



# AWARENESS AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

## MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 9 - SEPTEMBER 2014

### INTRODUCTION

September was busy month for HAART, aside from the usual activities of assisting victims and conducting workshops, there were many other activities. Young@HAART team visited local schools to spread awareness to students. In addition, we did data collection on human trafficking for research for both for the International Rescue Committee and a Kenya Peace Network. On October 1st we also had one of our victims' stories featured on BBC's Focus on Africa programme. We will try and get a copy of the show and put it on the website as soon as possible. Moreover we launched a new arts project called Arts to End Slavery. We will keep you updated on the progress of this exciting new project. On 27th September we had 25 young artists for a training on human trafficking.

This newsletter features a real life victim's story. The author was not aware of having been trafficked as a child until working with HAART. In that story you can read the nightmarish story about how the victim missed school, forced to work many hours every day as a house help and was sexually abused every night. As in the previous months, you can also read a new trafficking scenario in this month's newsletter. Young@Haart will be on Radio Waumini (88.3 FM) to talk about human trafficking using radio drama. Tune in Saturday 4th November at 11:15 a.m. - 14:00.



### Arts to End Slavery

It was a great day of talking about human trafficking, discussing how we can use art to raise awareness and for social change. See more pictures on [facebook.com/haart.ke](https://www.facebook.com/haart.ke)

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## Victim's story – I survived but I was broken

By Anonymous

If you told me a month ago that I was a victim of human trafficking, I would tell you to stop bluffing. However, the truth is that I am. I discovered that through working with HAART.

When I was thirteen years old my parents had financial strains. My father had just lost his job a few years ago and my mother's retail shop could not sustain us. We barely had enough to eat but my parents are firm believers of education. They tried their best even when we had nothing to make sure that we got to school.

I was in a boarding school in a rural area, and although it was expensive, my father insisted that I stay in that specific school. At that time I had an uncle who was living in a town close to where my school was located. My father felt that it was better for my uncle to take me to school since he was in Nairobi and was heading home anyway. He gave my uncle my school fees and took all that he had to do my shopping. I remember leaving home with tears rolling down my face because I knew that my family was going to stay hungry because my father had given out everything that he had.

I did not like my uncle. My uncle had been molesting me for some time. Four years to be exact. I chose to go to boarding school to get away from the molestation. This mostly happened when he came to visit. My parents were not aware of it. Somehow, I always believed that there was something that I did to provoke what he was doing to me. This is why I was not looking forward to this trip but my consolation was that I was going back to school and in school I was safe.

However, he had other plans. When we got to his place, he said that he would take me to school on Monday. This meant that I only had the weekend to tolerate his presence. That was not so bad. The weekend turned into a week, a week turned into a month and eventually a year. A year that I still believe is the worst year of my life.

His children went to school while I stayed at home working in the home the whole day. I cleaned, cooked and was not allowed to talk to neighbours. This was torture but the nightmare came each time the sun went down and it grew dark. I slept alone under the stairs, while everybody else slept in the bedroom. In the middle of the night, he always came and everyday he touched me, abused me and reminded me that I had no one that could help me. Initially I cried but after a while I discovered my tears were not going to bring a hero to come and rescue me. Therefore, each night when he came, I simply sat still and felt his hands on me, smelt his breath and heard him moan. My mind simply went blank in those moments. It was easier that way.

I barely ate during that time. I barely spoke to my cousins who seemed happy. I felt like we lived in different worlds, yet we were the same age. I thought of running away but where would I escape to? My parents could barely feed themselves and they thought I was in school. Who would ever believe me if I told them that my uncle was doing these things? I thought of suicide once. I also thought that my body would simply get exhausted and give up at some point. After all, human beings can only handle a certain amount of pain.

One day, they had an urgent errand in the city center and I was the

only one available. They had no choice but to send me. I had never thought of what I could do if I got the opportunity to leave that house but finally I was out. I could run if I wanted to but I had no money and no idea where I could run to because I was far from home. When I was just about to walk back to my uncle's place, I ran into my mother's friend. She could not recognize me but I recognized her, and I remember I simply broke down and cried. It was the first time I had cried in months. I explained to her that my uncle did not take me to school and my parents needed to know. She promised me that she would relay the information to my mother the same day because she was flying back to Nairobi. When I went to my uncle's place that night I never said anything so I would not get into trouble.

Early the next morning my mother arrived to pick me up. She did not speak to anyone. She held my hand and said it is time to go home. Never have I been that happy to go home. However, the pressing issue was whether it was wise for me to tell her everything. I tried to find words to tell her and my dad but eleven years later, I still haven't found those words. Eleven years and sometimes the scars still feel like it was yesterday. The nightmares and the fear are still raw. I survived but I was broken and I still feel like I am broken.

I never thought my experience was human trafficking. Discovering it has given me a fresh perspective on several things that could have been done to prevent it and even deal with the situation afterwards. I believe now that if I had been aware of certain things I would not have suffered that much without seeking help.



## Human Trafficking Scenario #8

By Tom Young

*Over the next few months HAART will present a series of human trafficking scenarios which we hope will educate our readers about how easily trafficking can occur from everyday situations. At the end of each scenario we will apply trafficking screening questions to determine if the subject of scenario has been trafficked.*

Lydia, 20 years old, lives in Nairobi and has been unemployed since completing high school. For more than a year she has been applying for jobs without success and needs to find work to help support her mother and younger sisters.

In central Nairobi Lydia sees a vacancy notice on a wall for full-time household domestic work in a Middle Eastern country. A salary of KES50,000 per month, food and board, international airfare, passport and visa are included in the offer. She makes note of the mobile number on the notice and calls it from home. A man answers the phone, confirms the details on the notice, and tells Lydia she can start work as soon as she is available. Frustrated from not finding work in Nairobi, Lydia tells the man she wants the job.

Lydia meets the man in Nairobi to supply information for her passport and visa application. Two weeks later he calls her to supply details of her flight to the destination. Lydia is excited to finally have work and an opportunity to travel internationally. She discusses sending money home with her mother.

Lydia flies to the destination country alone and after clearing immigration locates her contact holding a sign with her name. A man greets her in English and they drive across town to the house where Lydia will live and work. They stop at a large house in an affluent neighbourhood and Lydia is introduced to the resident husband and wife, who speak English. They tell her it is a requirement that they take her passport and phone. Lydia is shown all rooms of the house and areas of the property. It is a secure complex with perimeter walls. Excited, Lydia asks where her quarters are. She is taken to the back corner of the yard, shown a small metal shed with only a mattress inside, and is told that is where she will live. She is also told to get changed and come inside to prepare dinner.

Lydia works from 5pm until midnight, preparing food, cleaning the kitchen and dining area, washing dishes and cleaning and preparing clothes. She is given a small amount of leftover food. When the work is completed she is told to come back to the main house at 5am to start preparing breakfast, get the three young children in the family ready for school and clean the cars in the driveway. She returns to the metal shed and can only use a bucket and outside tap for washing.

The next morning Lydia is awoken at 5.30am by the wife banging on the shed, who yells at her and slaps her for being late. The wife tells Lydia she will be working from 5am until midnight each day, when the family is not home she must clean the house and yard, and the security guard at the front gate will be watching her.

The enforced routine continues for a week. Lydia is constantly exhausted and her back aches. Feeling sick, she approaches the wife in the house one evening and asks about being paid and having a day off. The wife beats and kicks Lydia extensively, tells her there is no salary or time off, she cannot leave the complex, no one can help her, and says if she asks questions again the men in the family will punish her.

After one month Lydia decides she must take action about being trapped. One night she attempts to get over the perimeter wall at the back of the complex, but sets off an alarm in the process. She is seen by the guard on the wall, pulled down and locked in the metal shed. A few hours later two men come into the shed and sexually assault and beat her, telling her it is punishment for waking up the family and trying to escape. She still works the following day.

After a few more weeks Lydia is resigned to the fact she cannot escape, and decides the only way to end the situation is to take her own life. One night she removes curtain cords from inside the house and hangs herself in the metal shed.

1. Was Lydia lured into this situation and deceived? – Yes.
2. Did Lydia agree to do the amount of work she was forced to do? – No.
3. Was Lydia free to leave the work site and talk to family and friends? – No.
4. Was Lydia physically, sexually or psychologically abused? – Yes, all three.
5. Did Lydia have valid identification and was she in possession of such documents? – No.
6. Was Lydia paid and were there any conditions of employment? – No.
7. Did Lydia fear that something bad would happen to her, or to a family member, if she left the house? – Yes.
8. Has Lydia been trafficked? – Yes.



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WE ARE ON THE WEB!!!

PLEASE VISIT US AT:

[HAARTKENYA.ORG](http://HAARTKENYA.ORG)

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Follow US ON FACEBOOK

[FACEBOOK.COM/HAART.KE](http://FACEBOOK.COM/HAART.KE)

## Upcoming events

- 10 workshops at the grass root level organized by our volunteers
- Assistance to victims' of human trafficking (VOTs)
- Anti-trafficking campaign in social media
- HAART to evaluate awareness programme

HAART in social media:

Please visit us on our new Facebook account:

[facebook.com/HAART\\_Ke](https://facebook.com/HAART_Ke)

If you click LIKE, you will receive daily news feeds.

You can also get our daily tweets if you follow us on twitter:

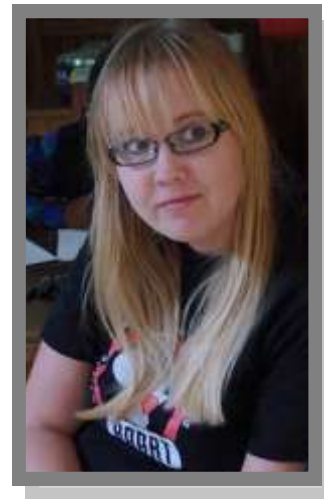
[@HAARTKenya](https://twitter.com/HAARTKenya)

## Volunteers of the month



A2ES Volunteer

Grace Mwende



Volunteer/Intern

Anni Alexander