or girl in their village and nearly 30% indicated that their best friend is someone else.



Lastly, masseurs were asked about the extent to which being a masseur affected their intimate personal relationships. A majority of respondents, 68.8%, indicated that being a masseur did not have an effect on their intimate personal relationships. Eight people or 16%

indicated that massage had "little effect"; five people or 10.4% and two people (4.2%) said that being a masseur had "very much" effect on their intimate personal relationships. For those who indicated that being a masseur did affect their intimate personal relationships, interviewers asked them in what ways their relationships were affected. Of those who offered responses, six masseurs cited discrimination. They reported that friends and teachers often discriminate against them, and cited criticism from other villagers. Five masseurs cited that stigma against male masseurs affects their relationships. Of those citing stigma, a number of common themes arose from their descriptions, particularly associated with being a man who has sex with other men, as well as with being likened to prostitutes. One masseur mentioned that he is mocked and laughed at by some people in his community because of his work as a masseur.

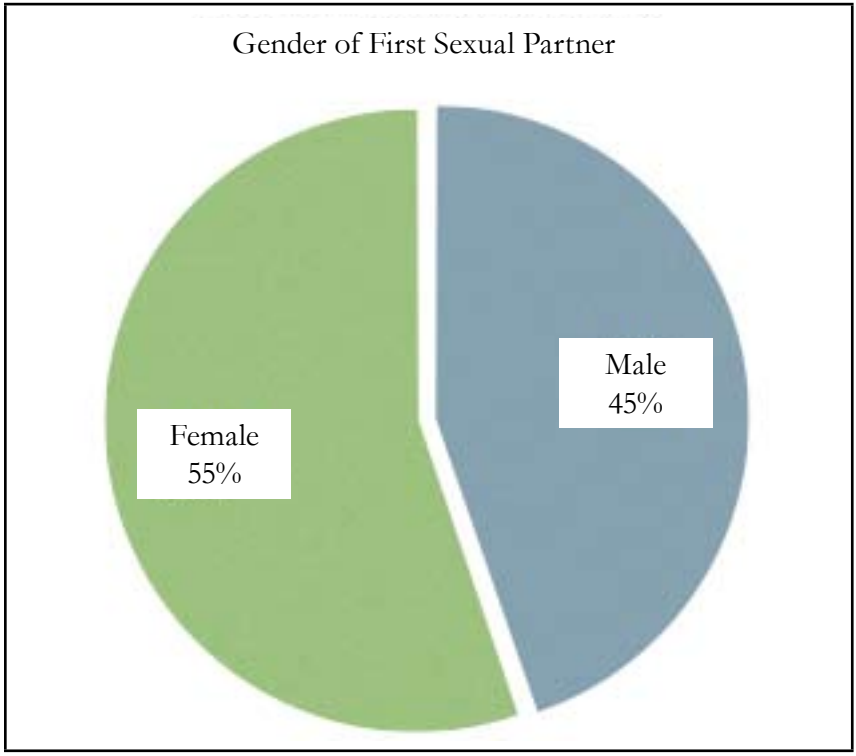
While it is true that a majority of the masseurs interviewed stated that their jobs have little effect on their intimate personal relationships, it is important to consider that over half of the respondents have not disclosed to their families that they are working as masseurs. Additionally, of those masseurs whose friends and families *do* know that they are working as masseurs, a number of them cited stigma and discrimination. We do not have enough information to understand this fully; however, it is possible that if their friends and families did know of their professions, masseurs might have stated that their profession had a greater effect on their relationships. It may also be important to consider that well over half of the masseurs who had a best friend indicated that their best friend was also a masseur. If their intimate personal relationships are with others in the massage industry, it is unlikely that being a masseur would hinder these particular relationships.

Sexual Experiences

The respondents were asked to identify the gender(s) of people with whom they preferred to have sex. Over one-third, or 40% of respondents (18 people), identified themselves as a "man who likes to have sex with men" (MSM), while 47% (21 people) identified

themselves as a "man who likes to have sex with women" (MSW). Additionally, 11% of respondents (five people) indicated that they liked to have sex with both men and women (bisexual) and one indicated that he liked to have sex with ladyboys (transgendered males).

In comparison with data from masseurs in Phnom Penh,[55] there is a much higher number of masseurs in Siem Reap who self-identify as MSM. In the Phnom Penh study, only 16.3% of masseurs identified themselves as MSM, while 58.1% identified themselves as men who like to have sex with women, and 20.9% reported liking to have sex with both men and women. It may be interesting to note that there are a greater number of respondents self-identifying as MSM even though only half of the Siem Reap respondents were from MSM establishments, compared to 100% in the Phnom Penh study.



[55]Miles & Blanch, *What about Boys?*

Masseurs were asked a number of questions regarding their first sexual experience. The ages at which respondents reported having their first sexual experiences ranged from 15 to 32 years old, the median age being 19.5 years old. Seven masseurs, or slightly less than 20% of those responding, reported having their first sexual experience between the ages of 15 and 17. Nearly half of those responding, 44.5% or 16 people, said that they were within the 18 to 20 year age-range when they had their first sexual experience, and nearly one fourth (22.2%) said that they had their first sexual experience within the age-range of 21 to 23 years old.

Less than half of the respondents, or 43.5%, stated that their first sexual experience was with a male. Of this number, exactly half stated that the male was a friend (or boyfriend) and over one-third, or 37.5%, said that the male was a client. Two masseurs in this category reported that their first experience was with a neighbor. Over half, or 57.5%, stated that their first sexual experience was with a female. Of this number, three-fourths stated that the female was a friend (or girlfriend), three (15%) stated that their first partner was a sex worker, and one stated that his first sexual experience was with a female client.

The respondents were asked if their first sexual experience was coerced or consensual. Four masseurs indicated that their first sexual experience had been coerced, and in all of these cases, the sexual experience had been with another male. All respondents stating that their first sexual experience had been with a female stated that the sex had been consensual. This differs greatly from the Phnom Penh study, in which 31.1% of total respondents reported that their first sexual experience had been coerced. Masseurs reported coercion 80% of the time if their partner was male and 17% of the time if their partner was female.

Over three-fourths (76.2%) of those immigrating to Siem Reap reported that their first sexual experience happened in Siem Reap. Including all respondents, a total of 81.8% reported having their first sexual experience in Siem Reap. Of those remaining, three, or 9.1% of total respondents, stated having their first sexual experience in the village, and one stated that his first experience was in Phnom Penh.

It should be noted that the masseur's first sexual experience is assumed to mean their first experience of sexual intercourse. The research instrument did not specify other sorts of sexual experiences, encounters, or even abuse that might have happened throughout the respondent's childhood. For future studies, questions such as this might be useful in order to understand better the complexities of the sexual histories of the men working in this industry.

Respondents were asked if they had visited a prostituted female within the past three months. Very few indicated that they had. Of the 50 respondents interviewed, four masseurs (8.2%) stated that they had and 45 indicated that they had not. One masseur declined to answer this question. This is significantly different from the numbers reported among masseurs in Phnom Penh[56] which found 31% of respondents having visited a female sex worker in the past three months. Although a larger sampling would be needed to determine a conclusive pattern from this dataset, it is interesting to note that not all of those visiting a female sex worker within the past three months self-identified as a man who likes to have sex with women. This was a pattern suggested in the study on male masseurs in Phnom Penh. In the study, 28.5% of respondents self-identifying as homosexual (or exclusively MSM) had also visited a female sex worker in the past three months. Miles and Blanch question whether there could be other reasons for visiting a prostituted female other than pleasure. More research is needed to determine what these alternative reasons could be. For example, might it be possible that some MSM masseurs felt a need to affirm their masculinity to themselves or their male friends by visiting a prostituted female?

Sexual Experiences as a Masseur

Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding their sexual experiences with clients. Kinds and frequencies of experiences were diverse. Masseurs were asked about the number of clients that they had met last week for sex. Responses ranged from 0 to 20 clients within the past week. The median number of clients was 1.2. Of those who

[56]Miles & Blanch, *What about Boys?*

had sex with clients within the past week, three masseurs had sex with only one client, five had sex with two to four clients, four masseurs had sex with five to seven clients, and one masseur (noted above) reported having sex with 20 clients.

Nearly three-fourths of masseurs indicated that they had not had sex with their clients within the past week. It is important to note, however, that within this context, the question of having sex with clients implies just that: penetrative sexual intercourse. A number of masseurs who denied having sex with their clients within the past week also mentioned providing other sexual services, such as masturbation, which would typically be done following the massage.

There was a strong contrast between masseurs working in male to male oriented massage establishments and masseurs working in mixed gender massage establishments. Over half of respondents working within male to male oriented establishments, or 12 people, reported having sex with clients in the past week. Conversely, only 3% of those coming from mixed gender massage establishments reported having sex with clients in the past week. Similarly, respondents were asked about the number of clients they met for sex within the past day. Six people, or 12% of total respondents, reported having sex with clients in the past day. All of the respondents were from male to male oriented massage establishments.

Respondents were also asked how often they had sex with multiple clients within the past three months. Eight people or 16% of total respondents indicated that they have had sex with multiple clients at the same time. Three respondents indicated that they did this "often" and others gave specific numbers. One masseur, who did this with some frequency, indicated that he had done this about 45 times in the past three months, and another indicated that he had sex with multiple clients 10 times within the past three months. Once again, there was a significant difference between the male to male and mixed gender massage establishments. All respondents reporting to have sex with multiple clients at the same time were from male to male oriented massage establishments and no respondents from mixed gender

massage establishments indicated having sex with multiple clients at the same time.

Additionally, respondents were questioned about how often they and another male masseur have had sex with one client at the same time in the past three months. About 80% of respondents indicated that they had never done this. One masseur, from a mixed gender massage establishment, indicated that his manager does not allow the masseurs to do this; however, if arrangements are made with the client, they can provide this service in another location. A total of eight respondents indicated that they and another male masseur have had sex with a client at the same time within the past three months. Four masseurs indicated that this has happened 1–2 times and another four indicated that this has happened 3–5 times. Once again, all of the masseurs who reported to have provided this kind of service within the past three months were from male to male massage establishments.

There were a number of masseurs who stated that they have never had any sexual experiences with their clients. While this may be true for many respondents, it is also important to note that some of these figures may be inaccurate for a couple of reasons. It is possible that, due to the nature of the services provided and potential pressures from management, some masseurs may choose to leave some parts of their work undisclosed. Additionally, there seems to have been some confusion among a number of respondents as to what is meant by "sex" or "sexual experiences." Towards the end of data collection, it was noted that a number of masseurs interpreted "sexual experiences" and/or "sex" to mean exclusively penetrative intercourse. Interviewers found that a number of masseurs denied having any sexual experiences at all; however, when this term was broadened to include fellatio ("oral sex") and masturbation, a number of masseurs then responded in the affirmative. Interviewers are uncertain of the extent to which this confusion occurred or if it could have had an effect on the figures reflected in this and other variables dealing with "sex" and "sexual experiences."

Sexual Education and Health

Respondents were asked to name a few of the modes of transmission for HIV. This was to determine if the masseurs recognized the connection between sexual relations and HIV/AIDS. Nearly all respondents (98%) cited "sex" or "sex without a condom" as a mode of HIV transmission, and one respondent cited "semen" as a mode of transmission. 26 respondents (56.5%) specifically mentioned "sex without a condom" and one mentioned "sex," with the exclusion of oral sex, as a mode of HIV transmission. A large number of respondents also cited "blood" and "shared needles" as additional modes of HIV transmission. This is somewhat better than the national average. A 2009 UNICEF report states that 45% of Cambodian youth aged 15–24 are able to correctly identify the major modes of HIV transmission. Slightly more than one-third of respondents (16 people or 34.8%) stated that they knew someone who was presently living with HIV/AIDS. HIV/AIDS has a 0.5% prevalence rate in Cambodia with an estimated 63,000 people presently living with the disease.[57] Of the masseurs interviewed for this study, 17 people or 34% stated that they know someone who is presently living with HIV/AIDS.

In addition to their knowledge of HIV transmission, respondents were asked about their usage of condoms. Nearly three-fourths (72.9%) of those interviewed, or 35 persons, indicated that they had previously used a condom. However, accounting for the fact that 3 masseurs reported to have not yet had sexual relations, slightly over three-fourths of those reporting to have had sexual relations (77.8%) stated that they have used a condom. Of this same group, 63.9% stated that they have used a condom in the past week, and 54.5% had a condom with them at the time of the interview.

---

[57]Gesa Kupfer, *Assessment of the HIV/Reproductive Health Programme "Health for Future Work"—Cambodia* (UNICEF/WDA/H&M, October 2008–January 2009), 17, http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/Cambodia_2009-005_-_Final_Assessment_Health_for_Future_Work_Cambodia.pdf (accessed October 15, 2013).

While those who report to use protection are in a majority, nevertheless, nearly one-fourth of respondents stated that they have never used a condom. A number of this group also reported having experienced coercive sex, and one of this group reported having rashes, ulcerations, or lumps in his anal/genital area within the past six months.

Substance Abuse

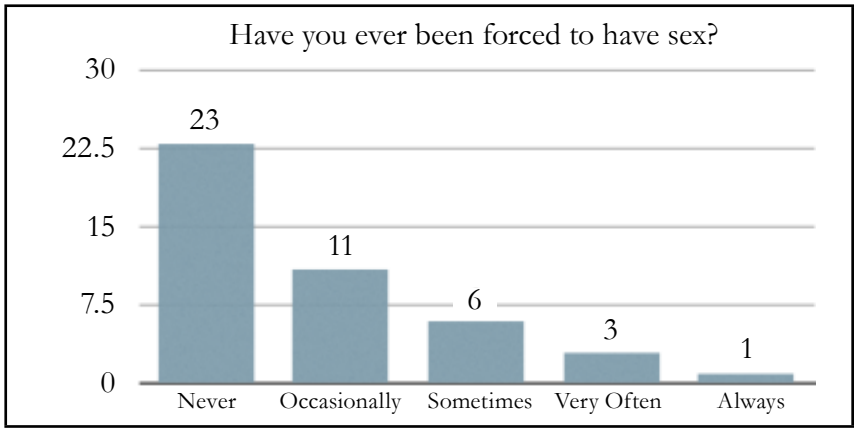
Masseurs were also asked about their use of addictive drugs and alcohol. Only one respondent gave verbal indication of using any addictive drugs. The only illegal drug that was acknowledged to be used was "ice" or crystal methamphetamines. It is probable that a number of respondents were not comfortable with sharing details of drug usage, particularly without having stronger rapport built between the respondent and interviewer. For example, in one interview, a respondent arrived with glossy, red eyes and other notable indicators of drug usage; however, when questioned about drug usage, the respondent denied any previous experience with addictive substances apart from alcohol.

In addition, no masseurs indicated using Viagra or "poppers" while having sex with clients. Some, however, admitted to using alcohol during sex with their clients. Among respondents from male to male establishments, two respondents said that they "sometimes" used alcohol during sex with clients and one said that he "occasionally" did. Among those from mixed gender massage establishments, one "occasionally" mixed alcohol and sex with clients and one did this "sometimes."

Experiences of Violence

Respondents were asked a series of questions regarding experiences of violence from police, bullies in the community, and their clients. Of these three groups, experiences of violence from clients were the greatest in number. Only one respondent indicated that, within the past three months, he had "sometimes" experienced violence from police. Additionally, two respondents indicated that they had experienced violence from bullies in their communities within the past three months; one indicated that this had happened "sometimes" and the

other indicated that this had happened "very often" within the past three months. Only one respondent stated that he had "occasionally" experienced violence from clients within the past three months. However, with regards to sexual violence from clients overall, the frequencies were much greater.



Respondents were asked about previous experiences of sexual violence from clients. Nearly half (43.7%) of the respondents reported the number of times they were forced to have sex with clients. Six respondents indicated that this happened "sometimes" (between 1–5 times); 11 respondents indicated that this happened "occasionally" (between 5–10 times); three indicated that this happened "very often," and one reported that when sex happened with clients, it had always been against his wishes.

Ten of the 21 masseurs who reported having sex against their wishes stated that they attempted to refuse their clients' sexual advances. A number of masseurs cited clients "having strong sexual urges" and becoming angry when the masseurs did not cooperate with the clients' sexual advances. One masseur recounted having a client pull his hair in order to force the masseur to provide sexual services; another cited being stripped of his clothes and having fellatio performed on him against his wishes. A number of respondents cited instances in which they were only forced to masturbate clients or provide oral sex, while others indicated full-on sex against their wishes. One masseur reported that some clients ask him for sex while others simply force him to

have sex. Others indicated bribes or other offers given to masseurs for their compliance. One respondent recounted a job offer, made by two foreign clients demanding sex, to work in a foreign country in what resembled an attempt at human trafficking.

While nearly half of the respondents reported being forced to have sex, when asked if they were aware of other young men in the massage industry who were being forced to have sex against their wishes, only one-fourth of respondents, or 11 people, indicated that they were aware of this. This may be due to the fact that these young men are working in a closed working environment, where sexual acts may happen and masseurs may even be paid for sexual acts performed; however, all of these services fall under "massage" and further services may not be openly acknowledged as such. These figures are strongly contrasted with a similar survey conducted in Mumbai, India with street-based masseurs (as opposed to the parlor-based masseurs in this study). In the Indian study, nearly 100 percent of the masseurs interviewed had faced violence from the police, 47 percent from gangs, and 42 percent from clients. Violence from members of their communities was almost unanimous.[58]

Faith and Dignity

Respondents were asked if they had a faith or system of beliefs. Nearly all respondents (96%) reported to be Buddhist and one stated that he was a believer of both Christianity and Mormonism. Two respondents initially reported to be Buddhists, but then added that they were followers or at least partial-believers in the doctrines of Christianity as well.

Nearly two-thirds of respondents, or 29 people, stated that they pray or worship every day. When asked how they feel after visiting their places of worship, nearly half of the respondents stated that they feel "happy." Slightly over one-fourth of respondents stated that visiting their places of worship made them feel "refreshed"; others mentioned

[58]Miles & Thakur, *Baseline Survey with Masseur Boys in Mumbai.*

feeling "relaxed" and eight stated that they just felt "normal." Some additional comments seem to give some insight into the understanding or function of faith in the lives of some of the respondents. One masseur added that visiting his place of worship makes him feel that he is "looked after." Others indicated a desire for future blessings. One respondent stated that he hopes to earn good merits, and another said that he would be willing to offer sacrifices if God would be able to help him.

Interviewers asked the masseurs what the word "respect" meant to them. There were no answer choices given and respondents could respond however they wished. This question often took a bit more time to process than the other questions in the survey. Several respondents did not provide a response and four responded that they did not know. Among those who did respond, a few themes became apparent. Nearly 60% of those responding described respect in terms of words and actions that others might show to them. A very common response was that being respected means that they are valued or shown value. Others cited facial expressions and being polite in speech. Over 10% of those responding cited being listened to and being understood as ways of being shown respect. A number of respondents cited love and acceptance and a few singled out non-discrimination and being provided with opportunities and assistance to better themselves.

Lastly, respondents were asked what they could do to increase their sense of value or self-confidence. Once again, there were no answer choices given and respondents were free to respond however they wished. Over one-third of responses to this question were along the lines of getting a better or more respectable job, getting an education, or learning specific skills. More than one-fifth of responses had to do with being a good person, being nice, or generally doing good in life. Nine respondents, or slightly less than one-fifth, mentioned needing to have respect for themselves and/or others to increase their sense of value as a person. Some respondents indirectly cited the need to develop a sense of self-respect by communicating their insecurities. One stated that he wants to show people that he is a "real man" and not *katuey* (ladyboy) and that this would help him to increase his sense

of self-confidence, while another cited wanting to avoid having a girly attitude and behavior. Further qualitative research on the self-identity and self-respect of people in this industry may be needed to further understand issues of shame or discrimination that may be compounded within somewhat enigmatic self-evaluations such as these.

Present Skills, Future Plans

The masseurs were asked a series of questions regarding their present skill sets, future goals, and plans for reaching those goals. These questions were asked primarily in order to help NGOs develop more focused initiatives for young men in these contexts to find alternative and sustainable employment. Respondents were asked if they presently had a second job or another source of income. 14 respondents described a variety of jobs that they undertook to supplement their income. Jobs were quite diverse. Three respondents described supplementary incomes having to do with their work as masseurs. One stated that he sleeps with customers as a way of supplementing his income; another is "on call" providing massage services for hotels, and the third stated that he teaches others how to do massage. Some other responses included two respondents working as motor taxi drivers, cleaning houses, and making small animals out of clay (presumably to be sold). When asked about the time spent working these secondary jobs in the previous week, only seven of the initial 14 indicated that they had worked at all.

Respondents were then asked what skills they would like to learn if they were given the opportunity. The respondents were given no choices and were free to answer with any skills that they wished. Their answers were diverse and many respondents gave multiple answers. Most commonly, respondents wished to be able to learn another language. Of the 12 people who responded in this way, nine stated that they wanted to learn English. Additionally, two people wanted to learn Chinese, two wanted to learn Thai, one wished to learn Korean, and one wished to learn Japanese. Using a computer was the second most common skill that respondents desired to learn, followed by mechanical and business skills, with each having eight responses.

Following this were electronics (seven people), hairstyling/cosmetics (six people), design (five people), and cooking (three people). Lastly, farming was a desired skill that had two responses.

More than one-fourth of respondents indicated that they see themselves in some type of business within two years' time, either as an owner or manager. Three respondents or six people saw themselves as a hairstylist or makeup artist. Other responses included NGO work, farming, tour guiding, and repair/mechanical work. Two people indicated that they saw themselves leaving Cambodia within the next two years. Lastly, 10% of respondents indicated that they do not really know what the future holds. One stated that he has never really thought about the future. Another stated that he does not want to make wishes about what is to come because these are only dreams.

Discussion

Divergent Markets: Male to Male Massage vs. Mixed Gender Massage

There is a clear distinction between male to male and mixed gender massage establishments in this study. Each category seems to cater to its own particular market and similarly seems to recruit a slightly different demographic of young men to work as masseurs. Respondents from each setting were found to have their own unique sets of vulnerabilities which should be considered.

Within male to male massage establishments, sexual services are implied and masseurs are often overtly sexualized. In some establishments, masseurs stand shirtless behind a glass showcase, identifiable by number, as clients browse for the masseur of their choice. Entrances to these establishments are often discreet or covered to allow clients to enter and exit without being easily noticed. Phallic symbols are often ubiquitous within these establishments, found in the artwork on the walls and as trinkets decorating shelves and tables within the business. A primary symbol that is common to these establishments is the

lingha, which has been interpreted as a religious symbol of male creative energy or a phallus. This symbol carries particular relevance for the Siem Reap area, and has been commonly found among the historic ruins of the nearby Angkor Wat temples which lie only three kilometers north of the modern city of Siem Reap. Male to male massage establishments are usually well-connected, commonly known within LGBT circles, and advertised within local LGBT bars and restaurants.

Mixed gender massage establishments do not overtly sexualize their masseurs, or directly imply sexual services. These businesses typically advertise by having their masseurs stand outside the establishment and call to potential clients passing by on the street, often handing out fliers that detail the services that they can provide. Inside the establishment, simple massage services, such as foot and hand massage, are often provided in an open area in the front part of the business. Other types of service, such as full-body, back, and oil massages, are provided in the back or upstairs portion of the building, often in private or semi-private, air-conditioned quarters. While masseurs from mixed gender establishments reported providing sexual services to clients, as well as having penetrative sex with clients, these services seem to be less frequent and do not seem to be acknowledged or even implied within the establishments.

While there are particular vulnerabilities and concerns that can be raised with each type of massage establishment, there are several factors that seem to indicate greater distress and vulnerability among male masseurs working in mixed gender massage establishments.

Upon analysis of the research data, respondents from mixed gender massage establishments reported significantly lower occurrences of sexual intercourse with clients; however, they were far more likely to have been forced to have sex against their wishes. While 12 masseurs (54% of male to male masseurs) from male to male establishments reported having sex with at least one client within the past week, only one masseur from a mixed massage establishment reported the same within the past week. On the other hand, 15 masseurs from mixed gender establishments (62% of the mixed gender category) reported

times in which they were forced (or coerced) to have sex against their wishes, while only 6 masseurs from male to male establishments (28% of male to male masseurs) reported the same.

Similarly, those who reported that massage work has a great effect on their intimate, personal relationships all came from mixed gender massage establishments. Some indicated physical violence, such as the pulling of hair, and many indicated bribes or other compensation in exchange for sexual services. A predominant number of masseurs in mixed gender massage establishments who reported to have been forced to have sex against their wishes also reported that they had tried to reject the clients' sexual advances. This resistance does not seem as prevalent among masseurs from male to male massage establishments. Presumably, since sexual services are implied, sex with clients is not unexpected or uncommon.

The masseurs coming from mixed gender establishments tended to be slightly younger than those coming from male to male establishments. Five masseurs, or 11%, of those coming from mixed gender massage establishments were in the 18–20 year old range, whereas only 2%, or one masseur, from a male to male establishment was in this range.

Masseurs from male to male massage establishments reported somewhat higher levels of education. A predominant number of masseurs coming from mixed gender massage establishments (26%) had 7th to 10th grade educations and only 11% had completed a secondary education; however, 20% of those working in male to male establishments had completed their secondary education.

Masseurs from mixed gender massage establishments indicated greater economic hardships and came from families who had greater debt. A predominant number of those coming from mixed gender massage establishments were in the $151 to $300 earnings bracket (for three months), whereas a predominant number of those coming from male to male massage establishments were in the $451 to $600 earnings bracket (for three months). Once again, it should be mentioned that this is potentially due to the fact that financial success in the massage

industry is often contingent upon services provided and tips received. Those masseurs working in male to male massage establishments are statistically more likely to be providing sexual services and thus more likely to receive a greater compensation for the services that they are providing.

The communities of those coming from mixed gender massage establishments were more aware of the respondent's career than the communities of those coming from male to male massage establishments. This could possibly indicate less fear of discrimination among mixed gender masseurs; one reason for this could be that these masseurs are not as strongly associated with male to male sex. Additionally, fewer masseurs from mixed gender establishments self-identified as homosexual; thus, they could be less prone to discrimination from family and community members.

A number of respondents from mixed gender establishments indicated that they provide sexual services, and also meet their clients for sexual intercourse; however, sexual services are not acknowledged or openly implied. Based upon discussion and qualitative data taken from interviews, it seems that most sexual services are quietly negotiated between the client and masseur. Some masseurs indicated that they are often unsure of their client's intentions. A number of masseurs gave reports of clients becoming angry when the masseurs decline to have sex.

Throughout this process, management seems to turn a blind eye. While masseurs from mixed gender establishments have indicated that sex is not allowed while they are at work, some indicated that if customers request, they can schedule to meet them later at their hotels or guesthouses for sex. This raises another concern in that once sexual services are taken outside of the establishment, there are little or no protections for the masseur. Additionally, it may be relevant to ask: Could establishments such as these serve as meeting points for male sex work similar to the way KTV bars serve as meeting points for female sex work?

Shame/Discrimination

While the young men working in mixed gender massage establishments appear to be the more vulnerable group, both in a demographic sense and with regard to experiences of sexual violence, this should not minimize the vulnerabilities of those within male to male massage establishments. 50% of the masseurs in male to male massage establishments self-identified as homosexual and 18% self-identified as bi-sexual.[59] A number of respondents indicated discrimination or an active fear of discrimination from their families and communities. One reason for this could be that male to male massage establishments have a much stronger association with male to male sex. Thus, masseurs in these establishments may deal not only with the social stigma of being a male masseur, but also with discrimination due to their sexual orientation or society's perception of their sexual orientation. Respondents in these establishments were less likely to disclose their work to their families and communities, which seems to verify a stronger sense of shame and/or discrimination. In a 2004 UNESCO report on the shame and discrimination of Cambodian men who have sex with men (MSM), respondents in the study indicated threats from community members, beatings within the family, and inability to find employment if they are known to be MSM.[60] Further qualitative research would be useful to understand better the social dynamics of stigma and discrimination among male to male sex workers within Cambodian society.

Lack of Skills, Lack of Job Alternatives

Many may argue that these young men (particularly those within male to male establishments) are not victims of exploitation, that they have chosen to offer sexual services to their clients out of their

[59]"Homosexual" and "bisexual" are Western categorizations for sexual orientation and are used here as operating terms for ease of reading. The terms by which respondents self-identified were "man who likes to have sex with other men" and "man who likes to have sex with both men and women."

[60]Sovannara & Ward, *Men Who Have Sex with Men in Cambodia*, 17.

own accord. However, research data seem to indicate that many careers in this industry are "structurally exploitative." Masseurs may not necessarily be forced to have sex with clients directly (although more than one-fourth reported that this *has* happened); however, the surrounding conditions of their finances, education, family debt/need, and job availability may force them to do things that they would not have otherwise chosen to do.

Upon analysis of the data, a number of notable patterns seem to emerge. Of those who had immigrated to the Siem Reap area, 78.4% stated immigrating to Siem Reap in search of a job. While the education level of respondents was slightly higher than the national average, 68% had not completed an 11th grade education and nearly half indicated that they had entered the massage industry due to a lack of education and/or skills. This seems to suggest the need for more non-exploitative vocational alternatives for such unskilled/low education job seekers, as well as a wider range of skills training or post-secondary options for this same demographic of people.

It is significant that nearly one-third of respondents cited that they entered the massage industry because it offered them the opportunity to earn money quickly—a number cited tips as a major drawing factor of the industry. Although tips are not consistently given, several respondents seemed to indicate that tips are expected in exchange for "special services" or for sexual favors. Upon review of income vs. sexual activity with clients, the two highest earners had also met the most number of clients for sex within the past week.

Recommendations

The authors believe this present baseline data to be a useful, but ultimately insufficient, tool describing merely the "the tip of an iceberg" with regard to the male sex industry in Cambodia. Much more research in this area is needed to understand better the scope and breadth of male sexual exploitation in Southeast Asia. Further qualitative research would be useful to understand better the individual narratives and developments of men in this industry. Very little is known about the

childhoods and formative experiences of these young men. Research has found that many young men in the sex industry have had histories of childhood sexual abuse.[61] Within Cambodia, Miles and Sun[62] noted that 18.9% of Cambodian boys between the ages of 12 and 15 reported being touched on the genitals after the age of nine. More research on childhood sexual exploitation of males within the sex industry would be useful to understand better the prevalence and implications of this kind of abuse, as well as its impact on development and its connections with the male sex industry.

Male massage is believed to be only one small piece of a much larger puzzle with regard to the male sex industry. Further and more in-depth research would be useful to understand better what additional markets for male sex work exist within Cambodia. Anecdotal discussion with various Cambodian MSMs suggests male sex work to be a thriving industry throughout Cambodia. Most of this work seems to be decentralized and often independent, largely taking place within and around bars, public parks, shopping centers, and other various locales. Online forums and MSM Internet sites indicate a number of public "meeting places" in Phnom Penh and Siem Reap for men looking to discreetly meet other men for sex. These locations could also serve as ideal markets for prostituted males, and a number of them correspond to the male sex work locations indicated in discussions with Cambodian MSMs. Ethnographic research into additional markets such as these would be greatly useful.

Perhaps a significant omission of the present study was an analysis of the clientele seeking sexual services. It is understood that Siem Reap is heavily patronized each year by international tourists. Qualitative data from a number of respondents seem to indicate that masseurs met with a diverse range of clientele, both local and foreign. It would be helpful to understand better the demographics and backgrounds of those seeking sexual services. This would be helpful in order to

[61]McIntyre, *Under the Radar.*

[62]Miles & Sun, *"Stop Violence against Us!"*

determine what demographic groups and other various factors might be driving the demand for this industry.

A content analysis of the respondents' qualitative feedback reveals a number of patterns which may provide insight into the self-identities developed by those working within this industry. A number of respondents indicated feelings of marginalization and desires to hide their work and their identities. These statements raise a number of questions about self-identity among men working within the sex industry. It may be significant for future research to ask how these young men understand themselves, and how this understanding informs how they develop as people. In addition, it should be asked to what extent sexuality and its surrounding social stigmas inform the development of self-identity among male sex workers in Cambodian society.

Beyond additional research, data from this study indicate a number of present needs for young men working in this industry. Many masseurs indicated that they wish to leave the massage industry; however, they are unable to do so due to a lack of skills and/or education. Free or low-cost vocational and life skills training programs provided by NGOs or local churches would be greatly beneficial for young men working in this industry. Respondents indicated that they had a diverse range of vocational interests. While it would be ideal for NGOs to provide specific training for an alternative career, it is also important to allow these young men a level of choice in their own future work. Among the desired skills most highly cited by masseurs, language and computer skills rank the highest. These skills are significant in that they are often foundational to success in a broad range of careers. Having basic training provided in these areas could serve as a significant stepping-stone or formative base from which masseurs could seek alternative employment in a number of various fields.

This research seeks to provide a basis for understanding the vulnerability of young males who are sexually exploited in the massage industry in order to make them visible and start addressing their needs. While girls have long been viewed as victims, boys are victimized as well. In the current donor climate, it is more difficult to get funding for boys' projects. Are Christian organizations afraid of being seen

as pro-gay while secular organizations are afraid of being seen as anti-gay such that the sexual exploitation of boys falls through the gap? Not enough research has been done to determine the extent of sexual exploitation of young men and boys, which may be occurring with much greater frequency than we currently assume. For example, in Cambodia, there are hundreds of research studies on women and girls compared to a handful mentioning men or boys, and even when studies talk of sexual exploitation of *children* this really means girls.

Christian organizations need to be at the forefront of providing holistic care for boys and young men. They are human beings with hopes and desires and vulnerabilities and needs that require better understanding in order to serve them. The best way to start doing this is to conduct thorough, careful research.

References

Boyatzis, Richard E. *Transforming Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis & Code Development*. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd., 1998.

Dennis, Jeffery P. "Women are Victims, Men Make Choices: The Invisibility of Men and Boys in the Global Sex Trade." *Gender Issues* 25 (2008): 11–25.

Dube, S. R., R. F. Anda, C. L. Whitfield, D. W. Brown, V. J. Felitti, M. Dong, & W. H. Giles. "Long-term Consequences of Childhood Sexual Abuse by Gender of Victim." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 28:5 (2005): 430–438.

Dworkin, Andrea. "Prostitution and Male Supremacy." *Prostitution: From Academia to Activism*. Symposium. University of Michigan Law School: Michigan Journal of Gender and Law, October 31, 1992.

Ennew, J., T. Abebe, R. Bangyai, P. Karapituck, A. T. Kjørholt, T. Noonsup, R. Waterson. *The Right to be Properly Researched: How to do Rights-Based, Scientific Research with Children*. Bangkok: Black on White Publications, 2009.

Farley, Melissa, Wendy Freed, Kien Serey Phal, & Jaqueline Golding. *A Thorn in the Heart: Cambodian Men Who Buy Sex*. San Francisco, CA: Prostitution Research & Education, 2012. http://www.prostitutionresearch.com/Cambodia%20Project%20Final.pdf (accessed October 14, 2013).

Frederick, J. *Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Boys in South Asia—A Review of Research Findings, Legislation, Policy and Programme Responses*. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, 2010. Pp. 6, 15.

Graham, Ruth. "Male Rape and the Careful Construction of the Male Victim." *Social and Legal Studies* 15:2 (2006): 187–208.

Hilton, A., S. Kong, S. Nong, S. Oung, C. Sok, S. Seoung, P. Teng, V. Long, & D. Meng. *I Thought It Could Never Happen to Boys*. Phnom Penh: Hagar & World Vision, 2008.

Holmes, W. C. & G. B. Slap. "Sexual Abuse of Boys: Definition, Prevalence, Correlates, Sequelae, and Management." *Journal of the American Medical Association* 280:21 (1998): 1855–1862.

Jones, Samuel Vincent. "The Invisible Man: The Conscious Neglect of Men and Boys in the War on Human Trafficking." *Utah Law Review* 4 (2010): 1144–1145.

Kendall, C. N. & R. E. Funk. "Gay Male Pornography's 'Actors': When Fantasy Isn't." In *Prostitution, Trafficking, and Traumatic Stress*, ed. M. Farley, 95. Binghampton: The Haworth Maltreatment & Trauma Press, 2003.

Kupfer, Gesa. *Assessment of the HIV/Reproductive Health Programme "Health for Future Work"—Cambodia*. UNICEF/WDA/H&M, October 2008–January 2009. P. 17, http://www.unicef.org/evaldatabase/files/Cambodia_2009-005_-_Final_Assessment_Health_for_Future_Work_Cambodia.pdf (accessed October 15, 2013).

Lisak, D. "The Psychological Impact of Sexual Abuse: Content Analysis of Interviews with Male Survivors." *Journal of Traumatic Stress* 7:4 (1994): 525–548.

McIntyre, S. *Under the Radar: The Sexual Exploitation of Young Men*—Western Canadian Edition. Calgary, Alberta, Canada: The Hindsight Group, 2009. http://www.hindsightgroup.com/Resources/Documents/UnderTheRadar%20Low%20Res.pdf (accessed October 14, 2013).

Miles, G. & H. Blanch. *An Initial Exploration of Young Men Who Work in the Male-to-Male Massage Industry in Phnom Penh, Cambodia*. Unpublished. Phnom Penh, Cambodia: Love146.

———. *What about Boys?: An Initial Exploration of Sexually Exploited Boys in Cambodia*. 2011. http://love146.org/wp-content/uploads/drupal_migrated/What%20About%20Boys_Miles%26Blanch.pdf (accessed October 14, 2013).

Miles, G. M. & J. Thakur. *Baseline Survey with Masseur Boys in Mumbai*. Unpublished report. Mumbai, India: Love 146 & Samabhavana Society, 2011.

Miles, G. M. & V. Sun. *"Stop Violence against Us!": Cambodian Children's Perceptions of Violence*. Phnom Penh: Tearfund, Child Welfare Group, 2005.

———. *"Stop Violence against Us!" Cambodian Children's Perceptions of Violence*. Part 2. Phnom Penh: Tearfund, Child Welfare Group, 2006.

Nichols, P. *Social Survey Methods: A Field Guide for Development Workers*. Oxford: Oxfam Publications, 1991.

Overton, J. & P. van Diermen. "Using Quantitative Techniques." In *Development Fieldwork: A Practical Guide*, eds. R. Scheyvens & D. Storey, 37–56. London: SAGE Publications, Ltd., 2003.

Renault, R. *Survey on Street-based Child Sexual Exploitation in Cambodia: Overview of 7 Provinces*. Phnom Penh: Action Pour Les Enfants, 2006.

Sovannara, Kha & Chris Ward. *Men Who Have Sex with Men in Cambodia: HIV/AIDS Vulnerability, Stigma, and Discrimination*. Phnom Penh:

Policy Project, January 2004. http://www.policyproject.com/pubs/countryreports/CAM_MSM.pdf (accessed October 15, 2013).

Steinfatt, Thomas M. *Measuring the Extent of Sex Trafficking in Cambodia—2008*. Bangkok: UNIAP, 2008.

Tan, Phong. *HIV/AIDS Prevention Programme: Ethnography of Male to Male Sexuality in Cambodia*. Phnom Penh: UNESCO, 2008. Pp. 24–26, http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0016/001630/163077e.pdf (accessed October 14, 2013).

Tarr, Chou Meng. *Study of Contextual Factors Affecting Risk-Related Sexual Behaviour Among Young People in Cambodia*. Phnom Phenh: UNAIDS, 1996.

UNICEF. *Cambodia statistics*. August 2012. http://www.unicef.org/infobycountry/cambodia_statistics.html (accessed October 14, 2013).

Valente, S. M. "Sexual Abuse of Boys." *Journal of Child and Adolescent Psychiatric Nursing* 18:1 (2005): 10–16.

Landas 27:1 (2013) 73–101

DEVELOPMENTAL MINISTRY AMONG WOMEN IN PROSTITUTION

Jonathan Nambu

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to outline and articulate a philosophy of development that is rooted in, and derived from, the work of Samaritana Transformation Ministries, an evangelical ministry among female prostitutes in the Philippines. Its ideas and principles come from the struggles, joys, and lessons learned in that ministry. At the same time, this philosophy guides Samaritana's ministry, for every action needs a framework, a philosophical underpinning, a motivating and driving force behind it, giving it energy, direction, and shape. This philosophy of development is dialectical. It is an attempt at a synthesis within the action-reflection-action dynamic, a conversation between contemplation and action.[1] I hope to integrate here lessons learned from a ministry imbedded in transformational development work among marginalized women in the Philippines, and a philosophical framework for doing this ministry that has Biblical,

[1]Parker Palmer, in his *The Active Life* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1991), writes about what he calls "contemplation-and-action," a grammatical way of reminding us that action and contemplation actually belong together and cannot be separated. Thus, we may have "contemplative action" and "active contemplation" (15–34).

theological, psychological, and cultural integrity. I also hope that this framework is dynamic, moving back and forth between action and reflection, with both sides of the dialectic informing one another, questioning one another, and enriching one another. As Parker Palmer would say, action and contemplation, or doing and being, cannot really be separated, but are a part of the same whole.

What follows is a series of themes or principles that I think are crucial to the process of "transformational development." Presented here at random are samplings of what I believe are the key elements of a ministry among wounded souls.

Development as Human

Development work has become a commercialized industry. There are seminars for professional workers who engage in inputs using log frames, hoping for good results which they can report to development funders. Library shelves and bookshops have a growing number of titles to sharpen the skills of development workers. Capacity building and organizational development interventions, along with costly consultations, all aim to produce sustainable development. Glossy brochures and reports are distributed to attract donors and volunteer workers.

This is not to say that development workers and development organizations do not have the responsibility to learn and employ the most effective and efficient strategies, make the best use of our resources as stewards, and do the hard work of research, communication, feasibility studies, project planning, monitoring, financial accounting, reporting, and evaluating.[2] Sadly, however, much of this activity, energy, and resource allocation sometimes miss the aim of development. The object of development is, or ought to be, the advancement of humans.

---

[2]See John R. Cheyne's *Incarnational Agents: A Guide to Developmental Ministry* (Birmingham: New Hope, 1996) for a good working toolkit of principles and tools involved in development projects, clearly and simply presented for practitioners.

We spin our wheels and create a lot of smoke, but at the end of the day, we fail to develop women, men, and children. Veteran activist Jim Wallis rightly says, "Always remember that when you're dealing with projects and campaigns, you're dealing with people."[3]

This may seem self-evident, but a short look at the history of development as an academic focus, or as a profession,[4] tells us that development in reality has often become other than human-focused. An honest look at current development work suggests the same. People are too often missed and invisible in the development process.

Humanizing development work begins with an affirmation—or reaffirmation—of the inherent beauty, worth, and dignity of each human being. For Christians, the keystone of this is Genesis 1:26–27, where we find that God created women and men as bearers of his image: *Imago Dei*. This means that all persons carry within them the likeness of God, the attributes of God, however marred, hidden, or wounded they may be. Every human being is therefore sacred, and has a sacred story.[5] Jesus' ministry is human-centered. He valued very

---

[3]Jim Wallis, *Faith Works: Lessons from the Life of an Activist Preacher* (New York: Random House, 2000), 262.

[4]See, for example, the article "The Roots and Context of Social Mobilization in the Philippines" by Oscar P. Ferrer, Emmanuel M. Luna, & Angelito G. Manalili, in Ofelia Valdecanas, Ramon Tuazon, & Delia Barcelona, eds., *How Social Mobilization Works: The Philippine Experience* (Manila: UP College of Mass Communication and UNICEF, 1996), 34.

[5]Margaret Guenther writes about a chaplain in charge of training theology students at a home for the elderly. He told his students,

> Visit with the residents, talk to them, and listen to their stories. And when they ask me what to do about those who are unable to speak, unable to hear, perhaps even unconscious, I tell them the same thing: sit with them and listen to their stories. Each of those very old people, no matter how fragile their hold on life might be and no matter how useless they might be in the eyes of society, is a rare parchment. A rare parchment waiting to be read. (Margaret Guenther, *Toward Holy Ground: Spiritual Directions for the Second Half of Life* [Boston: Cowley Publications, 1995], 127)

deeply every woman, man, and child. This is evident in his interactions with all. He stopped and took time with individuals, asked questions and listened, shared with people in the thresholds of their lives (e.g., in weddings and funerals), offered touch, welcomed children, honored women. Jesus gave special honor and attention to those whom society disdained and marginalized.

When my wife Thelma and I began visiting women in bars, we frequented one small karaoke bar, sat at a table, ordered drinks, and asked the waiter to send a girl to our table. We tried to get "Sandy"[6] to sit beside Thelma so that the two of them could hear each other over the booming of the sound system. After a round of drinks, we were on our way. The next week we went back to the same bar and asked for Sandy again. She came out, surprised but with a beaming smile. Many women were pleasantly surprised that we remembered their names, birthdays, and other information they shared with Thelma. In a place where they entertained men who really did not care what their names were, or who they were, honoring their names was a way of affirming their dignity and humanity.

For our perspectives and our strategies to be fully human, we need to have a Biblical anthropology, a way of understanding humans and the human condition that comes from God's story. We also need to pay attention to what other disciplines, such as psychology and sociology, tell us about humanity. We need to have a clear understanding of what it is that makes a woman a woman and a man a man. What are the deepest longings and yearnings, fears and pains common to all people? What are the things that we hold in common as humans?[7] In order for our ministries to be human, we must have a rich understanding and acceptance of our own humanity and all that that entails. This means that all of us in the development process, the community and the

[6]All of the women referred to in this article are real women we have befriended in Samaritana's ministry, but their names have been changed in order to protect their anonymity.

[7]I recommend Jean Vanier's *Becoming Human* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press Ltd., 1998) as a wonderful collection of five talks he delivered on what it means to be human, and how to reclaim our humanity in a broken world.

development workers, should be on an honest journey of deepening self-awareness and self-understanding, of psycho-spiritual growth.[8] The unexamined life is not worth living, and we cannot help bring others to places of the heart and of humanity where we ourselves have not gone.

Development Prioritizes the Most Vulnerable

Development takes place in a world where there is extreme inequity and harsh disparity. There are persons who are more capable than others in defending themselves, pursuing their dreams, living responsibly, and growing in maturity. Others, for various reasons, are weaker and more vulnerable. Development should always aim at touching the lives of the poorest of the poor, the people most at risk. We take our cue here from Jesus, who outlined his mission at the inauguration of his public ministry:

> The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. (Luke 4:18–19)

These persons may not be the most receptive, responsive, or capable. Development work, however, should be biased in favor of these persons—not primarily because of the agenda of funding agencies, or of an ideology, or because it makes us feel better ourselves, but because this reflects the heart of God.

---

[8]David Benner, in his very helpful *Care of Souls: Revisioning Christian Nurture and Counsel* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), is presenting a contemporary evangelical attempt at soul care that integrates psychology and spirituality. Personally, I have also found the *enneagram*, which has a fairly integrative framework taking into consideration spiritual and psychological dimensions, a very useful tool for self-understanding. Of the many resources now available about the enneagram, I recommend *The Wisdom of the Enneagram: The Complete Guide to Psychological and Spiritual Growth for the Nine Personality Types* by Don Richard Riso & Ross Hudson (New York: Bantam, 1999) and *Discovering Your Personality Type* by Don Richard Riso (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1995).

Liberation theologians from Latin America have given us a phrase that expresses this prioritization: *the preferential option for the poor*. This option does not come from a naïve notion of the poor. We do not romanticize poverty, as if the poor are less problematic, less prone to foolishness, less self-centered than the rich and powerful. Croatian theologian Miroslav Volf, quoting Ciroan, notes that "the great persecutors are often recruited among the martyrs not quite beheaded." Poor victims who are empowered and liberated but not transformed can become as oppressively evil as their former tormentors.[9] Romanticizing poverty and the poor only serves to add another layer of suffering on the poor. Portraying the poor as somehow noble and virtuous, or desirable, may serve the fantasies of the middle class and wealthy who have chosen voluntary evangelical poverty or downward mobility, but these fairy tales will not serve or empower the poor.[10] This preference is not exclusive, but it should remind us whom to prioritize when we make decisions regarding whom to be in solidarity with.[11]

This preferential option for the poor is a reflection of what we understand the heart of God to be. God has a special love for the voiceless and the powerless. He is in solidarity with the destitute and the oppressed because they have no one on their side. They are in need of an advocate and a protector. As God's people, we make the same choice as the God we follow. Our development initiatives should focus first on the poor, the weak, the vulnerable, and those who have no voice. "Union with the poor and the oppressed requires a commitment to combat poverty as an evil that degrades the lives of many people. Material poverty is not a Christian ideal, but is rather a subhuman condition caused by our sinfulness and the selfish exploitation of the weak."[12]

---

[9]Miroslav Volf, *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996), 104.

[10]Wallis, in Andreas Ebert & Patricia C. Brockman, eds., *Richard Rohr: Illuminations of His Life and Work* (New York: Crossroad, 1993), 188.

[11]Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, rev. ed. (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991), xxv–vvvi.

[12]Wilkie Au, *By Way of the Heart: Toward a Holistic Christian Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 171.

Prioritizing the poorest, the weakest, and the most vulnerable means making concrete decisions with regard to how we spend our time, how we allocate our budgets, and how we structure our programs. Development programs can easily begin to channel more and more of their resources into the more responsive beneficiaries, the less problematic individuals, the more quantifiably measurable activities, and the equipment and infrastructure to maintain and build the organization. It is worth making an honest and ongoing critical self-evaluation as to whether these decisions are made at the expense of the poorest, the weakest, and the most vulnerable whom we state on our brochures and funding proposals as our priority.

Development as Transformation

Development, as I understand it, is not *simply* about uplift, although improvement in skills, insight, understanding, social standing, opportunities, or income level may be a part of the whole process. True development, however, is best characterized by deep, lasting transformation of all the persons involved. That includes the oppressed as well as the oppressor, the poor and the rich, the target beneficiaries and the development workers. The transformation should also include the systems and structures that are in need of change, which may require advocacy, legislative action, and wider social change. Indeed, Gutierrez says that the "goal is not only better living conditions, a radical change of structures, a social revolution; it is much more: the continuous creation, never ending, of a new way to be human, a *permanent cultural revolution*."[13]

Bryant Myers uses the term "transformational development" instead of simply "development" in order to be free of the baggage and negative sense associated with the latter. He is also making the qualification in order to highlight that development, as he understands it, seeks "positive change in the whole of human life materially, socially, and spiritually." Moreover, development is transformational because it requires hard work, commitment, and struggle against the Evil

[13]Gutierrez, *A Theology of Liberation*, 21.

One and all of the evil forces that seek to stop human progress and development. True development involves decisions—making new choices and choosing life where once we chose death.[14]

With this in mind, we may define transformational development as the restoration of our relationship with God through Jesus Christ, with ourselves and our communities, with all who are "other" to us, and with the earth and all of creation.[15] It would be difficult to find a single verse or passage from the Bible to try and express this. It is more important to bathe ourselves in the whole Biblical narrative and have a grasp of the movement of God in history—past, present, and future—than to formulate a neatly packaged proof-text. But Jesus' statement, "I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full" (John 10:10), perhaps, communicates something of the holistic nature of Jesus' mission, a redemptive image of God's vision for us and all of God's creation.

Samaritana's vision statement is an attempt to articulate a transformative vision.

> Our vision includes the women we minister with, the Church, and society at large being impacted deeply from the inside, but having concrete, visible, specific indicators of change and transformation on the outside. This by necessity includes our own ongoing conversion and transformation, too, as individuals and as an organization. Our vision for transformation touches all the areas of life, for that is what radical transformation is like.

Development as Incarnational

The primary movement of the Gospel is downward, following the example of Jesus who,

> being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very

[14]Bryant Myers, *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2000), 3.

[15]Myers, *Walking with the Poor*, 50.

> nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross! (Philippians 2:6–8)

Jesus is in fact our Immanuel, *God with us*. The good news of the Gospel is that we know the extent of God's love for us in the Incarnation. God did not send an email or a text message to show us his love; God came and pitched his tent among us. Incarnation is vital for development and transformation to happen. We must be *with* people before we can be *for* them. Being for people comes out of our strength; being with people comes out of our weakness. The fundamental movement of God was making himself known in the person of Christ in a particular place and time. The most effective ministry is making our presence felt in a particular place with a particular people during a particular time.

Part of what we in Samaritana have learned with regards to incarnating the Gospel for women in prostitution has to do with the ministry of presence. Presence is not the same as giving assistance or advice. It may include spoken words, but it is much more than conversation. I still remember the night when Samaritana staff members, volunteers, and women gathered in a small church sanctuary to be with one of our friends who was mourning the loss of her baby. There was not much we could do or say, but that really did not matter. What was important to her was that *we were there with her*. Presence speaks of solidarity, shared journey, mutuality, attentiveness, and full engagement. Presence, too, can have a redemptive impact. Bakke outlines a theology of presence based on the story of Abraham's pleading with God for Sodom (Genesis 18:16–33). The implication of the story is that the presence of a few righteous persons can have a redemptive impact on a particular people and place.[16]

The ministry of presence in Samaritana means, in practical terms, that we go to where the women are—to the streets and bars. What exactly do I mean by a "ministry of presence"? Sometimes that means sitting in a dark, smoke-filled bar with loud music playing, leaning forward to try to hear what the girl sitting across the table is saying.

---

[16]Ray Bakke, *A Theology as Big as the City* (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1997), 38–46.

Sometimes it means giving a word of caution, a suggestion, or a short counsel, or often not saying anything at all. Sometimes it means walking around the street looking for a particular girl but not finding her. Other times it means talking to a group of loud and obnoxious women on the street corner while commuters and passers-by stare and frown slightly. Once, our ministry of presence led to two of our staff members being caught in a police roundup. Whether we pray for a woman or not, whether we speak the Gospel message or not, whether our plans work out or the unexpected catches us unprepared, we believe we are bringing the light and life of Christ to a place and to a people that need it badly. A ministry of presence means we regard the dark alleys of Cubao as our parish.[17]

Development as Journey

Development is not an event. Development cannot happen in a project lifespan. In fact, the process of development never really ends. Development by its very nature is a process, and may be best described as a journey. This is why it is helpful to understand development as an intersection or a convergence of stories of the poor and of the development workers—all fitting in the larger story or *metanarrative* of God's action in human history.[18] God's activity in the world can be characterized as a long and slow march.[19] There is nothing we can do to rush God or hurry him up. Our job is to be pilgrims, not timekeepers.

The Exodus story in the Old Testament can be a helpful paradigm for us as we consider the transformational development process as a journey. The people of Israel were rescued from Egypt in a singular

[17]Jonathan Nambu, "Lessons from Our Journey: Ministry Among Prostituted Women," *Phronesis* 5:1 (1998): 33–34.

[18]Nambu, "Lessons from Our Journey," 20–25.

[19]Ringma uses this phrase to describe the journey of faith in *Missio Dei*, the mission of God (Charles Ringma, "The Slow March of God," *Phronesis* 7:1 [2000]: 3–18).

event, but their deliverance was also a process of following, fighting, grumbling, confession, renewal, worship, social reconstruction, etc. that took forty years. A preacher noted that it was easier for God to get them out of Egypt than it was for God to get Egypt out of them. We should expect that the process of transformational development, particularly among the severely oppressed, wounded, and abused, will also be a long and difficult journey.

One of the first women befriended by Samaritana workers was "Paula." She was a street prostitute who picked men up along Quezon Avenue. She was also involved in drugs. When Samaritana staff members invited her she volunteered, made a decision of faith, joined Bible studies, began to make noticeable improvements, and then disappeared. We later learned that she was back on the streets and back to drugs. Paula repeated this cycle numerous times over the next eight or nine years, bouncing from one service provider to another, weeping in sorrow one day and fighting another woman at knifepoint the next day. The cycle she was in was not a meaningless, karmic cycle. There was movement and growth happening, but there was also falling, struggling, and running. Today, Paula is still not done, but she is a completely different woman from what she was ten years or even one year ago.

Au writes that "the metaphor of a journey captures well what most adults come sooner or later to realize about spiritual and psychological growth: it is a never-ending series of changes and struggles. In a word, it is a hard road to travel."[20] He goes on to remind us of the proverb of the Chinese sage Lao-Tze: "The journey of a thousand miles begins with one step." Despite the length and challenges of the journey, we are encouraged to take small, sure steps together toward Jesus. Some of the steps along the way may be wobbly and unsure. We will in fact make mistakes, and there is nothing wrong with that. "Even great saints like Augustine of Hippo and Ignatius of Loyola learned how not to make mistakes by making many." The journey is difficult, long, and challenging, but it is not overwhelming. Our journey ought

[20]Au, *By Way of the Heart*, 191.

to be made with the freedom to explore, discover, and learn from mistakes.[21] Change, growth, and transformation sometimes begin to happen in miraculous events, but they are also a series of choices that really never ends.

Development as Participatory

Spiritual director Margaret Guenther says, "Good ministry, like spiritual friendship, is mutual; it is a dance, a drama, a story, a partnership."[22] More particularly, we may say that transformational development must be mutual, shared, and participatory. It must be empowering. Individuals and communities should be encouraged to identify and understand their problems and needs, and to propose appropriate actions and remedies.

It is very interesting to read the story of Jesus and the invalid by the poolside (John 5:1–15). Jesus asked the man, "Do you want to get well?" When the man responded in self-pity and gave excuses, Jesus commanded him, "Get up! Pick up your mat and walk." Jesus would not let the man off the hook. He required the man who had been an invalid for thirty-eight years to stand up, carry his mat, and take his initial steps. The man who had been helpless all his life was made to participate in his own miraculous healing.

This is what distinguishes a work of development from one of charity or relief. In development work, we look for partners and collaborators, rather than recipients and beneficiaries. We want everyone to have the freedom and space to be active partners in the whole process, from planning to implementation and evaluation. We listen to, and value what each one says, for as the Quakers say, "Everybody has a piece of the truth." As Paulo Freire writes,

> At all stages of their liberation, the oppressed must see themselves as men *(and women)* engaged in the ontological and historical vocation of

[21] Au, *By Way of the Heart*, 197–202.

[22] Guenther, *Toward Holy Ground: Spiritual Directions for the Second Half of Life*, 132.

> becoming more fully human …. To achieve this praxis, however, it is necessary to trust in the oppressed and in their ability to reason.[23]

The process of involving all the community in the process of their own transformation and liberation is not so easy. There is often hesitation, reluctance, and even resistance from the community to take greater responsibility in the process. This may be due to the traditional perception of what leadership means, or low self-esteem, or an overwhelming sense of deference to authority and powerful figures, or a sense of powerlessness.[24] Inviting participation, building a healthier sense of self-esteem, and empowering people to take responsibility for themselves and others is a long process which will require not only patience and graciousness but also skills in listening, understanding, and working with people.[25]

When "Sophia" was hospitalized during a difficult childbirth, she and her husband expected Samaritana staff members to come to the rescue and do everything for her. She was surprised, disappointed, and irritated initially when "Cherry" and "Maribel," two of the other Samaritana women trainees, were the ones who stayed with her at the hospital, coached her how to apply for public assistance discounts for her hospital bill, and urged her and her husband to do things for themselves. This was a learning experience for Sophia and her husband as well as for Cherry and Maribel (and a healthy reminder for the

---

[23]Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (New York: Continuum, 1992), 52–53.

[24]Maria Leny E. Felix, *Leading with the People: A Handbook on Community-Based Leadership* (Tarlac City: Holy Spirit Center of Tarlac, Inc., 1998), 1.

[25]There is a wealth of resources available to those who would like to engage in a more participatory style of leadership, development work, or ministry. One may want to look at Felix's *Leading with the People: A Handbook on Community-Based Leadership*, Sam Kaner's *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making* (with Lenny Lind, Catherine Toldi, Sarah Fisk, & Duane Berger [Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers, 1996]), and Anne Hope and Sally Timmel's four-volume *Training for Transformation: A Handbook for Community Workers* (Gweru, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press, 1984/London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1999) for principles, suggested activities, and further ideas.

Samaritana team, too!), as they all learned the important lesson that Samaritana funds did not grow on trees, and there was much that they could do for themselves.

At Samaritana, we designed and developed a new way of teaching and training our women to become "disciples." It is a three-part modular approach using non-formal adult education methods.[26] We recognize that our women will learn most effectively, and be most empowered, when they are active participants in the learning process. We have also used *Appreciative Inquiry* and Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) as methods of involving the staff team in making decisions regarding the ministry's direction, and involving women in visioning, planning, and evaluating various programs and activities.[27]

One of the challenges of participatory processes is to learn what we as development workers can contribute and where we can participate. One inherent weakness, for example, in the appreciative inquiry method of visioning, planning, and evaluating is that not all of what is knowable or needful is within any one group at any one time. There are always new bits of information, experiences, wisdom, and creative ideas outside of a group. These new data are not available to its members unless outsiders bring them in. If we adopt appreciative inquiry woodenly and legalistically, we may help a group to feel empowered but we deprive them of important input, lessons, experiences, and resources that would have further aided them in their transformation. One community development educator has said that we must do "facipulation"—mixing facilitation and manipulation. This recognizes the fact that no one has pure motives

[26]One of our staff members is currently pursuing a master's degree in Non-Formal Adult Education at the University of the Philippines.

[27]Another staff member has gone through workshop training in using the *Appreciative Inquiry* methodology. For more information on Appreciative Inquiry and how it is used in planning and evaluating projects, see Sue Annis Hammond's *The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry* (2nd ed. [Plano, Texas: Thin Book Publishing Co., 1998]) and Chapter 5, "Using Appreciative Inquiry to Build Capacity," in CRWRC's *Partnering to Build and Measure Organizational Capacity* (Grand Rapids: Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, 1997), 245–282.

and no one is completely without an agenda. Is it honest for us to say that we completely devolve the process of development yet we remain actively participatory in it? What exactly is the appropriate level of our involvement so that we do not become manipulative? What are the areas where we may rightly give input and direction, or even exercise leadership and authority? These are areas Samaritana has not yet fully determined, and we are still learning.

Development as Holistic

Development of women, men, and children takes into account the wonderful mystery and complexity of humanity, and has all of the concerns of humanity in mind. Western culture has promoted a false and unhealthy dualism and compartmentalization of life, prioritizing private over public, spiritual over physical, work over Sabbath, personal evil over structural evil, prayer over politics.[28] God, however, is concerned with, and involved in, all of life. As God's people, we need to nurture that same concern and involvement. Our development work needs to be integrative rather than compartmentalized, whole rather than segmented. This is not merely a call to an eastern or southern cultural dynamic; it is an invitation to reclaim a more Biblical perspective on the redemptive work of God.[29] As John Perkins declares,

---

[28]It has been rightly pointed out that the relatively recent emphasis on holism has been needed in the West to serve as a corrective to the dichotomized, dualistic worldview that has captivated, or at least influenced, the Church in the West to a great degree. It is too simplistic, however, to brush this off as a Western problem. Western missions and theological education have had a huge impact on the shaping of the theology and ecclesiology of the Church in the east and south. Moreover, with modernity and globalization, technology and communications, many aspects of dualistic and dichotomized thinking and living have been absorbed into non-Western cultures, such that I believe it is now helpful to highlight the need for holism even among Christians in non-Western contexts.

[29]Ron Sider's fifth chapter, "Embracing the Fullness of God's Salvation," in his *Good News and Good Works: A Theology for the Whole Gospel* ([Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993], 83–100), provides a helpful survey of Biblical words for

> The Gospel, rightly understood, is wholistic. It responds to people as whole people; it doesn't single out just spiritual or just physical needs and [speaks] to those. Christian community development begins with people transformed by the love of God, who then respond to God's call to share the gospel with others through evangelism, social action, economic development, and justice.[30]

The best way to describe what we mean by holism is by using the Biblical concept of *shalom*. Shalom is a concept of right relationships on all levels and in all areas of life: relationships with God, self, others, and all of creation. Shalom is "human welfare, health and well-being, in both spiritual and material aspects."[31] Shalom is "shockingly materialistic,"[32] and has to do with the gritty realities of life that we find ourselves in as inhabitants of planet Earth. Shalom, however, does not simply mean comprehensive programs. Pursuing holistic ministry among women in prostitution does not necessarily mean that we must have many programs and activities, e.g., a program for spiritual, a

---

salvation. He notes that "salvation" in the Bible is the work of God, happens in history and is social, corporate, and communal, is linked inseparably with the Kingdom of God, includes physical healing, has right relationship with God at its center, has past, present, and future reference to the redemptive activity of God in Christ, and has cosmic aspects. Father Ben Beltran, meanwhile, gives a helpful background to the truly holistic worldview of ancient Filipinos, the development of a dichotomized and dualistic worldview in Greek and western philosophy and the development of the Church, and the impact of that often unconscious dualistic world view and theology upon Filipinos (and, by extension, other evangelized and colonized developing nations) in his chapter, "Toward a Theology of Holistic Ministry," in Tetsunao Yamamori, Bryant Myers, & Kenneth Luscombe, eds., *Serving with the Urban Poor* (Monrovia, California: MARC, 1998), 191–210.

[30]John M. Perkins, *Restoring At-Risk Communities: Doing it Together and Doing it Right* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995), 21.

[31]Bruce Bradshaw, *Bridging the Gap: Evangelism, Development and Shalom* (Monrovia: MARC, 1993), 17. Bradshaw's book is actually a helpful attempt at encouraging a holistic approach to ministry using the theological framework of creation, redemption, and *shalom*.

[32]Bradshaw, *Bridging the Gap*, 18.

program for psychological, a program for physical, and a program for social needs of people. Instead, shalom reminds us that all of life and all of ministry are created, sustained, and being redeemed by God. As Charles Ringma says, "All of life is under God's watchful eyes and in God's reshaping hands."

Commitment to the God of shalom demands that our development philosophy, strategies, and work must invite people to a life that is integrated and whole, healthy and reconciled.

Development in the Context of Community

People develop most fully and richly in the context of a community. Human development and transformation is not an individual endeavor, but a process that happens in the context of relationships and community. Change is made, tested, validated, and celebrated in community. "Discipleship is best done with others who are also disciples."[33] As Richard Rohr wrote, although we must work with individuals, yet too often "we are saving souls while God is creating a people."[34]

I still remember asking "Edna," a woman we had worked with for years and then referred, along with her two children, to another Christian ministry, "So, Edna, who are your friends there in your new home and community?" I knew that Edna was an angry and proud Christian woman who had a hard time trusting anyone. "Oh," she answered sweetly, "I don't have any friends there. It's just me and the Lord." Her spiritualized answer did not comfort me. She had a false sense of a privatized spirituality disconnected from people around her. She thought she could make it through life praying to God but not relating with others. Edna's spirituality appeared spurious and hollow to those around her who experienced her as an aloof and proud person.

---

[33]Art Gish, *Living in Christian Community* (Scottdale: Herald Press, 1979), 46.

[34]Richard Rohr, *Near Occasions of Grace* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1994), 50.

The work of development needs to be done by women and men standing shoulder to shoulder. The story of God's transformative work in history, in the Old Testament and in the New Testament, is a story of people in a community. In fact, "although personal relation to God is vital, according to Biblical thought God is more concerned with creating a people than with private religious experience."[35] A person attempting to engage in development work alone is a sad anomaly.

"Reconciliation is at the heart of the gospel."[36] Our communities need to be places where people are experiencing, offering, and celebrating reconciliation with God, self, others, and creation. This is what is meant by *shalom*—right relationships in all the spheres of life. This means our communities will need to be places where honesty is encouraged, trust is built, and forgiveness is offered and received.

For almost two years, Samaritana experimented with a residential facility in Fairview, Quezon City. My wife and I lived in a large eight-bedroom rented house, along with several other staff members, an intern, five women, and three children. This was a learning experience for all of us. After the first two days, our initial romanticized notions of living in community were deflated. We began to experience fights, intrigues, irritations, and misunderstandings. We also experienced rejoicing, reconciliation, and shared celebrations.[37]

Now, for a variety of reasons, we no longer have a residential facility or program. Our challenge now is how to create the psychological and emotional space for the community to grow and flourish without physically living together. Particularly for the women who have gone through abuse, trauma, and psychological fragmentation, we must provide a safe haven for them, so they can begin to trust, to hope, and to re-collect themselves.[38] How do we as a group that meets four to five

[35]Rohr, *Near Occasions of Grace*, 23.

[36]Perkins, *Restoring At-Risk Communities*, 22.

[37]Nambu, "Lessons from Our Journey," 35–36.

[38]Both Judith Herman in her *Trauma and Recovery* (New York: BasicBooks, 1997) and Diane Langberg in *Counseling Survivors of Sexual Abuse* (Wheaton: Tyndale

days a week create a spirit of trust, and make space within ourselves[39] for God and others? The community is a gift that we receive as well as a responsibility that we nurture and struggle to maintain. How can we embrace it and take care of it? This is a process of learning and struggling, one that we are certainly still in.

Development's Impact on Structures

A Philippine Daily Inquirer article once featured a news item about a Manila hotel that was raided. Manila police officials were quoted as explaining that one of their assets masqueraded as a customer and selected a woman, then somehow sent a signal to the policemen who were waiting outside that he and the woman were already engaging in sex. Upon forcing their way into the building and into the room where this man and woman were, they were indeed found in a compromising position. The young woman was arrested and charged with prostitution. A number of other women were rounded up that day, but the owners and managers were not to be found. Is it right for a man to pretend to be a customer, select a woman, and then engage in sex with her in order to conduct a raid on an establishment fronting for prostitution? Entrapment is another level of violation, compounding the victimization of the women involved. It remains, though, a common method of police in trying to find and catch women in prostitution. What about the fact that women are commonly rounded up but customers, pimps, recruiters, and owners are usually not found, taken into custody, charged, and convicted? If prostitution is illegal

---

House Publishers, 1997) stress the utmost importance of creating safety for abuse and trauma victims as the necessary first step in their recovery and healing.

[39]Margaret Guenther, in the chapter entitled "Welcoming the Stranger" in her *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction* (Boston: Cowley Publications, 1992), writes of the necessity of creating a safe space for those we listen to and minister to. This safe space is not only physical, having to do with a room, decorations, and furniture layout, but is also personal, psychological, relational, and emotional. We must be committed to being centered ourselves in order to offer a safe space within ourselves to others, providing inward hospitality.

in the Philippines according to the Revised Penal Code, why are all women employees of discos, bars, saunas, and similar establishments required to report regularly to the local social hygiene clinic to have a pap smear test for sexually transmitted diseases? These are examples of structural injustices, flaws in the system that contribute to the system of prostitution and to the oppression of women. Samaritana is just realizing in new ways that we must begin to be involved in addressing structural injustices that affect our women. We are to be involved in advocacy work.

What is advocacy? Advocacy, or advocate, comes from the Latin word *advocare*, or *a-vocare*, which has to do with "to call," "to call out," "to speak," or "to speak on behalf of." Therefore, advocating has something to do with 1) speaking for, acting for, or defending someone or something before someone else, or 2) proposing, promoting, or suggesting something to someone. Advocacy has to do with helping give a voice to the voiceless. It is worth noting, however, that whenever we advocate for someone or some people we can take away their voice and actually disempower them. Especially when we work with the poor and marginalized, we must be careful not to take away their voice. There are times when we must speak on their behalf, but we must be aware of the power dynamics involved, and always seek to develop their self-worth and potential.

Some Biblical examples of advocacy include Abraham bargaining with God on behalf of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:16–33), Moses arguing with the Pharaoh on behalf of the Hebrews (Exodus 7–11), Nehemiah lobbying the nobles and officials on behalf of the poor and overtaxed oppressed (Nehemiah 5), Jesus defending the woman caught in adultery before the lynching mob (John 8:1–11) and interceding for us before the heavenly Father (1 John 2:1).

What is our motivation when we engage in advocacy? What drives us? First, the heart of God is for the weak, the vulnerable, the forgotten, the disadvantaged (e.g., the story of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4). All of Scripture tells us the narrative of God who cares for the whole world, especially those who have no one to care for them. Second, we are driven by a commitment to justice and righteousness.

As Samaritana's team, we decided to involve ourselves in the work of advocacy on the local and national level. We participate in legislative advocacy related to issues relevant to prostitution and the sexual exploitation of women and children that is already being done by other groups.[40] The staff members are engaged in gathering information, raising awareness among women and churches, catalyzing the involvement of prostituted women, building a network of relationships, organizing a team, and strategizing. Specifically, we work with other NGOs and women's groups to push for the passage of the Anti-Prostitution Bill. Our ministry among women in prostitution is not complete if we do not address the system of prostitution and dismantle the structure that supports it. As stated so clearly in the fifth paragraph of the Lausanne Covenant, "evangelism and socio-political involvement are *both* part of our Christian duty" (italics added).[41]

Development as Dying

As a hyperventilating, perspiring, exhausted teenager reeling from the pain of body-punishing workouts with my teammates on the high school wrestling team, I still remember hearing the coach repeat over and over, "No pain, no gain." Winston Churchill said, "We have fought them (the Nazis) with our blood, sweat, and tears." The principle is the same: goals are often realized through sacrifice and difficulty. Filipino theologian David Lim has said that "[nothing] good will happen on earth unless someone suffers for it."

Christians will recognize this as the principle of the cross, the invitation to sacrifice, and, indeed, death. John 12:24 reminds us that in

[40]We have learned some things about strategizing for and being involved in advocacy work from Tear Fund's *Footsteps* 45 (December 2000). This issue of their "quarterly newsletter linking development workers around the world" dealt specifically with advocacy, including articles outlining the "advocacy cycle," ideas for practical campaigning, case studies in advocacy efforts among development projects, Biblical reflection on advocacy, etc.

[41]*The Lausanne Covenant* (Lausanne, Switzerland: International Congress on World Evangelization, July 1974), par. 5.

the agricultural planting-harvesting cycle as well as in God's economy, death is required for new life to emerge: "Unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds." Not everyone is called to martyrdom like that of Salvadoran Archbishop Oscar Romero, but all of us are invited to walk the way of the cross, and to embrace whatever form our "dying to self" will take. For some, this may take the form of a preferential option for the poor. They may be called to incarnate the love of God by moving into an urban poor community. For others, this may mean leaving behind their own culture, their preferred ways of thinking and living. According to Volf, "the practice of embrace … is for Christians possible only if, in the name of God's crucified Messiah, we distance ourselves from ourselves and our cultures in order to create a space for the other."[42] For many, the martyrdom we are called to is not dramatic and heroic, but made up of small sacrifices in mundane routines and chores of our families, work, and other involvements. Embracing death is in effect embracing humility, weakness, vulnerability, and powerlessness[43]—things we naturally recoil from because they are foolishness to the world and to our flesh (1 Cor. 1:18–29).

In any transformational development endeavor, there is, specifically, a crucifixion involved. According to Maggay, incarnation requires crucifixion, involvement entails *kenosis* (self-emptying), and solidarity requires surrender.[44] Our submission to death opens our hearts to the transformative work of God's Spirit. Our effectiveness and fruitfulness as transformational development workers depend not so much on our monitoring and evaluation, or on intervention strategies, or on the percentage of loan repayments, as on our willingness to lay down the things most precious to us—even those things that give us life—on

[42]Volf, *Exclusion & Embrace*, 30.

[43]In his *The Path of Power* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1995), Nouwen posits that it is in releasing power, and embracing weakness, vulnerability, smallness, and poverty, that we are ultimately empowered.

[44]Melba Padilla Maggay, *Transforming Society* (Quezon City: ISACC, 1996), 73–80.

behalf of our brothers and sisters. To the extent that we do this, new life will emerge.

Our commitment to let go and live a life of self-giving becomes a model for those whose lives are intertwined with us. We willingly embrace death not only because it makes our work more effective, but also because it makes us more human. Wilkie Au quotes Judith Viorst, who writes about losses from a psychoanalytic background: "The road to human development … is paved with renunciation. Throughout our life we grow by giving up."[45] Au adds, however, that the good news of the Gospel is that God brings new life, so that we are not merely left with the existential reality of our losses but with the hope of new life and the heightened longing for God.[46] Moreover, the Suffering God, who chose death in order to redeem us and bring us new life, accompanies us always and invites us to accept loss, desolation, and death.[47] Not only does this make our development task more fruitful, it also makes our lives and our communities more real, more healthy, and more fully human.

Development and Spirituality

Development workers are usually activists. Not all of us march on the streets, make press releases, wave placards, and go on hunger strikes, but most of us are doers. We get things done and make things happen. We are people of action. However, we can go to the extreme. A voice inside us whispers, "Don't slow down or stop, things may fall apart. What will life be, what will you be, if you stop now?" There are gifted and committed friends and colleagues around us who have reached the

[45]Au, *By Way of the Heart*, 188.

[46]Au, *By Way of the Heart*, 190.

[47]Mitch Albom writes about "dying well," although not particularly from a Christian perspective, as he recounts the true story of his interactions with a dying former professor, Morrie, in his international bestseller, *Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, A Young Man, and Life's Greatest Lesson* (New York: Doubleday, 1997).

point of complete exhaustion and burnout. We need to develop and nurture a spirituality that will sustain us in our development work. As Merton warns us,

> He who attempts to act and do things for others or for the world without deepening his own self-understanding, freedom, integrity and capacity to love, will not have anything to give others …. There is nothing more tragic in the modern world than the misuse of power and action to which men are driven by their own Faustian misunderstandings and misapprehensions.[48]

I believe, however, that spirituality in our development action is more than simply a self-protective exercise to try to ward off burnout. To be distinctively transformational and Christian, our work needs to be shaped and nurtured by the streams of a vibrant spirituality, an inner reservoir that refreshes us in times of dryness, tiredness, and disappointment. The community we are with, and the people we serve, need to be quenched by the waters of life that come from within.

I suggest here that a spirituality which may serve us is a *contemplative* spirituality. We need silence to give power and meaning to our words, solitude to help us create safe space within ourselves, reflection to help us make sense out of what happens in our life. The contemplative spirituality I am suggesting here is not the "flight to the desert" type of spirituality, of escaping from the world to become an eccentric hermit. I am proposing a spirituality that integrates silence and word, solitude and community, action and reflection, prayer and work into a healthy rhythm of life and ministry.

True contemplatives, in fact, do not isolate themselves from people, but connect more deeply with people. That is why Thomas Merton could say, "… the only justification for a life of deliberate solitude is the conviction that it will help you to love not only God but also other men …. Go into the desert not to escape other men but in order to find them in God."[49] Kenneth Leech writes,

---

[48]Thomas Merton, *Contemplation in a World of Action* (Garden City, New York: ImageBooks, 1973), 178–179.

[49]Thomas Merton, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New York: New Directions Books, 1972), 52–53.

> The contemplative and the active are necessary for each other. Contemplation must be involved, a clear seeing into the reality of human life and human suffering, not an evasion of that reality …. In such contemplative spirituality lie the resources for resistance to injustice. For resistance can only grow out of improved knowledge and deepened insight (Philippians 1:9).[50]

Edwina Gately, a Catholic laywoman who founded the Volunteer Missionary Movement and has helped women in prostitution in Chicago through the Genesis House, which she began, says,

> Justice is inseparable from spiritual development. I think one of the mistakes we've made in our history is parsing things out and separating them. We pretend you can be a holy person and have nothing to do with the poor or the disenfranchised, that you can be involved in justice and not have anything to do with spirituality. But if we want to be whole, justice brings back upon our own spirituality …. It doesn't mean that we can cop out and become passive. The real act of faith and the move toward the deepest spirituality is when we admit we don't know, anymore, whether we're really making a difference. We do know that we must keep on doing what we believe in, what we're called to do right now …. We can't save the world, but we can work toward it.[51]

In Samaritana, we are discovering, experiencing, and exploring further the gift of contemplative spirituality as we engage in transformational development work among women in prostitution. The staff and volunteers meet once a month for quiet reflection together, often using the *lectio divina*, centering prayer, and extended times of silent reflection together. We practice a form of the Ignatian exercises together. My wife, who serves as Coordinator of Counseling and Spiritual Nurture (and who is herself receiving spiritual direction and training to give spiritual direction), has introduced to the women a form of group spiritual accompaniment. This is planting the seeds of a contemplative experience and spirituality into the soil of the women's hearts as they have group liturgies, extended silence, and *Taize* chants

---

[50]Kenneth Leech, *Soul Friend: An Invitation to Spiritual Direction* (San Francisco: HarperCollins Publishers, 1980), 192.

[51]Dorothy Whiston, "Living Justice: An Interview with Edwina Gately," *Presence: The Journal of Spiritual Directors International* 7:1 (January 2001): 21.

together. These complement the more exuberant praise songs during Samaritana's worship times, and have been appreciated and enjoyed by the women. These practices are creating a safe place for the women with one another, with Thelma, and with God, allowing women to find moments of rest for their souls amidst noise, chaos, and confusion.

Conclusion

I appreciate the opportunity for me to think critically about my understanding of development, particularly in the context of our ministry in Samaritana. This exercise has forced me to reflect on our work, to articulate the lessons we are learning, and to try to integrate theory and practice, action and reflection, being and doing. I realize that the articulation of a philosophy of development is itself a work in progress. That is to say, while I share these themes freely *now*, based on action, reflection, and study, I also hold my thoughts and ideas tentatively and with humility, knowing that this is not the final word. The lessons I will learn with my colleagues and friends will not end, just as the process of development will never really end. There will always be new insights, new changes and adjustments, new experiments and revisions, new problems and solutions. That is part of the excitement and wonder of a journey.

Bibliography

Albom, Mitch. *Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, A Young Man, and Life's Greatest Lesson*. New York: Doubleday, 1997.

Au, Wilkie. *By Way of the Heart: Toward a Holistic Christian Spirituality*. New York: Paulist Press, 1989.

Bakke, Ray. *A Theology as Big as the City*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1997.

Benner, David G. *Care of Souls: Revisioning Christian Nurture and Counsel*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998.

Bradshaw, Bruce. *Bridging the Gap: Evangelism, Development and Shalom*. Monrovia: MARC, 1993.

Cheyne, John R. *Incarnational Agents: A Guide to Developmental Ministry*. Birmingham: New Hope, 1996.

CRWRC. *Partnering to Build and Measure Organizational Capacity*. Grand Rapids: Christian Reformed World Relief Committee, 1997.

Ebert, Andreas & Patricia C. Brockman, eds. *Richard Rohr: Illuminations of His Life and Work*. New York: Crossroad, 1993.

Felix, Maria Leny E. *Leading with the People: A Handbook on Community-Based Leadership*. Tarlac City: Holy Spirit Center of Tarlac, Inc., 1998.

Ferrer, Oscar P., Emmanuel M. Luna, & Angelito G. Manalili. "The Roots and Context of Social Mobilization in the Philippines." In *How Social Mobilization Works: The Philippine Experience*, eds. Ofelia Valdecanas, Ramon Tuazon, & Delia Barcelona, 31–42. Manila: UP College of Mass Communication and UNICEF, 1996.

Freire, Paulo. *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum, 1992.

Gish, Art. *Living in Christian Community*. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1979.

Guenther, Margaret. *Holy Listening: The Art of Spiritual Direction*. Boston: Cowley Publications, 1992.

———. *Toward Holy Ground: Spiritual Directions for the Second Half of Life*. Boston: Cowley Publications, 1995.

Gutierrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation*. Rev. ed. Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991.

Hammond, Sue Annis. *The Thin Book of Appreciative Inquiry*. 2nd ed. Plano, Texas: Thin Book Publishing Co., 1998.

Herman, Judith Lewis. *Trauma and Recovery*. New York: BasicBooks, 1997.

Hope, Anne & Sally Timmel. *Training for Transformation: A Handbook for Community Workers* Vols. 1–3. Gweru, Zimbabwe: Mambo Press, 1984.

———. *Training for Transformation: A Handbook for Community Workers* Vol. 4. London: Intermediate Technology Publications, 1999.

Kaner, Sam with Lenny Lind, Catherine Toldi, Sarah Fisk, & Duane Berger. *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making.* Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers, 1996.

Langberg, Diane Mandt. *Counseling Survivors of Sexual Abuse*. Wheaton: Tyndale House Publishers, 1997.

Leech, Kenneth. *Soul Friend: An Invitation to Spiritual Direction*. San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1980.

Maggay, Melba Padilla. *Transforming Society*. Quezon City: ISACC, 1996.

Merton, Thomas. *Contemplation in a World of Action*. Garden City, New York: ImageBooks, 1973.

———. *New Seeds of Contemplation*. New York: New Directions Books, 1972.

Myers, Bryant. *Walking with the Poor: Principles and Practices of Transformational Development*. Maryknoll: Orbis, 2000.

Nambu, Jonathan. "Lessons from Our Journey: Ministry Among Prostituted Women." *Phronesis* 5:1 (1998): 23–41.

Nouwen, Henri J.M. *The Path of Power*. New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1995.

Palmer, Parker. *The Active Life*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1991.

Perkins, John M. *Restoring At-Risk Communities: Doing it Together and Doing it Right.* Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1995.

Ringma, Charles. "The Slow March of God." *Phronesis* 7:1 (2000): 3–18.

Riso, Don Richard. *Discovering Your Personality Type*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1995.

Riso, Don Richard & Ross Hudson. *The Wisdom of the Enneagram: The Complete Guide to Psychological and Spiritual Growth for the Nine Personality Types*. New York: Bantam Books, 1999.

Rohr, Richard. *Near Occasions of Grace*. Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1994.

Sider, Ron. *Good News and Good Works: A Theology for the Whole Gospel*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1993.

———. *Rich Christians in an Age of Hunger*. Dallas: Word Publishing, 1990.

Tear Fund. *Footsteps* 45, ed. Isabel Carter. Teddington, U.K.: Tear Fund, December 2000.

The Lausanne Covenant. Lausanne, Switzerland: International Congress on World Evangelization, July 1974.

Vanier, Jean. *Becoming Human*. Toronto: House of Anansi Press Ltd., 1998.

Volf, Miroslav. *Exclusion & Embrace: A Theological Exploration of Identity, Otherness, and Reconciliation*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996.

Wallis, Jim. *Faith Works: Lessons from the Life of an Activist Preacher*. New York: Random House, 2000.

Whiston, Dorothy. "Living Justice: An Interview with Edwina Gately." *Presence: The Journal of Spiritual Directors International* 7:1 (2001): 20–28.

Yamamori, Tetsunao, Bryant Myers, & Kenneth Luscombe, eds. *Serving with the Urban Poor*. Monrovia, California: MARC, 1998.

Landas 27:1 (2013) 103–109

FINDING HOPE IN A BROKEN WORLD*

The Response of the Church to Human Trafficking

Abraham George

A fifteen-year-old girl desperate to help her family recover from the devastation of Typhoon Haiyan is promised a waitressing job in Manila.[1] Instead, she finds herself trafficked and sold for sex in a bar, subject to a daily ritual of abuse and exploitation. When not with customers, she and other girls sleep in a room crowded with bunk beds. They are denied food if they refuse customers, and, with no way to return home, they fear being cast out onto the streets. Trapped in a strange place and subjected to sexual abuse by strangers who pay to use her body, she becomes resigned to the new reality of life.

Fortunately, for this young girl and three other survivors, the Philippine Anti-Transnational Crime Unit (ATCU) and International Justice Mission (IJM) heard about their abuse and conducted a rescue operation on January 29, 2014. Two managers and the bar owner were arrested, and the girls were taken to aftercare shelters where they will receive the long-term care and support that they will need to heal from

*This article is a revised version of Abraham George, "Hope in a Hurting World," *Evangelicals Today* 39:4 (2013): 22–27.

[1]International Justice Mission, "IJM Brings Rescue to Manila Bar, Survivors from Province Destroyed in Typhoon Haiyan" (February 7, 2014), http://www.ijmuk.org/node/703 (accessed February 11, 2014).

their abuse and rebuild their lives. In addition, IJM will provide legal assistance to ensure they receive the justice they deserve.

For these girls, their painful stories end in hope. But this is not the case for countless other young women and girls who are victims of human trafficking, a crime that affects nearly all countries in every region of the world. The statistics[2] are simply overwhelming:

- There are an estimated 27 million people trapped in slavery today, whether in bonded labor or forced prostitution.
- Between 2007 and 2010, victims of 136 different nationalities were detected in 118 countries across the world.
- Trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation accounts for 58 percent of all cases detected globally, while trafficking for forced labor accounts for 36 percent. Incidentally, the share of detected cases of trafficking for forced labor has doubled since 2008.
- 27 percent of all victims detected globally are children. Of every three child victims, two are girls and one is a boy.

In the Philippines:

- There are between 60,000–75,000 Filipino children trapped in the sex trade, where they are repeatedly sold to pedophiles for the explicit purposes of rape and abuse.[3]

[2]United Nations, *Global Report on Trafficking in Persons 2012* (New York: 2012).

[3]Ecpat Global Monitoring, *Report on the Status of Action Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children: Philippines, 2006*, http://www.ecpat.net/sites/default/files/global_monitoring_report-philippines.pdf (accessed February 8, 2014).

- The Philippines, and particularly cities like Cebu, are popular destinations for sex tourism, where unrestricted, illegal sexual practices are rife.[4]
- In a study conducted in 2004, every taxi driver interviewed in Cebu confirmed that he or she had at one point witnessed a foreign tourist accompanied by a Filipino minor.[5]

Human trafficking is just one instance of violent injustice, where the weak and vulnerable are preyed upon by the strong and powerful who see an opportunity to take advantage of them in brutal and greedy ways. It happens when people are recruited in their community and exploited by traffickers using deception and/or some form of coercion to lure and control them. Gary Haugen of International Justice Mission defines this, and injustice in general, as the abuse of power and exploitation of the weak by the strong.[6]

As Christians, this has to be something that registers rather loudly in our hearts and minds. Such crimes against innocent human beings, especially those that are least capable of standing up for themselves, clearly violate God's plan for *shalom,* and this must elicit an instinctual reaction from us.

But What Does the Bible Say?

The Scriptures really are chock-full of rather explicit commands to "do justice" (Micah 6:8) and to "seek justice, defend the oppressed, take up the cause of the fatherless, [and] plead the case of the

---

[4]Ecpat Global Monitoring, *Report on the Status of Action Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children*.

[5]Ecpat Global Monitoring, *Report on the Status of Action Against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children*, 11.

[6]Gary A. Haugen, *Just Courage: God's Great Expedition for the Restless Christian* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2008), 46.

widow" (Isaiah 1:17). These are not incidental references; instead, they constitute the central sweep of the Bible. Concern for the oppressed and the abused is a constant theme throughout the Scriptures. It is deeply embedded in Israel's history, and dominates the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

In the Pentateuch, or the first five books of the Bible, Yahweh delivers the Israelites from oppression in Egypt and now expects them to be liberators as well. The Mosaic Law is replete with calls for his people to live justly in the land he has given them. Every three years, for example, the Israelites are required to bring a tenth of their produce for those that did not have an inheritance, the foreigners, the fatherless, and the widows (Deuteronomy 14:28–29).

The Prophetic books simply echo and reiterate such requirements. God employs a whole host of prophets to constantly show the Israelites how they are grieving him by letting injustice permeate their societies. Through the prophets, God cries out to the Israelites to remember his heart for the broken:

> Is this not the fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the chords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and provide the poor wanderer with shelter—when you see the naked, to clothe them, and not turn away from your own flesh and blood? (Isaiah 58:6–7)

In the Gospels, Jesus makes it very clear that he did not come to start a religion, but instead to announce a new "kingdom," a new way of life. The good news of Jesus was not just to address the question of sin and the spiritual fall of man, or how to get to heaven and avoid hell. It was about the coming of God's kingdom on earth as it is in heaven. This kingdom that Jesus spoke of was not a future state of being, or some distant place. No! He was speaking about something that was happening on this earth *here* and *now*.

Admonishing the Pharisees for their lack of justice and mercy, Jesus says: "You have neglected the more important matters of the law—justice, mercy and faithfulness" (Matthew 23:23). God's priority

for justice over religiosity is made clear throughout the Gospels as Jesus continually challenges the hearts and attitudes of religious leaders.

Do We Have a Responsibility?

Most of us reading this would agree that if we were in positions of authority, we would be completely responsible for following the clear commands of Scripture in executing justice on behalf of the poor and the oppressed. However, the simple fact is that much of the Church has very little or no direct proximity to such issues. Do we, then, have any responsibility?

Perhaps the best answer to the question is found in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25–37). Jesus recognizes in the lawyer's question the human tendency to attempt to absolve ourselves of responsibility by claiming that certain people are not our responsibility. With his final command, "go and do likewise," Jesus erases the boundaries the lawyer attempted to draw and drives home the point that those who truly participate in the Kingdom fully live out the Law by "being neighbors"—bringing *shalom* to bear on all who experience brokenness around them. To do nothing, Jesus seems to imply, would effectively be collusion with the brokenness of Creation by allowing the man to continue suffering and dying.

The Church is God's vehicle to usher *shalom* into the brokenness and oppression in the world. We are his "hands and feet" (1 Corinthians 12). For the Church to announce credibly that God is God and that his new world has begun, it has to be, as N. T. Wright helpfully reminds us, "actively involved in seeking justice in the world, both globally and locally, and cheerfully celebrating God's good creation and its rescue from corruption …."[7] Without this active interaction with the brokenness around us, our proclamation remains merely a shadow of the glorious Gospel which we have been tasked with sharing.

---

[7]N. T. Wright, *Surprised by Hope: Rethinking Heaven, the Resurrection, and the Mission of the Church* (New York: HarperCollins, 2008), 227.

What Must the Church Do?

As church leaders, we have a responsibility to shepherd our congregations into a life that is pleasing to God, and the Scriptures make it clear that part of pleasing God is engaging in the work of justice. There are some very important and tangible things that church leaders can do:

1. Speak up.

The Church in the Philippines, like the rest of the global Church, is a significant portion of the population, and as such has a strong voice that can lobby local and federal governments for allocation of resources to combat trafficking, raise awareness of such crimes, and create social demand for justice.

2. Teach congregations.

There is much to be done inside the Church as well. We need to teach our congregations about the Biblical foundations for justice and God's view of women and children, discuss pornography and the objectification of women, encourage men's groups to talk about exploitation and violence and how it affects women and children, and encourage them to become protectors of, and advocates for, vulnerable women and children. Bible colleges and seminaries must incorporate a robust analysis of the theology of justice into curricula so that future pastors and leaders of the Church will have the passion, vision, and know-how to stand up for those that are oppressed.

3. Get your hands dirty.

Engage with these victims as if they were part of your own family. Watch for signs of such crimes in your own communities—report them to authorities and reach out to organizations like the International Justice Mission and others who might have operations in the area to intervene on behalf of these victims. Volunteer time, skills, and resources with shelters and other facilities in your area that care for rescued victims of such abuse. On behalf of these victims, be willing to risk reputations, bank accounts, and personal safety—that is what Jesus would have us do "to the least of these."

There are only two things that are required of us all. Jesus, responding to the Pharisee (Matthew 22), spells it out clearly: love the Lord our God and our neighbor! While we largely attempt to follow the first, we are often guilty of not giving the latter the same attention, and yet the simple fact is that the Scriptures also make it abundantly clear that if we do not love our fellow human beings, we simply cannot love God. In other words, "anyone who loves God *must* also love his brother and sister" (1 John 4:21).

The body of Christ in the Philippines, as in the rest of the world, desperately needs to believe that it can truly be an agent of transformation in this broken and hurting world. If it does, it will become an unmistakable part of the process of God birthing something beautiful in this world—his perfect *Shalom*!

Landas 27:1 (2013) 111–120

REPAIRERS OF BROKEN WALLS*

Blair Burns
Andrey Sawchenko

Charito† dropped out of elementary school to find work in order to help her impoverished family. She worked odd jobs babysitting or working as a maid, and then she met a woman who promised her a good job in a nearby city. It was, however, a lie.

At just 14 years old, Charito was trafficked to a large entertainment club in Cebu, Philippines. "They treated us like animals," Charito said years later, remembering how she was sold for sex night after night. She added, "I never thought it would happen to me."

Human trafficking erodes the dignity God has intended for his children and our communities. God has made us in his glorious image to display his majesty, but human trafficking converts people, the objects of our Father's affections, into tools for profit and perverted pleasure of the powerful in society.

Perhaps the most brutal form of human trafficking is the massive global business of rape for profit called sex trafficking. Sex trafficking

*This article is an updated version of Andrey Sawchenko, "We Need a Wall," *Evangelicals Today* 39:4 (2013): 13–21.

†A pseudonym.

is the recruitment, harboring, provision, or obtaining of a person in order that a commercial sex act can be induced by force, fraud, coercion, or great vulnerability. Trafficked persons—predominantly women and children—are often targeted because of desperation and tricked with the promise of a good job. Some are kidnapped and drugged only to find out upon waking up that they are trapped in a brothel and forced to provide sex to customers. In some instances, victims are sold by family members in order to pay medical bills or family debts. According to UNICEF, nearly two million children are used globally in the commercial sex trade.[1] My colleague, Sharon Cohn Wu, rightly observes that "more than any other human rights abuse I can think of, forced prostitution—rape for profit—tears down the person completely, [and] just strips away who they are."[2]

Human trafficking also breaks down a community's sense of the value of human life. In the Philippines, the on-going, open sale of children for sex is both a sign of their broken down lives and of the community's broken down defenses. This year, the US Department of State correctly observed the sex trafficking situation in the Philippines: "[h]undreds of victims are subjected to sex trafficking each day in well-known and highly visible business establishments that cater to Filipinos' and foreign tourists' demand for commercial sex acts."[3] Over the weeks, months, and years, the public sale of girls and boys and vulnerable women for sex reinforces unspoken beliefs that some people are less worthy of protection, and that some abusers are too strong for the community to stand up against.

---

[1]UNICEF, *Annual Report 2006* (published 2007).

[2]Gary Haugen, *Terrify No More: Young Girls Held Captive and the Daring Undercover Operation to Win Their Freedom* (Nashville, Tennessee: W. Publishing Group, 2005), 47.

[3]US State Department, *Trafficking in Persons Report* (June 2013).

A Fight We Can Win Together

In the tradition of heroic Christian leaders like abolitionist William Wilberforce and transformational leaders like Mother Teresa and Martin Luther King, Jr., International Justice Mission staff, in response to the Bible's call to justice—*Seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow* (Isaiah 1:17)—and together with government and non-government partners in 11 countries, stand against violent oppression. Its founder and human rights attorney, Gary Haugen, launched IJM after serving as the U.N.'s lead investigator into the aftermath of the Rwandan genocide. Moved by how rampant violence led to the death of thousands of innocents, Gary Haugen founded IJM, which seeks to restore to victims of oppression the things that God intends for them: their lives, their liberty, their dignity, and the fruits of their labor. By defending and protecting individuals, IJM seeks to engender hope and transformation for those it serves, and to restore a witness of faith, courage, and redemption in places of oppressive violence.

IJM's clients come from those who have been abused through sex trafficking, sexual assault, forced labor, land grabbing, and lack of citizenship rights. In the Philippines, IJM has been working together with law enforcement, prosecutors, social welfare agencies, and local governments for the past thirteen years to combat sex trafficking and child sexual assault, and in that time has facilitated the rescue of 1,175 victims, the arrest of 621 suspects, and the conviction of 108 perpetrators, including 69 under the Philippine Anti-Human Trafficking Act.

I have been working with our IJM teams in Southeast Asia on anti-human trafficking projects for the past nine years after leaving a legal practice in the United States. When I first arrived in Asia from the US, I hoped that God would allow me to help just a few people with my legal skills. I actually would have been well satisfied with just one. I drew inspiration from Jesus' parable of the good shepherd leaving the flock in order to find the one missing sheep. Over the last nine years, the Father has allowed me and my IJM colleagues, most of whom are Filipinos, to be part of his care for hundreds of those who

were mistreated and crying out for rescue. Joining with such amazing colleagues in this mission is one of the greatest joys of my life.

The Fight for Dylan. All of us at IJM in the Philippines have closely followed the story of Dylan† and his friends for the past four years. The Philippine National Police contacted IJM in 2009 after they arrested an Australian doctor in the act of sexually abusing a 12-year-old boy in Metro Manila. Further investigation uncovered the sad truth that the doctor had exploited and abused several other 12- to 15-year-old boys for sex.

After the doctor's arrest, the Philippine National Police searched for the remaining victims. Five young boys eventually came forward and revealed to the police and IJM that the doctor had sexually exploited them. IJM made sure all six boys were taken to a government shelter where they started to receive critical care and counseling. IJM social workers also started meeting regularly with the boys.

IJM attorney Lawrence Aritao represented the six boys in court, and he said that the hallmark of the case was the "courage of our clients." Dylan testified against the doctor, taking a very brave stance against a powerful Western man who was respected in the community. The other boys testified in the case against the suspected trafficker who allegedly worked as a recruiter and pimp for the doctor—that case is still ongoing.

Dylan said the doctor took photos and videos of the abuse, and he said that the recruiter threatened to make these images public and create a scandal if Dylan ever told anyone about the abuse. Aritao added that it was the boys' "commitment to seek justice that made it possible for the supporting cast of public prosecutors, social workers, and the IJM team to reach a just result."[4]

On April 18, 2013, the court in Dylan's case pronounced the doctor guilty on two counts of sexual abuse. On April 24, 2013, the remaining

†A pseudonym.

[4]Lawrence Aritao, personal communication (2013).

five young men sat quietly in the Manila courtroom, flanked by their families and their IJM social worker. IJM's Aritao sat in front of them, waiting for the ruling that would tell the boys that what happened to them was wrong. The judge announced the convictions, completing the victory for each of the young men. At the end of their journey, two criminal courts had sentenced the doctor to serve a combined prison sentence of 10 to 62 years in prison and ordered him to pay restitution between $7,300 and $10,500 to each young man. Before the trial began, none of the boys knew each other. Today, they are close friends, bonded together because of the adversity they had overcome.

The Fight for Charito. Fortunately, like Dylan and his friends, the police rescued Charito and 13 other underage girls who were trapped in the bar with her. But from there the case stalled, stuck in a broken court system. Charito returned home alone, burned by shame and struggling to process the trauma she had endured on her own.

In 2007, a year after IJM opened an office in Cebu, IJM attorneys heard about the troubled case and started working with public prosecutors to move the trial forward. IJM social workers found Charito and helped her move into an aftercare home for the support and trauma counseling she so desperately needed.

Over the next few years, Charito said she "realized the importance of dignity." She also decided to go back to school. She knew it would be difficult, but she said, "I really want to finish my studies to prove to people that everyone deserves a second chance."

With support, Charito felt strong enough to face her trafficker—and the painful memories—in court. "I testified against my abusers so that I can help in giving justice to all who have been victimized and exploited."

The trial finally ended in June 2013—after more than six years. The trafficker was declared guilty. Charito was ecstatic when she heard the news. She said, "It is an answer to my prayers. All this time, I've been praying, 'God, please grant me justice.' This really is a success for me."

We Need a Wall

These are stories of redemption, of hope, and of the intervention of the Almighty, and they are beautiful. But these stories do not have to keep happening. Rampant sex trafficking, slavery, and tyranny against widows and orphans are not inevitabilities, even in this fallen world. From the very beginnings of human society, God has called ordinary citizens and ordained them to be special ministers who work to restrain evil.

In Romans 13, Paul reminds us that God has established the governing authorities as "his ministers" and as "his servants." He tells us that these ministers are intended "to do you good," and that they are there to "bring punishment upon the wrongdoer."

Of course, what Paul is talking about, in modern speech, is that part of the governing authority that is the public justice system—that system of law enforcers, judges, prosecutors, and social service workers intended to deliver the protections of law to all the people, especially the poor and vulnerable. What Paul is telling us is that this public justice system, which is composed of *God's own ministers*, has a *holy mandate* to *do good* and to hold perpetrators accountable for their crimes. The explicit purpose of this system is to *restrain* evil, upholding the dignity of all people.

The problem is that in the places where we do our work, including some parts of the Philippines, this God-ordained system is *broken*. It does not work, and so what happens? Evil expands, deepens, and engulfs children like Charito and Dylan.

Those entrusted with responsibility to protect the victims are instead feared, and officials who desire to do good do not have enough resources to pay for things like gas in their cars, even if they have cars. On those occasions when they have both resources and the desire to act, they often do not have the skills needed to enforce the law.

Can systemic problems like these be fixed? Most people say *no way*. Let us find other ways to protect the poor and vulnerable. But to really protect the countless victims these systems *must* function.

The last historic account in the Old Testament has long been one of my favorite stories. It happens in Persia, in the King's Court, with a senior government officer who, amazingly, is one of the Jewish exiles. Nehemiah is at the height of his career. He is one of the highest ranking civil servants in the mightiest empire on the planet.

Yet he is undone. His heart breaks for his people and for his God. A keen student of the Scriptures, he understands the calling of Israel, the intended glory of Israel, and Israel's holy designation as a shining light to the nations, and yet she is decimated. Her population is but a fraction of the stars in the sky that once numbered in her. Her promised land, reduced in size, now comprises an insignificant vassal state in the sprawling empire which Nehemiah serves. Jerusalem, the Holy City, the home of Yahweh's temple, is bereft of its people, its economy, and perhaps most importantly of all, its wall. The wall is down. It is laid to waste. It is reduced to rubble, and in the ancient world, there was no greater indignity to a city than to be without its wall.

So Nehemiah prayed. For four months, he prayed. Then, like any faithful man or woman who sets out on a great endeavor, Nehemiah defined his purpose: rebuild the wall. He laid out a well thought through strategy to achieve it, and then he acted.

Not surprisingly, there were great challenges—not the least of which was that there were not enough people living in the city to actually do the building. Add to that the fact that virtually none of them had jobs that could broadly be classified as related to the construction of large walls. Instead, Nehemiah's corps of builders was comprised of civil servants, nobles, jewelers, merchants, and priests. There was also opposition—armed militia-like bands loyal to local warlords kept the builders under constant threat of attack. The last thing these warlords wanted was a new power in the region based in Jerusalem and behind a mighty wall.

On top of that, there was just plain mockery. Nehemiah writes:

> When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he became angry and was greatly incensed. He ridiculed the Jews, and in the presence of his associates and the army of Samaria, he said, "What are those feeble Jews doing? Will they restore their wall? Will they offer

> sacrifices? Will they finish in a day? Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble—burned as they are?"[5]

Note here that Nehemiah does not respond at all, and note especially that he does not challenge the accuracy of this statement because he is both godly and patient, and he knows that Sanballat is right. The rocks are sitting in piles of rubble, and they are burned with fire. The only rocks available for mining near Jerusalem were sandstone. It turns out that when sandstone is burned with fire—as would have been done in the many sieges of Jerusalem—it loses its structural integrity.

What Sanballat has accurately observed is that 1) the rocks are already reduced to rubble, 2) the ones that are big enough are burned with fire such that they fall apart when you touch them, and (3) there is no mining operation to get new rocks. It will not work. This wall cannot be built!

Nehemiah does not respond. But I think I know what he was thinking: "Thank you, Sanballat. You are right. But these rocks are the only rocks we have. And right now we need a wall. Our God is with us. And so we his servants will continue rebuilding."

What happened? That wall went up in 52 days.

We Will Continue Rebuilding

As I look at the broken public justice systems in the places where we work, I hear the accuracy of the opposition. But we need a wall, and these rocks are the only rocks we have, and so we his servants will continue rebuilding.

We at IJM have been doing that for a long time now, in places like Cambodia, Uganda, and here in the Philippines, where the system the vulnerable must be able to rely on to restrain evil has not functioned for the poor. But perhaps, just like what Nehemiah's builders found

[5]Nehemiah 4:1–2.

when they began working, there is a miracle in these rocks and as we build, they are no longer as weak as before. As many have been faithfully praying and pressing on towards seeking justice, we are finding that, in the midst of the rubble of these broken public justice systems, there is strength in the rocks. We have found noble police officers who want to protect the people, prosecutors who really want to win cases against traffickers, judges trying to erase the backlogs in their courts, and social service providers who care a great deal about the quality of care being delivered.

So we are seeing the wall go up. A few years ago, we worked with the Philippine National Police to create, train, and mentor a special anti-trafficking unit in Cebu called the Regional Anti-Human Trafficking Task Force. Today, the officers of the RATT Force are well trained, and they proactively go out to rescue victims of trafficking and to ensure that justice is brought to their oppressors. Because of this partnership, and because they enforce the law, a recent independent study has shown a 79 percent reduction in the availability of minor girls for commercial sexual exploitation in Cebu.[6]

The walls of dignity and protection are going up in the lives of survivors as well. Last February 11, 2014 was the groundbreaking for SafeSpace, a government run shelter in Metro Manila that will provide temporary housing and counseling for survivors immediately after rescue to get them started well on rebuilding their lives. This facility is based on a similar center in Cebu called HerSpace, which IJM created in conjunction with the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD).

Dylan and his friends are working with IJM social workers and other supporters in order to build their own lives. One of the young men is now a sophomore in college, and another has graduated from high school and is working as a junior hair stylist. Dylan and the other boys are working on their high school diplomas. All of the boys said

[6]Edward R. Maguire & Megan Gantley, *Wave 3 Assessment for Project Lantern: Final Report* (Fairfax, Virginia: Crime and Justice Analysts, Inc., 2010).

that they want to use the financial compensation they will receive from the trial to further their education.

Charito has continued to grow in strength and is now offering support to other survivors. She finished high school and has completed her first two years of college. She participates in her campus anti-trafficking Justice Advocate student organization. She told IJM that she wanted to keep studying so she could become a social worker. "Because I saw that I was loved, my passion to serve was developed," she said.

She has also helped IJM pioneer a program to mentor other young trafficking survivors. She helps them overcome the lies they have been told and adjust to their new situation. She serves as an inspiration for the girls to rebuild their dreams for the future. She anticipates taking on additional responsibilities as part of IJM's volunteer program within the year. "I have experienced what they are experiencing right now," she said, "that is why I can help them."

At a meeting with her fellow mentors creating colorful art together, Charito worked on making her tree. "You cannot have faith in God if you do not have faith in yourself," she said with firm conviction, "God is the source of my life, and he is the source of my strength." The last word she wrote on her tree was "love." With a smile, she said, "This is the most beautiful and wonderful thing that I feel in my life right now, because, since I am loved, therefore I am able to love."

Can they bring the stones back to life from those heaps of rubble, burned as they are?

The answer is a resounding *yes*. By the grace of God, the walls of protection for exploited and vulnerable people in the Philippines are getting stronger. Filipinos of faith, working together with public justice system officials, God's special ministers of dignity and peace, have a chance to step into their calling as Repairers of Broken Walls[7] for victims of human trafficking.

[7]Isaiah 58:12.

Landas 27:1 (2013) 121–152

FROM THE MARGIN TO THE MAINSTREAM

Reintegration into Community Life of Prostituted Women through Non-formal Education

Ma. Justiniana J. Dedace

Prostitution is an issue of human development and human rights violation because it capitalizes on the vulnerability of women. A host of political, economic, socio-historical, and cultural factors reinforces its global existence and creates a negative impact on society, especially on women. Only a few government and non-government institutions focus on implementing reintegration programs, and their intervention strategies are not well-documented. Despite this dearth of information, however, there are remarkable stories of women's transformation and successful reintegration.[1]

Amponin and Derks[2] consider the psychosocial, economic, physical, and mental health of the women, their religious beliefs, gender-responsiveness, and depth of awareness of trafficking as critical factors for reintegration. Both recommend a holistic, community-based

[1]The Asia Foundation, *Reintegration Assistance for Trafficked Women and Children in Cambodia—A Review* (Sept. 2005), http://www.asiafoundation.org/women/trafficking.html (accessed February 27, 2006).

[2]L. V. G. Amponin, *Critical Factors for Enhancing Reintegration Programs for Returning Filipino Women Entertainers*, M.A. Thesis (Quezon City: College of Social Work and Community Development, University of the Philippines, 2003); A. Derks, *Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking in Cambodia* (International Organization for Migration, 1998).

reintegration for prostituted/trafficked women. This is done through training and education that often resemble nonformal education (NFE) characteristics and methodologies. Like reintegration, NFE aims at achieving an individual's economic,[3] cognitive, psychological,[4] political,[5] and spiritual[6] empowerment.

In order to highlight various models for reintegrating prostituted women into society, there is, thus, a need to document both the reintegration journey of NGOs and the women. This study, therefore, aimed to describe the following: 1) the reintegration initiatives provided to women during and after their involvement in prostitution; 2) the knowledge, values, and skills learned by the women; 3) nonformal education methods in transmitting reintegration; 4) empowering strategies learned by the women that facilitated their decision to leave the flesh trade. Specifically, it aimed to 1) systematize approaches to reintegration initiatives provided by selected NGOs, 2) define the type of education embedded in reintegration, and 3) identify learning outcomes as experienced by the women.

Research Methodology

This research used the grounded theory approach, which developed a theory that "is grounded in data systematically gathered and analyzed."[7] Feminist qualitative research methodologies were

[3]R. C. Cabag, *Nonformal Education: A Handbook for Teacher Education Students, NFE Administrators, and Extension Program Implementors* (Quezon City: Katha Publishing Co., Inc., 1999).

[4]N. P. Stromquist, *The Theoretical and Practical Bases for Empowerment*, International Seminar on Women's Education and Empowerment (UNESCO Institute for Education, 1993).

[5]P. Freire, *Education for Critical Consciousness* (New York: Seabury Press, 1973).

[6]Derks, *Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking in Cambodia*.

[7]J. R. Fraenkel & N. E. Wallen, *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*, 5th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2003), 438.

employed, which are dialogical and female-friendly.[8] This resulted in a mutually beneficial and empowering experience for both the researcher and the research participants.

Nine women from three NGOs (LAKAS is rights-based and GABAY and SAMARITANA are faith-based) serving prostituted women were purposely chosen as research participants. The following criteria were used in selecting the women: 1) they have given up prostitution for at least a year; 2) they have undergone some form of training in organizations that serve prostituted women; 3) they have reintegrated into their families or communities. Data were collected from September of 2007 to January of 2008. The following data gathering activities were conducted: a) semi-structured interviews; b) focus group interviews; c) key informant interviews; d) training session documentation. The data analysis consisted of verbatim transcriptions of all the interviews, thematic categorization, data triangulation, and validation from existing studies.[9]

Results

Women's Profiles

The ages of women involved in the study range from 21 to 47 years old. Six out of nine women are single mothers, with one or two children living with them. Two women were married but later got separated from their partners. One is married and lives with her husband and children. A majority of the research participants reached the secondary level of education, while two women finished the elementary level of education. Among those who actively participate

[8]Sylvia H. Guerrero, ed., *What is Feminist Research? Gender-Sensitive and Feminist Methodologies: A Handbook for Health and Social Researchers* (Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2002).

[9]Guerrero, *What is Feminist Research?*

in their respective organizations, five are pursuing formal education under the sponsorship programs of these organizations.

The women got involved in prostitution at a young age. Seven were in their teenage years (16 to 18 years old) while two of them were in their early twenties. Five became street girls, and four became bargirls. The duration of their involvement in prostitution varied from one week to 10 years. Three of them had 10 years of experience as street girls while the rest had one to three years experience as bargirls or street girls. The duration of their involvement in prostitution was either continuous or periodic, but majority spent most of these years in prostitution.

Shadows of the Past

The research participants had similar childhood experiences. Almost all of them are poor. The majority hailed from the provinces before they transferred residence to the city. Most of them had sad stories to tell about their childhood. Five of them were sexually abused as children, usually by their relatives or members of their household. They got disillusioned and did not fully understand how such evil acts could be done to them by their relatives or friends. All of them felt the shame and embarrassment deep within, and they grew up with bitterness and deep-seated anger toward their abusers.

Life in Prostitution

The majority of the women's entry to prostitution was facilitated by a pimp or *mamasan*. The street women were vulnerable to violence from sadistic customers. The bargirls were trapped by the whims of both their customers and *mamasan*. Failure to obey meant further violence or the loss of their "job." The law enforcers were brutal. They abused their authority by rounding them and beating them up, or they themselves became the women's customers. These experiences led the women to develop extreme feelings of shame, fear, anger, and isolation. The women's health also suffered. They acquired sexually transmitted diseases and underwent repeated abortions. To make matters worse, a

majority of them got hooked on alcohol and drugs in order to numb their painful situations. They felt self-pity and had low self-esteem.

Bathsheba and Solomon: A Story of Reintegration

The critical questions for oral interviewers have to do with whose story the woman is asked to tell, who interprets it, and in what contexts. Dana C. Jack reminds us: "If the goal of the interview is to encourage the woman to tell her own story, to speak in her own terms, then how one asks questions, and with what words, becomes critical to the outcome of the interview."[10] These pointers served as guides and reminders for the researcher in conducting in-depth interviews with the women.

The following is a story of Bathsheba and Solomon (not their real names). Bathsheba chose these pseudonyms for herself and her son in order to symbolize her transformation.

> *Pinili ko ang pangalang Bathsheba kasi naaalala ko si Haring David, yung naging ka-relasyon niya, na hinangaan ko dahil isa siyang lalaki na malapit ang puso sa Diyos. Kahit na nagkasala si David dahil kinuha niya si Bathsheba kahit na [may] asawa siya, natauhan siya, inamin niya yung kasalanan niya at humingi siya ng tawad sa Diyos. Kagaya ko, pinatawad ako ng Diyos sa kabila ng nakaraan ko. Hindi dahil sa hindi na ako nagkakasala uli, dahil hindi ako perpekto. Pero malaking bagay na yung mapatawad ka, at pagkatapos kang patawarin, mamuhay ka nang malaya, na hindi ka na nahihiya* … (I chose the name Bathsheba because she reminds me of King David, her lover, whom I have always admired as a man after God's own heart. Even if David sinned against God by taking a married woman like Bathsheba, he came to his senses, confessed his sins to God and asked for forgiveness. Like me, I was forgiven by God despite my past. Not that I do not commit sins anymore, because I am not perfect. But it is one thing to be forgiven and after that, to live freely without shame …)

---

[10]Kathryn Anderson, Susan Armitage, Dana Jack, & Judith Wittner, "Beginning Where We Are: Feminist Methodology in Oral History," *Oral History Review* 15 (Spring 1987): 120. See also Kathryn Anderson & Dana C. Jack, "Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses," in Sherna Gluck & Daphne Patai, eds., *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 11–26.

Even in her choice of names, Bathsheba is very meticulous. A reflective woman by nature, she takes to heart everything that happens—her past and present, and the things that happen to her loved ones, mean a lot to her. She is looked up to by other women in Samaritana when it comes to sharing her reflections because she creatively symbolizes what she feels, and her thoughts are often deep. I met Bathsheba 15 years ago when I was a volunteer in Samaritana. She had just given birth to her child, Solomon, who was born with cerebral palsy. Bathsheba loves Solomon very much. In fact, she often runs into trouble in his defense, especially when people get curious and stare at him or when children bully him because of his disability. She says she needs to take good care of him and protect him because she does not want him to suffer like she did in her younger years.

"You do not understand what I have been through!"

This was the usual battle cry of Bathsheba whenever she got hurt. She was only six years old when her father died. They were seven in the family, and for reasons which she did not understand, she was the only one among her siblings who was taken to the orphanage by her mother soon after her Daddy died. She stayed in a Christian home for homeless children until she was 13. Bathsheba remembers being a good girl. She was religious and felt close to God. She thinks she reached puberty sooner than the other girls her age. She observed her breasts starting to grow at the age of nine, and by eleven, she had her first monthly period. She did not know why, but she would like to believe that it was because of this that a lot of boys in the home were attracted to her. A few even attempted to sexually abuse her, but she always got away from their advances. In the fourth attempt, though, a 16-year old boy succeeded in raping her. Bathsheba was 13 then. After raping her, the boy threatened that he would spread rumors to the other children that she was his girlfriend, a move that Bathsheba believed would surely alarm the staff and make them scold her. With great fear in her heart, she left the orphanage without permission. She sought the help of her father's relatives who gladly took her in and sent her to school. Bathsheba never told anybody about what happened to

her. She was so ashamed of and angry at what the boy did to her. She bottled up all of her anger inside her heart.

When she was in fourth year high school, her Mommy learned that she was in her aunt's custody, and so she started visiting her in the house where she lived. Bathsheba had already graduated from high school then, even though she admitted to doing many foolish things in school. As her Mommy continued to visit her, she was eventually persuaded to move in and live with her and her siblings, all of whom she met again after seven years of separation from them. Little did she know that her Mommy had a live-in partner. They all lived under one roof in Montalban, Rizal. In her second month in the house, something happened. One night, her stepfather attempted to rape her. She was fortunate enough to escape, and so when her Mommy arrived, she told her right away about what her stepfather did to her. To her surprise, her Mommy did not believe her, and sided with her stepfather instead. Enraged, Bathsheba left the house.

"Life on the streets is colorful ..."

Bathsheba landed in Cubao after she ran away from home. It was there that she began meeting high school students who went to school at daytime but walked the streets at night. *Gimik* was what they called giving customers sexual "services" in exchange for money. Soon, Bathsheba found herself doing the same thing. She started doing *gimik* as a way to earn money. She learned how to be a toughie in the area. Cubao became her turf. Extorting money from innocent teenagers became a pastime with her newfound gang. She would lead them to the malls, spotting students who looked innocent and *aanga-anga* (ignorant). They would follow them to the restroom, push them aside in one corner, and force them to shell out some money before they went out. Refusal to do so meant heavy beatings before the teenagers could get out. *Sa Cubao ako naging astig, matapang. Hindi ako nagpapatalo para hindi nila sabihing mahina ako. Sinasabayan ko sila. Kapag sinindak nila ako, sinisindak ko rin sila*, Bathsheba quipped. (It was in Cubao that I became a toughie. I would not allow myself to become a loser so that they would not call me a weakling. When other toughies tried to outdo me, I made sure that I was the first to outdo them.)

She also learned how to take drugs. Bathsheba thinks that it was necessary for her to take drugs in order to muster the courage to extort money and get customers. Otherwise, she would not be able to do it. She did not stay long in Cubao, though, for then she discovered another hangout—Quezon Boulevard. She found lots of street girls there. Unlike in Cubao, customers had cars, and they paid street girls a higher price for their services. "Life was colorful in the area," Bathsheba said. There, she met different kinds of customers—some were kind, some were sadists. The sadist ones, she recalls, were really bad:

> There were a few times when I went with only one customer in a car, but upon reaching one corner, I was met by three to five other men who suddenly hopped in the van where I and the lone customer were riding. They brought me to a faraway place, and poked their guns at me so I would not be able to resist. When I begged for their mercy, they did not listen to me. Instead, one by one, they started using me. I often ended up without money and beaten up badly. Others were really stern and mean. When they shouted, "Strip!", they expected me to strip and face them naked right away. When I started to complain, they reasoned that they had already paid for my services, and so they had every right to do whatever they wanted with my body.

Bathsheba says that it was not only the customers who treated her and the other street girls badly. The police who were assigned to patrol the area were also as brutal. But she was wise. She was able to find a way so that she would not get rounded up like the others. She says:

> *Ang mga pulis, kapag nahuli ka, kukursunadahin ka. Kaya natuto rin akong maging mautak. Naging "asset" nila ako, minsan, binu-boyfriend ko, para hindi ako hulihin. Kaya kapag may huli, ti-timbrehan nila ako para hindi ako lumabas.* (When the police rounded up street women, they also molested those they found attractive. That is why I have also learned to be wise. I became one of their "assets." I attracted their attention and made them my boyfriends. I would benefit from these relationships by getting warnings when there were scheduled roundups. They would find ways to tip me off or inform me so that I will not go out on such nights.)

Bathsheba thinks that not all the customers were that bad, though. There were men who, upon knowing about her life story, just gave

her money and sent her home. She would like to believe that she was also generally kind to her "guests," another term that she uses for customers. She said that she was not a hustler like the others who only knew how to milk money from customers. Then, talking loudly, she says with emphasis:

> But of course, I generally hated men. It's because most of them gave me very difficult and painful times. So if there were a few men who seriously pursued me, I refused to believe them even if they promised to take me off the streets. I did not show any interest in their offer because I knew they were not serious in their intentions and they would just use me like the rest. So, instead of taking them seriously, I played tricks on them. Since I was young and beautiful, customers queued up for me. What I did was choose the one who had the highest offer. Then I would laugh out loud and mock those whom I did not choose and were left behind. That was my way of exacting vengeance on them.

Bathsheba was not always this tough. Deep in her heart, she pitied her condition and felt weak and helpless about her situation. She longed for companions but they were hard to find on the streets, so she learned not to trust anyone. She recalls:

> *May mga panahong naglalalakad ako nang mag-isa lang at naaawa ako sa sarili ko. Kasi mahirap din noon ang maki-grupo. Mainit sa hulihan kaya mas mabuti pa yung nag-iisa. Ang mga bugaw nga, nakakabangga ko rin, kasi maarte daw ako at nagso-solo flight. Eh paano ba naman, madalas, mas napapahamak ako. Kukunan kang kostumer na hindi man lang kinilatis, tapos sadista pala yun, kaya pagbalik ko pasa-pasa na yung mukha ko, ni hindi man lang ako maabutan ng yelo.* (In my solitary moments, though, I would remember walking along the Boulevard alone, and I would feel self-pity. I was a loner and did not choose to mingle with other street women. I was too careful not to be a friend with others especially because groups of street women were hot targets, so it is better to do "solo flight." The pimps, they hated me and thought I was just being self-centered. What they did not realize is that I got traumatized hanging out with them because I frequently ran into trouble when they pimped me. There was a time when one pimp got me a customer without sizing him up, but he happened to be a sadist who just beat me up and badly abused me. When I came back to the streets, my face was black and blue, but this pimp did not even care to buy ice for me.)

"I felt loved and cared for ..."

Bathsheba continued living this kind of lifestyle for 10 years. She either lived on the streets or rented small houses with street girls or pimps in an urban poor community in Mother Ignacia, situated at the back of Quezon Boulevard. One time, she and her housemates were invited to attend a meeting for women who were working at night. Curious, Bathsheba attended and met the facilitators of the group. She learned that they were from Samaritana, a Christian ministry that wanted to help street girls and bargirls with whatever they needed. The facilitator, Ate Thelma, asked them how Samaritana could help the women. They offered to support those who wanted to take vocational courses. She recalls their meeting vividly: "They offered to support those who wanted to study. I wanted to take up a secretarial course, but I was not serious then, because I still enjoyed the streets. But when they visited, I always accommodated them."

After that first meeting, the Samaritana facilitators visited them regularly, almost once a week, and met with the same women in one of the bargirls' houses. Jenny, one of the staff members, led Bible studies, and they often talked about God's love and their lives in general. They also prayed for each other often. Bathsheba was drawn to the sessions and anticipated their weekly visits.

In 1992, she accidentally got pregnant by a customer. She immediately told Jenny about it, and the latter asked what her plans were for her baby. She did not know how to respond to her question because she was confused about what to do with her growing tummy. Jenny, sensing Bathsheba's need for guidance, visited her more frequently. Though Jenny did not ask her, Bathsheba sensed that Jenny was worried that she would abort her baby. When she realized that her tummy was getting bigger, she became lethargic and began to lose her desire to do *gimik* on the streets. It was then that she decided to ask for assistance from Jenny. She made a decision that she would take and follow whatever piece of advice or assistance Samaritana would offer because she needed their advice and assistance badly.

Samaritana referred Bathsheba to a Christian ministry for pregnant mothers called Bethesda in Antipolo City. When Jenny brought her there, she was almost in her third month of pregnancy. The place was big, but comfortable and homey, Bathsheba thought. The staff there gave her and the other pregnant mothers an orientation about the rules and policies like following assigned work schedules, going for regular prenatal check-up, attending Bible studies, and undergoing occasional counseling sessions. Everything was provided to them for free, even their maternal clothes, toiletries, and expenses for their delivery. They agreed, though, that they could not leave the premises until they gave birth. Friends and family were allowed to visit on certain days. Jenny regularly visited her to find out how she was doing.

Bathsheba found the place a haven for pregnant mothers. She found the daily household chores light, and she felt cared for by the staff there. For almost eleven months, she developed the habit and discipline of following daily schedules, which she said she did not have on the streets. She fondly recounts one of her favorite daytime schedules:

> In the shelter, we had daily devotions. Every morning, all the pregnant women and the staff of Bethesda would gather together and select Bible verses to reflect on. These were read to us, and we would share how they spoke to our hearts or touched us. The organization gave me a personal copy of the Bible. To keep myself from getting bored, I turned to Bible reading as a hobby. This gave me strength of spirit. I suddenly realized that I needed to take life more seriously, and I felt this most especially when I had a major problem with my pregnancy.

Bathsheba had a risky pregnancy. Her blood pressure went up and down, and she experienced bleeding a few times. The doctor told her straight that her baby might have a problem when he comes out. She was so scared. She called on the Lord everyday for help. It was then that she surrendered everything to Him and asked Him to take over her life from then on. His words in the Bible became her inspiration, and she felt that her faith in God was renewed and strengthened even more when God answered her prayer for a safe delivery.

Bethesda persuaded her to stay in the home until Solomon was four months old. The staff asked her to assist in taking care of the other

babies who were surrendered for adoption by some mothers who had already left the home. Bathsheba did not think of surrendering her son for adoption. She was bent on keeping him and raising him by herself no matter what happened. After four months, she left the shelter. Not knowing what she should do, she went back to Mother Ignacia. That was when she noticed that there was something wrong with Solomon. She started taking him for medical check-ups and found out that he had cerebral palsy. The medical examinations depleted Bathsheba's meager resources, and so she was forced to go back to the streets to earn money. She also longed for a partner who would support her and her son financially, and so when she was courted by Johnny, an employee in a nearby film studio, she readily agreed to live with him. Johnny, though, was married. Bathsheba knew from the start that this relationship was not going to last because she believed it was wrong in the first place, and she was aware that she could never have him "wholly." At that time, Jenny still continued to visit her regularly and often advised her to trust in God and not in man.

Since they started living together, Johnny persuaded Bathsheba not to go back to the streets. He tried to provide for her and Solomon, and Bathsheba fell in love with him all the more. The relationship was short-lived. In their fourth month, Johnny's wife discovered their relationship, and so to avoid further problems, Bathsheba let him go and told him not to come back. She told him that he should just think that he did her and Solomon a good deed by providing for them for a period of time. Bathsheba remembers crying a lot during that time, but since she surrendered the matter to God, it was not so painful to let go of Johnny.

During that time, Samaritana offered her the opportunity to join its one-year residential training program. Bathsheba did not hesitate to join the training program because she did not want to go back to the streets anymore. In the program, she and the other trainees contributed only a minimal amount of money for the payment of utilities and food. She learned how to cook different kinds of food because it was part of their daily household chores. She also acquired livelihood skills, like cross-stitching, baking, and making pineapple jam, all of which generated some income for her while in training. Each trainee was

given a notebook, in which they wrote the recipes and other things which they learned in doing livelihood. The livelihood coordinator demonstrated to the group or to individuals the proper way to do the livelihood to ensure good quality of the product. One by one, they were coached and monitored in their progress towards perfecting the quality of their product. Bathsheba found joy in doing all of these things, although it was difficult at first. She also struggled to produce good results because the staff took turns ensuring quality control, for the products were being sold to churches or to individuals in the Philippines or abroad, if there were orders. She experienced repairing her "rejects," her work which did not pass the quality control. It was difficult at first because she sometimes did not earn a lot due to rejects. But she said that she learned that a product has to be presentable and good to look at in order to be bought. In terms of the income that she generated in doing her livelihood, Bathsheba recalls:

> *Kumikita ako noon, pero hindi gaanong sapat. Pero kahit maliit ang kita namin, tinuruan kami ng isang staff na mag-save at mag-budget. Natuto akong mag-budget ng para sa aming pangangailangang mag-ina sa araw-araw, at itabi ang ilang percent para sa savings. Bulagsak kasi ako sa pera noon, pero nagawa kong mag-save. Kaya nung nag-graduate ako sa residential training ng SAMARITANA, may pera akong nabitbit.* (I earned money from these, but it was barely enough to meet our growing needs. Yet even though I earned only a little, one of the staff members taught me how to save and how to budget my resources. I learned how to apportion my earnings, distribute them according to our daily needs, and put aside even a small percentage for my savings. I realized how poor I was before at budgeting, but I was glad that I was able to save. I benefited from this habit because when I graduated from Samaritana's residential training program, I had accumulated some amount which I needed after I left the residence.)

Learning to give and to receive

One of the most important skills that Bathsheba learned from the training program was how to relate with others. Since they were five women trainees, each with one child, she struggled to accept the fact that they had different personalities and needs. She admitted to being a quarrelsome person, and, looking back now, she believes it was because she was not yet completely healed at that time. The weekly

Bible studies and fellowship times helped her to have a more mature outlook in life. She recalls:

> During Bible studies, we opened our Bibles, read selected verses, and talked about what these meant to us, what were God's promises to me personally. At other times, we were asked to use drawing as a form of reflection. We drew things about the environment that we could relate with at the moment: the leaves, flowers, stones, trees, even the wind. Then we reflected and compared these to ourselves. We were asked to show our drawings, shared why we drew them and what it meant to us at the moment. Oh, how I loved doing this! This way, I was able to release whatever it was that I felt in my heart.

Bathsheba preferred telling her story this way. She believes that this holds true for the other women as well. She goes on to say:

> *Sa ganitong paraan kami nagkukuwento, para hindi kami mailang sa pagbabahagi ng nararamdaman namin. Masarap ang pakiramdam kasi nailalabas namin ang nararamdaman ng aming puso. Dati kasi, parang ayaw kong magkuwento tungkol sa sarili ko. Sa paghahambing, bigla mong naaalala ang Diyos na, "Ay, nilikha pala ako ng Diyos." Parang nakakawala ng moody; nakaka-relax ng isip. Isa pa, nagkakaroon ka ng tiwala sa tao na puwede mo palang isabi kung anong nararamdaman mo. Puwede mo rin palang ibigay ang sarili mo sa iba. Yung hindi ka bato, kundi may pakiramdam ka rin pala.* (For me, it was a safe and less awkward way of sharing how we felt. I used to dread sharing things about myself. But when we used drawings for comparison, I was suddenly reminded that I am God's creation. It banished my moodiness and relaxed my mind. Moreover, I guess sharing this way has taught me how to entrust myself to others, especially the way I feel. I discovered that I could also give myself to others. I realized that I was not a stone as I used to see myself before, but that I am someone who also has the capacity to feel.)

Attending Friday afternoon fellowship was also one of Bathsheba's regular schedules in the residential training center. During this time, Samaritana staff and other street women or bargirls are welcome to join. A staff member or volunteer of Samaritana usually facilitated the activity. They prayed for each other, played games, shared their reflections and stories, and sang heartwarming songs. Bathsheba particularly liked songs that moved her heart to tears. For instance, there was this song entitled *Kaibigan* (Friend). As she sang it with the

group, she was always reminded about her life before on the streets, especially the pimps whom she trusted but who betrayed her trust and friendship. Unlike the previous friendships that she had, the relationships that she had formed with the other women in Samaritana were far different, and she felt it even more when they sang the song together. She says:

> I was touched by the songs because when we shared, I felt like we could easily give ourselves to each other since we shared similar past experiences, and that paved the way for us to understand each other better. It was not awkward to share our stories and there's no room for us to mock each other's stories. There, I learned how to gradually give myself to others. Gradually, too, I saw and realized that I should forgive my parents and those who have hurt me in the past. I began to wonder, how will I be able to give myself to others fully if I myself have closed my doors to my relatives?

Bathsheba also valued counseling during her residential training. She identified two kinds of counseling: one-on-one and group counseling. She describes her one-on-one counseling this way:

> During my one-on-one counseling, I was freely allowed to release my feelings. The counselor just listened to me. She just allowed me to tell my stories without time limit. Then, she asked me at times if, by what I shared and thought, I had pleased the Lord or made Him happy. Or what have I realized that felt right, and what was good in what I shared? Well, I knew in the end that I would still be the one to answer the questions. I believe the counselor was just there to sort of wake me up. Because of that, I learned how to openly accept my mistakes and failures. I have learned how to be humble. Perhaps it is because I was made to feel that the counselor was saying to me, "Here I am, I am just here to listen to you."

As a result, Bathsheba also learned how to listen to others. She said, "What a nice feeling it is when you have learned to listen to others; it means they trust you. And that is how you also begin to desire to give yourself to others."

Bathsheba found group counseling to be fun yet a bit different from one-on-one counseling. They were made to sit in a circle, either on the floor or using chairs. The facilitator, usually Ate Thelma, used

group sharing and discussion in pairs. She or someone else in the group would start off with a prayer, then they would proceed to group sharing. Bathsheba specifically enjoyed listening to different opinions, and appreciated that everybody listened to one another. She fondly recalls her group counseling experiences:

> We talked about what has happened to us the whole day, or what we have experienced in the past days. As we shared, each one of us was allowed to make comments, give encouragements, show our concern. We also gave pieces of advice. I felt like we were siblings. We also shared stories about our past experiences. There were many different stories. One thing I did learn was that, sometimes, you would think that you are the worst, but soon you realize that there are stories even far worse than yours. Then you recognize that you are not the only one who had problems. Through this, I have learned how not to be so self-centered. I realized that others had far worse problems than I had. All the while I thought that I was the only one who had problems, that I was the only one worthy of understanding. But I realized that I myself need to understand the situation of others.

Bathsheba believes that group counseling is a venue where women can strengthen one another. She recognizes that one's weakness can be another's strength. For instance, a woman is able to help other women by sharing how she has overcome her trials in life so that they can also learn from her experience. There is mutual learning as others share their own experiences too.

One thing that she found helpful during the training was the help that she got from Precious Jewels, a ministry partner of Samaritana. It is a ministry for urban poor children. On occasions when she would be away for out-of-town trainings or retreats, she would go to the ministry and leave Solomon in their temporary shelter. She found it beneficial for both of them because, not only did she feel secure to leave her son with them, she also learned how to understand Solomon's condition and respond to his physical needs. At times, they also referred him to institutions that specialized in Solomon's physical condition. Their love and care for Solomon gave Bathsheba the courage and strength to accept Solomon's condition and love him even more. This also helped her son grow in his social skills and relate better with other children.

"Thank God for the training!"

As part of her preparation for transitioning out of the residential training program, Bathsheba was sent to a one-month training program on food processing methods such as peanut butter making, baking, and meat processing. It was held daily in the Department of Social Work and Development's Skills Training Center in Manila. The manner of teaching was hands-on and actual demonstration. Each student was asked to bring pen and notebooks, and they wrote down the recipes and the techniques of cooking and food preparation on their notebooks. Sometimes, photocopied materials were given to them, which Bathsheba compiled in a folder. They also did group cooking and food preparation, and they all tasted and ate their food together. Bathsheba was given a certificate of attendance when she finished the course.

With the loan assistance provided by Samaritana, she made peanut butter and sold these to people. She was able to recover her capital by selling all her products to other people. She then determined that this would be one of her income-generating livelihoods when she finished her residential training. Using her accumulated savings, she invested part of it as start-up capital right after she graduated from the one-year training program.

Samaritana staff guided Bathsheba in identifying her options for the future. Months before her final departure, she was accompanied by a staff member to explore if she could stay with her Mommy or live in another house where they were staying. This did not work out because, as she attempted to live there occasionally on weekends, they often quarreled, and so she gave up the idea and decided that they were both not prepared to live under one roof. She finally decided to go back to her former community in Mother Ignacia because that was the only place she knew which was safe for both her and her son, since most of them already knew her. As she settled in the place, she started making peanut butter, but this was not enough to meet their growing needs. Fortunately, a work opportunity came to her from a businessman friend of Samaritana. Bathsheba applied at Max's Restaurant as kitchen crew in the company's pantry. She was

happy to note that her DSWD certification got her qualified for the kitchen crew job. Her earnings helped her and Solomon to get by every day. This continued only for a few months, though, since she found no one to take care of Solomon on a regular basis. She had to find an alternative livelihood, and so she grabbed every opportunity to attend short courses in cosmetology and massage/reflexology in her neighborhood and in other institutions which were close to her house. She learned how to do haircut, manicure, and pedicure, but the skill that she became most interested in was learning how to do foot spa and massage. It did not take long before she got customers from her place and from Samaritana. The staff, volunteers, and women willingly volunteered themselves for Bathsheba to practice her skills on, and she, in turn, opened herself up to their feedback and comments about the quality of her service. Through the years and until the present, she has maintained communication with them. Bathsheba now says:

> Since then, I had never thought of going back to the streets. First of all, my child is a special child. Secondly, I was tested negative for HIV. I used to pray before: "Lord, if in case I tested positive for HIV, I cannot do anything about it because it is a consequence of the work that I entered in, so it is my punishment." But despite my hard-headedness, I tested negative. That is why it is scary to go back. The Lord has given me a second chance to live, and anyway, we survive and get by every day, so it is really scary to go back and stay away from the Lord. I believe that if I do that, I would just end up being a loser in the end. Furthermore, Solomon was already walking and was growing up fast.

"God loves Solomon so much ..."

Bathsheba became nostalgic and emotional as she recalled Solomon's earlier days. She recalls:

> I remember then, there was a Christmas party in Samaritana, on December 20, 1997. During the party, we were asked what our prayer wishes were, so I told them that my wish is for my child to be able to walk. We prayed about it. December 24 came, and before the clock struck at 12 midnight, Solomon started taking steps and finally learned to walk. I cried because the Lord enabled him to walk. That means I trusted in him, and I believed in his miracle.

> Sometimes, though, I rebel against the Lord, like in times when some of my prayers are not being answered. For instance, I used to cry hard because I would bring Solomon to school only to be rejected because of his special case. When that happens, I feel like they have taken away my child's right to study. I feel impatient and discouraged. I realized later, though, that I do not know how to wait upon what the Lord would give. Soon, I found out that there is a better place for Solomon to study. "Lord, sorry. I did not realize that you have planned to give good things to my child."

Four years after Bathsheba finished her residential training, she asked Samaritana's assistance to scout for a school for Solomon which catered to special children. Samaritana assisted her in enrolling him in a public school which suited his special needs. He became one of the children scholars being supported by the ministry, and has since improved his psycho-motor level. He is now fourteen years old and is studying in Batino, another school for special children. Bathsheba is very proud and happy that he is now able to go to school on his own, and is more physically independent.

Looking beyond the past and laying a foundation for the future

> *Kung iisipin ko ang kinabukasan at babalik-tanawin ko ang aking nakaraan, masasabi kong wala na akong balak bumalik sa dati kong buhay. Bagama't may mga bagay akong pinagsisisihan sa buhay ko, kagaya ng nagsayang ako ng panahon na ibinigay sa akin ng Panginoon para maging maayos ang buhay ko. Pero nanalig ako sa kanya. Dahil dito, nakaalis ako sa Quezon Boulevard* …. (If I were to think about the future and look back at my past, I would say that I no longer have any intention to go back to my former way of life. I must confess, though, that I regret some things which I should not have done before, like wasting those times God gave to me which I could have spent to make my life better. But I had faith in Him. Because of this, I was able to leave Quezon Boulevard ….)

Bathsheba looked far as if in deep thought while she uttered these parting words. Without batting an eyelash, she said that she could choose to go back to the streets—either through pimping or through having several boyfriends who could support her financially. Then, with a sudden look of conviction on her face, she emphasized that she will never do it again. She continues:

> Do you know how I was able to step out of the streets? To prove to myself that I had no intention of going back, I disposed of the calling cards and address book which contained the contact information of my former "guests." That step helped me a lot and made it easier for me to let go of any thought of going back.
>
> It's both scary and hard to go back. The Lord might spank me if I do. Furthermore, I'm already applying the skills that God has allowed me to acquire according to my God-given capacities, and I am earning from them.

Presently, Bathsheba earns a living by providing services like foot spa, massage, manicure, and pedicure. At times, to increase her income, she does extra work by being a "barker" or "dispatcher" in jeepney terminals. She also accepts clothes repair services from friends and neighbors, like fixing broken zippers of pants or mending holes in clothes.

Bathsheba shows deep compassion for other women. In fact, she does volunteer work in Samaritana by getting involved in doing home visitations or helping them process their birth certificates. Twice, she joined their HIV/AIDS education seminar. There, she learned the proper ways of sharing HIV/AIDS information and how to discuss this topic with the women. She comments:

> I am now confident about sharing information with other women. You know, one thing that I value most from the residential training program is learning how to relate with others. After my training, it was not hard for me anymore to relate with others. I am now able to extend patience to others. I realized that outside, it's really different. Your patience will truly be tested. On my own, I visit HIV patients in San Lazaro. I bring two patients out to church so that they will be prayed for. When I do things like that, I really feel that I am doing it from the bottom of my heart, that I am giving myself to others. I realize that they need others, they need somebody to whom they could talk. After that, I go home, and that is the only time that I am reminded of my own problems. Outside, you give your all to them, and you do not really care so much about yourself and your own concerns. Before, it seemed like I never run out of problems. But now, if I have problems, I do not want to problematize them anymore. I do not want to die with a wrinkled forehead.

She has several suggestions for supporting street women's desire to leave prostitution. She sees home visitation as necessary in order to know about the women's family background and problems, and to find ways to help them. She is aware of the woman's need to talk to somebody who could give her encouragement and good counsel so that her life will have better directions. She thinks that this has to be done simultaneously with livelihood training even while she is still on the streets, so that when the time comes for her to finally decide to leave prostitution, she will not be scared. She can use her acquired skills to earn income, even if she does her business at home. This will boost her courage. For instance, she can start a cooking business, or an organization can give her start-up capital for making beaded bracelets and earrings, to be sold to students in schools. She can also be sent to a training program in massage, pedicure, and manicure, like what Bathsheba herself did before. After that, she can earn from massage services—a good way to start when she says she wants to stop doing *gimik*. Bathsheba deems it necessary to encourage a woman by saying that it is possible for her to get off the streets. Equally important is to give her time to think through her decision to leave so that her life will be better.

One of Bathsheba's "highs" is when she is cited by her neighbors as a good example and a living testimony of a woman who was able to get off the streets. They now look up to her as a model. She says it really helps that there are eyes watching her because she gets reminded of her role as a model to other street women and bargirls. Regarding her relationship with her family, she remembers quarreling a lot with them before. But now, she believes that she is like a light and a bridge between her mother and her siblings so that they will finally be able to reconcile. She says she has offered them up to the Lord.

In all these, Bathsheba claims that the support given her by Samaritana and the Lord was very important for her transformation, having had no support from her family. Asked about how she could describe all that she has gone through, she looked at me straight in the eye and said: "*Mahal ako ng Panginoon* (The Lord loves me)." She then said nothing more.

Encounter with NGOs, Assistance, and Approaches

The NGOs built relationships with the women through regular street and bar outreaches at night, and through home and jail visitation. The table below summarizes the types of reintegration assistance provided by the NGOs to the women while they were in prostitution and after they decided to leave prostitution.

Reintegration Assistance	Shelter Program		Non-shelter Program	
	While in Prostitution	After Leaving Prostitution	While in Prostitution	After Leaving Prostitution
a. Training				
Women/peer organizing	√	√	√	√
Livelihood skills	√	√	√	√
Spiritual teaching	-	√	√	√
Life skills	-	√	√	√
b. Counseling				
One-on-one	√	√	√	√
Group	√	√	√	√
Mother and child	-	√	-	-
c. Educational sponsorship				
Vocational	-	√	√	√
Formal	-	√	-	√
Alternative Learning System	-	√	-	-
d. Employment	√	√	-	-
e. Emergency	√	√	-	-
f. Referral	-	-	-	-

Reintegration Assistance Provided to Women While in Prostitution and After Deciding to Leave Prostitution

Two categories of reintegration assistance were provided by the NGOs while the women were in prostitution and after they had decided to leave prostitution: the shelter program and the non-shelter program. The types of reintegration assistance provided were: a) training; b) counseling; c) educational assistance; d) employment; e) emergency assistance; f) referral to other organizations. Only LAKAS research

participants experienced training on women organizing. This entailed learning about women's issues, particularly prostitution, trafficking, and other forms of violence against women. They also underwent paralegal training. They also attended training sessions on operationalizing their organization, and were constantly being mentored by staff members of their partner organization. On the other hand, spiritual teaching was emphasized by Gabay and Samaritana. This entailed learning from God's word, Christian living, and learning to relate better with each other.

Counseling is an important reintegration assistance among all the organizations. Through one-on-one or group sessions, women were given opportunities to understand themselves better and heal from their difficult pasts. On the other hand, women who were interested to pursue formal or vocational education were given educational sponsorships.

The training approach of the NGOs reflected their deep compassion and commitment to work for the healing and empowerment of prostituted women. These were mostly participatory and learner-centered. Learning needs analysis was conducted beforehand to know the interests of the women and their preferred learning styles. The staff of the NGOs also involved them in the planning, monitoring, and evaluation of their training sessions. The methods of training used were as follows: a) the use of prayers and icebreaker games/activities; b) group discussion/sharing; c) creative ways of training (e.g., use of drawings and symbols, personal and group reflection, and role playing); d) hands-on training; e) sharing their life testimonies; f) individual and group counseling.

Leaving Prostitution and Re-entering Family/Community

Majority of the women decided to leave prostitution because of the series of training and education programs which they received. Half of the women were employed by their organizations while the rest earned income from their small businesses (e.g., beauty parlor, food business). Because of this, they do not see any need to go back to prostitution. Other reasons that they gave for leaving the flesh trade

are: a) fear that their children will grow up seeing and emulating their lifestyle; b) unhappiness in the trade and desire for a better life; c) fear of family reproach.

All the organizations made efforts to usher the women towards re-entering the community or going back to their families. They worked with the women in making step-by-step plans and implementing them so that they would be able to go home or settle in their chosen community. Along the way, the women encountered situations that challenged them to go back to prostitution. This was triggered by relational problems either with other women or the organizations. Eventually, upon personal reflection and with counseling, they made more stable decisions to leave prostitution for good.

Conclusion

According to this study, reintegrating prostituted women involves four stages: a) befriending them through home/street/bar/jail visitations, b) offering them shelter or non-shelter assistance, c) preparing them for re-entry to families or new communities, and d) providing them with continuous support (post-reintegration efforts). At the first and second stages, various types of assistance are offered to the women. These can be grouped into five components, namely: a) training (women organizing, livelihood and life skills teaching, and spiritual teaching), b) counseling (one-on-one and group), c) education (vocational and formal), d) social services (medical, child care, and social security assistance), and e) referrals to other organizations. Women avail of these assistance measures either while involved in prostitution or after leaving prostitution behind. At each stage, the facilitators of the organizations exercise precaution and sensitivity in order to show consideration for the women's preparedness to live independently in their chosen community. They use gender-sensitive methods in conducting training sessions, particularly the dialogical and group learning methods, in order to promote safety, connectedness, and a sense of community.

As the women were assisted in various ways, they got empowered through the following processes: cognitive, economic, political, psychological, emotional, and spiritual. Through the provision of shelter as well as medical and legal assistance, they felt the organizations' concern and support, and this enabled them to regain their trust in other people. Through livelihood and life skills training, they were equipped with skills and developed the strength to look for alternative sources of income and secure employment. A few of them, through women or peer organizing, became aware of different women's issues such as trafficking, prostitution, and violence against women. This allowed them to understand not only their victimization but also their capacity to do something about their marginalized situation. Through counseling, the women gained self-confidence, learned how to relate better with each other, and reached out to other prostituted women. The spiritual teachings offered them hope, strengthened their faith in God, and gradually brought back their self-respect and sense of dignity. Along their reintegration journey, they encountered relational problems, either with their organizations or with their colleagues, and these posed challenges in their decision whether to leave or go back to prostitution. Despite trials and struggles, they are now able to live their lives free from prostitution and with greater stability.

The Language of Reintegration

Reintegration has its own language, communicated between the NGOs and the women. The first aspect is communicating trust, which is key to the women's healing and reintegration. The second aspect has to do with the staff taking on the role of the learner and not just that of a teacher. Thirdly, the use of group learning principles and methods allows women to interact with each other in order to learn. Group learning becomes a venue for affirming each other's worth and personhood, bonding together, learning from and correcting one another, and deciding what is best for their lives. Their cognitions translate later on to new behavioural manifestations which are proof that learning has become effective. For example, they realize that they do not know how to discipline their children, and thus end up seeking ways to become better parents. The fourth aspect points to creating

situations for one-on-one counseling and individual training. When women are given personal attention and understanding, they develop self-confidence, experience emotional healing, and eventually decide to leave prostitution. Furthermore, those who are ushered to develop a personal relationship with God experience peace and a sense of wholeness in their being.

The Link Between Education and Reintegration

Three types of education were present in reintegration: formal, nonformal, and informal education. Formal education was represented by the women's schooling and fostered a positive outlook in life. They saw education as a ticket to a more stable source of income and as a symbol of regained dignity. Nonformal education, which was largely employed in the reintegration process, was observed through the participatory and learner-centered methods of teaching, and through its impact in transforming social structures in prostitution. This was evident in the women organizing of LAKAS which translated into joining collective activities that sought to change laws that do not look after the welfare of prostituted women. Informal education was mostly demonstrated by the staff through modelling of good values and through informal chats on the *how-tos* of living.

From Exclusion to Reintegration: A Conceptual Framework for Reintegrating Prostituted Women into Community Life

The situation of a prostituted woman is a picture of disconnection from society. She is typically poor, unschooled, and unskilled. She most probably grew up with low self-esteem because of childhood experiences of physical or sexual abuse. She lives with guilt and shame and views herself as dirty and wrecked. In the sight of her neighbors or even her family, the prostituted woman is an immoral person who should feel guilty because her "work" is shameless. Being the usual object of gossip, she feels inferior and is often embarrassed to participate in the social activities of her community. She acquires

sexually-transmitted diseases and other kinds of illnesses; her health is poor. When she encounters violence, injustice, and oppression from her customers, employers, and even her live-in partner or husband, she rarely gets any ally. Thus, she feels isolated and socially excluded.

A crucial factor in determining what reintegration program to initiate is the underlying perspective that propels organizations to help prostituted women. Prostitution as a product of domination, subordination, oppression, and human rights violation gives rise to a reintegration program that seeks women's liberation from oppression and works toward their humanization. Basically, it involves four stages: a) befriending, b) equipping and establishing, c) preparation for re-entry into family or community, and d) post-reintegration.

Stage 1: Befriending

The first stage starts with befriending prostituted women where they are—on the streets, in jails, or in bars. Visits to them extend to their homes, which give a more complete description of their individual and household situations. Ample time is spent listening to their stories, giving them appropriate affirmation and encouragement. It is important for them to believe in their personal capacities to develop themselves, no matter how small their goals in life are to begin with. Moreover, opportunities to provide for their emergency needs can be expected, since the women often encounter crisis situations that call for support from people whom they trust.

Stage 2: Equipping and Establishing

As women respond to friendship, they begin to feel safe and to trust the sincerity of other persons. This is the stage where they become more open and attentive to envision the good things that are in store for them—something which they may have hoped for but have given up on because of their suffering and helplessness. Equipping refers to the provision of various reintegration assistance measures that respond appropriately to the women's physical (health- or economic-related), emotional, intellectual, psychological, political, spiritual, and social needs.

Depending on the organization's perspectives and capacity, a reintegration assistance program can offer either a shelter training program, a non-shelter training program, or both. The overall assistance program must consist of the following components: a) training, b) educational assistance, c) social services, and d) referral assistance. The training component has four interrelated sub-components, namely: women organizing, livelihood skills/employment training, counseling, and spiritual teaching. As spiritual teaching is recognized by the women as a major component for their transformation and healing, so it must serve as their foundation for women organizing, counseling, and livelihood skills/employment training. This means imparting values that will reinforce and inspire these three sub-components of training. Examples of these are values related to self-worth, respect, faith in God, integrity, wholeness, belief in the innate giftedness of each person, their capacity for self-development, and other life skills. Critical thinking and reflection should be developed among the women, whether as part of women organizing or as part of counseling. In women organizing, emphasis must be placed on awakening their consciousness about the following: 1) women and gender issues, 2) basic rights and laws pertaining to violence against women and children, and 3) other related topics. Their leadership and negotiating skills must also be developed. Counseling must cater to individual or group sessions since each woman has uniquely different psychological and emotional needs.

Regarding educational assistance, the women must be encouraged to resume formal/vocational education or any alternative learning system of education, as this helps boost their self-confidence and raise their hopes for themselves and for their family members. Furthermore, organizations would do well to prepare for emergency assistance, particularly legal and medical assistance for the women and their children. In between equipping and establishing, the women make and weigh their decision to leave or stay in prostitution. Establishing refers to a time when they have made the decision to leave the flesh trade and to continue on with their training. Basically, this stage sets up the women to think through the kind of life that they want to lead after their reintegration training.

Stage 3: Preparation for Re-entry into Family or Community

This is an interim stage for women who desire to go back to their families who live in another place (e.g., province) or to settle in another community. Preparation for re-entry happens as they are in the process of training. As they apply the knowledge and skills that they learn, and as they live out the values that they have acquired, they are prepared to reflect and plan on how they want to envision themselves starting a new life with their family or another community. With guidance from their mentor-facilitators, the women draft tentative step-by-step plans and suggest action points that will move them towards implementing and achieving those plans. Together with their facilitators, they periodically assess their preparedness to reintegrate into their family or community and eventually live their lives on their own. The facilitators take an active part in providing the various resources needed for their transition. Most importantly, they make sure that the women's families or communities where they will eventually reintegrate are safe for the women to start their lives anew.

Stage 4: Post-Reintegration Stage

This stage is optional for the women since they are the ones who can tell if they still need support after the reintegration training. The organizations maintain their availability and supportiveness for the women and ensure that the latter are prevented from being re-trafficked or going back to prostitution.

Training Methods

The ideal training and educational method for the whole reintegration period makes use of a combination of formal, nonformal, and informal teaching and learning methods. A dialogical and participatory culture is to be encouraged and developed among the facilitators and the women. Likewise, from planning to teaching, a learner-centered approach should be employed.

Empowerment

Empowerment is central to reintegration. The kind of empowerment that manifests in the women's lives is a product of the training and assistance that the women have received during the reintegration process. This framework aims to show that as the women's physical, intellectual, political, socio-cultural, psychological, and spiritual needs are responded to and addressed through various reintegration assistance measures, corresponding empowerment takes place in those same aspects of their lives. When former prostituted women are empowered, they become active and productive members of a community.

The work of reintegrating prostituted women into community life is still in process. At any stage during their reintegration journey, women may vacillate and go back to prostitution. Service providers should make efforts to exercise patience, understanding, and care in handling such situations, and maintain open communication between them and the women. Moreover, it is best to take note of the learning gained during the reintegration process in order to evaluate and improve the programs, thus appropriately addressing the needs and the context of the women.

Issues

Certain issues arise which merit some consideration when implementing reintegration. The first refers to the contextual approach to learning, especially regarding power relations between the women and the NGOs in the learning process. There is a need to take precaution that assistance is always provided and implemented in the best interest of the women. Facilitators should constantly be mindful that the women's contribution to their own development is affirmed and acknowledged. Secondly, holism could be seen from the viewpoint not only of the service providers but also of the women. NGOs must be open to certain perspectives that, in the viewpoint of the women, will contribute to their full humanization and well-being. Lastly, while there needs to be constant refinement and improvement

of reintegration efforts, service providers must not forget to work also for the prevention of prostitution, which means rooting out the problem of this social phenomenon. This means addressing not only the women's concerns but the multi-dimensional factors that perpetuate prostitution as well.

Recommendation

A levelling off of local reintegration practices among service providers is highly recommended to strengthen and firm up reintegration practices. Likewise, as education is one of the major factors that ensure a successful reintegration of prostituted women, efforts in crafting a training and educational approach for reintegration should be promoted. This needs the complementation of a trainors' training program on educational approaches for transitioning women out of the flesh trade.

References

Amponin, L. V. G. *Critical Factors for Enhancing Reintegration Programs for Returning Filipino Women Entertainers.* M.A. Thesis. Quezon City: College of Social Work and Community Development, University of the Philippines, 2003.

Anderson, Kathryn & Dana C. Jack. "Learning to Listen: Interview Techniques and Analyses." In *Women's Words: The Feminist Practice of Oral History*, eds. Sherna Gluck & Daphne Patai, 11–26. New York: Routledge, 1991.

Anderson, Kathryn, Susan Armitage, Dana Jack, & Judith Wittner. "Beginning Where We Are: Feminist Methodology in Oral History." *Oral History Review* 15 (Spring 1987): 103–127.

Cabag, R. C. *Nonformal Education: A Handbook for Teacher Education Students, NFE Administrators, and Extension Program Implementors.* Quezon City: Katha Publishing Co., Inc., 1999.

Derks, A. *Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking in Cambodia*. International Organization for Migration, 1998.

Fraenkel, J. R. & N. E. Wallen. *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*. 5th ed. New York: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2003.

Freire, P. *Education for Critical Consciousness*. New York: Seabury Press, 1973.

Guerrero, Sylvia H., ed. *What is Feminist Research? Gender-Sensitive and Feminist Methodologies: A Handbook for Health and Social Researchers*. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Press, 2002.

Stromquist, N. P. *The Theoretical and Practical Bases for Empowerment*. International Seminar on Women's Education and Empowerment. UNESCO Institute for Education, 1993.

The Asia Foundation. *Reintegration Assistance for Trafficked Women and Children in Cambodia—A Review*. September 2005. http://www.asiafoundation.org/women/trafficking.html (accessed February 27, 2006).

CONTRIBUTORS

Blair Burns is the Director of Operations for Southeast Asia for International Justice Mission (IJM), a human rights agency that secures justice for victims of slavery, sexual exploitation, and other forms of violent oppression. Mr. Burns holds a B.A. from James Madison University as well as a J.D. from Wake Forest University.

Ma. Justiniana J. Dedace is an adult educator for non-government organizations. She has worked for 10 years as researcher amongst urban and rural poor mothers in Luzon. For 12 years, she worked as missionary staff of Samaritana Transformation Ministries, Inc., a ministry serving prostituted women in Quezon City. Currently, she does volunteer work in ministries that are starting to help and support women survivors of prostitution—through training the staff and volunteers, and supporting former prostituted women who have leadership potential. She also specializes in designing training modules and facilitating workshops amongst urban and rural poor women and their trainers. Tina finished M.A. in Education, major in Non-formal Education, at the University of the Philippines-Diliman, and is an occasional guest lecturer in U.P. and other ministries in Asia.

Abraham George is the Director of International Church Mobilization with the International Justice Mission (IJM), a human rights agency that secures justice for victims of human trafficking. He served as pastor and as a theology lecturer in a seminary in India for several years before migrating to the U.S., where he worked with the International Fellowship of Evangelical Missions Theologians and a public policy think-tank in Washington, D.C. prior to joining IJM. He holds a Master's degree in Divinity from India and a Master's in Theology from Trinity Theological College, Singapore.

James McTavish, F.M.V.D., is a Verbum Dei missionary priest from Scotland, assigned in Quezon City since 2008. He is a moral theologian interested in theological reflection on contemporary

ethical issues. He is the author of *Choose Life!* which deals with various themes from moral theology with a special application to issues arising from the apostolate setting. Seeing the extent of prostitution in the Philippines, he sees the urgent need for the new evangelization—to awaken the collective social conscience in an attempt to change hearts and mindsets.

Glenn Miles has been working on addressing child rights in Asia for more than twenty years. He is Asia Capacity Building Director for Love146, an international human rights organization working to end child trafficking and exploitation through survivor care, prevention education, professional training, and empowering movement. He obtained his Ph.D. from the University of Wales, and his MSc from University College London. His research on "Cambodian children's experiences and understandings of violence," including sexual abuse and trafficking, was used as part of the U.N. Study on Violence against Children (2005). He also teaches in seminaries in Cambodia, Malaysia, and the Philippines. He is married, has three girls, and is based in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. His research published here was undertaken with the help of **Jarrett Davis,** a social researcher of Love146.

Jonathan Nambu is a Japanese American who has lived in the Philippines for 23 years. He is the executive director of Samaritana Transformation Ministries, Inc., a Christian organization serving adult women survivors of prostitution and trafficking. With his wife, Thelma, he is on the global leadership team of the International Christian Alliance on Prostitution (ICAP). Jonathan finished an MDiv in Missions at Asian Theological Seminary, Quezon City, a graduate diploma in Christian Spiritual Direction at Tao Fong Shan Christian Center, Hong Kong, and a DMin in Transformational Urban Leadership at Bakke Graduate University, Seattle.

Broderick S. Pabillo, D.D., is auxiliary bishop of the Archdiocese of Manila and Chair of the Episcopal Commission on Social Action, Justice and Peace, and convenor of the Philippines' Interfaith Movement Against Human Trafficking: "Magkaisa: Ipaglaban ang Angking Dangal" (Unite: Fight for Inherent Dignity). The forum explores ways by which the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP), the National Council of Churches in the Philippines (NCCP), the Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches (PCEC), and other partner organizations could help address human trafficking.

Andrey Sawchenko serves as the National Director for International Justice Mission (IJM) in the Philippines and as Field Office Director for IJM Cebu. IJM is a human rights agency that secures justice for victims of human trafficking. IJM lawyers, investigators, and professionals work with local governments to ensure victim rescue, to prosecute perpetrators, and to strengthen the community and civic factors that promote functioning public justice systems. Andrey leads IJM's work in the Philippines, developing intervention strategies to rescue victims of violence and executing national-level advocacy plans with government agencies to combat commercial sexual exploitation and sexual violence against children. He started with IJM Thailand in 2004, where he led a dedicated team fighting sex trafficking. He holds a J.D. from the University of Washington School of Law and a B.B.A. from Trinity Western University, Langley, B.C., Canada.