



AWARENESS AGAINST HUMAN TRAFFICKING

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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INTRODUCTION

December was a month with an evacuation victims of trafficking on an unprecedented. 29 women and 1 baby came from Libya, through Sudan and Ethiopia and came to Nairobi. You can the first part of the story about how the women were rescued in this issue. We will keep you updated on the progress of this case as we work on reintegration and rehabilitation of the victims.

In December, we had training sessions with our partners and volunteers as we are discussing how to go forward and create awareness and create a network for referring and assisting victims of human trafficking. We also had sessions with Young@HAART. We trained Young@HAART members to do research and they helped us with completing a needs assessment. By doing this, they learned some valuable skills they can use in the future.

Also in this months newsletter, our programme assistant Winnie Mutevu talks about her recent trip to Rome for a symposium. Winnie met a lot of other young people from all over the world who work on the issues of human trafficking and prostitution.



HAART in Rome

Winnie took some pictures when she was in Rome in November, see pictures on [facebook.com/haart.ke](https://www.facebook.com/haart.ke)

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Home from Libya in time for Christmas (Part 1)

By Sophie Otiende

A few months ago, a young man approached HAART about his sister who is stuck in Libya. One of our volunteers who tirelessly works in his community to ensure that these cases are reported referred the young man to us. The brother had been in contact with her and she had complained of mistreatment and not being paid by her employer. After taking the necessary information from him, it was obvious that this was a case of human trafficking. His sister travelled to Libya and was promised a hefty salary for being a domestic worker in Libya. As soon as she got to Libya, her passport was taken from her, she was overworked and was not being compensated according to the terms of the contract. This is a classic human trafficking story. Most people are aware of this type of trafficking because the media has highlighted the plight of migrant workers in places like Saudi Arabia.

HAART tried to contact the sister but it was not easy to reach her through the number that her brother had given. It was extremely important that we gather all the information needed to follow up the case. HAART decided to contact the International Organization for Migration (IOM) in Tripoli to assist in following up the case. However, the information that was available initially was very little to go by, but HAART still kept the case open.

A few weeks ago, the brother contacted HAART again with a new number for the sister. He also gave an additional number of the friend of the sister who was also in Libya. The sister was still unreachable but the friend was contacted and it was easy to get information from her. She not only relayed to us her story but also gave numbers of other victims in Libya that might need rescuing. The information she gave us is that there were several girls stuck in domestic labor in Libya. She also informed us that more than sixteen women are stranded in Tripoli in the building that was the former Kenyan embassy. The Kenyan embassy in Libya was closed after the outbreak of civil war that rocked the nation in July 2014. According to the reports, some of the staff that worked in the Kenyan embassy were killed and the embassy was closed in a rush. All of these girls arrived at the embassy after it had been closed. Some of the girls arrived at the embassy as far back as July and have been living in deplorable conditions since then. They are also living in fear because of the reports that the war in Libya is getting worse and their security at the embassy might be an issue.

Before we got this case, HAART was in contact with a lady who had raised concern about the situation in Libya. She was employed by a good family but was concerned about some of her friends. However, she never managed to connect us with those friends and it was only after getting in touch with the women at the embassy that we realized that she was one of them. She has been extremely helpful in gathering information about all the women and helping us communicate with them.

We contacted the Kenyan government about the issue because some of the women did not have their passports and traveling from Libya without any form of travel document would be difficult. The Kenyan government told us that upon getting the information about the women, they sent an officer who will facilitate their rescue. IOM have been

very cooperative and have agreed to cover the cost of flights for all the girls that were stranded in Libya. HAART commends the urgency with which IOM Libya handled this case and their quick follow up with the women in Libya. This clearly shows the importance of networks in fighting human trafficking. The burden of fighting modern day slavery becomes a little lighter when organizations work together.

The plans were underway for evacuating the women when tragedy struck. The only functioning airport was bombed and could not be used for travel. This meant that the IOM Libya team and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs had to think of an alternative option for these women to get out of Libya. The women were in a state of panic when they heard the airport was bombed.

Their hopes for ever setting eyes on their loved ones died with the bombing of the airport in Tripoli. It was not easy convincing them to stay hopeful and that there were alternative options for getting out of Libya. At this point, we were worried about the welfare of the women because they were running out of food and money. They had managed to get food by each of them donating the little money they had. Some of them had been in the embassy for more than six months and were now broke. This meant that in some cases they had to rely on good Samaritans to fend for themselves. We were especially worried about the welfare of the women with infants. The women included two women with infants that were 2 weeks and five weeks respectively. There was also a woman who was six months pregnant and was yet to receive the medical care that she needs in her condition.

IOM Libya looked for alternative options and decided to take the women through Tunisia in a bus and from there to Kenya. The women were excited when they heard about the plan and were prepared for the trip back home. However, when the day arrived, they were to face disappointment again. The women were full of excitement as they got into the bus and were headed to Tunisia but the trip had to halt when one of them fell seriously ill. They took a detour to the hospital and the doctor declared her unfit to travel. They had to leave her in the hospital as the others continued with their journey to the border. When they got to the border, the border officials in Tunisia denied them entry. The government official who was escorting them tried everything but they were not allowed to get into Tunisia. This meant that they had to go back to the embassy. As expected the women were heartbroken; it seemed to them that fate had decided that they would not leave Libya.

IOM Libya and Ministry of Foreign Affairs had to go to the drawing board again and look for an alternative route to get these women home. HAART kept in touch with the women the whole time through communication via WhatsApp. Two of the women were really helpful in ensuring that the group stayed calm by passing on the information that we gave to them. *Read two of this story in the next issue.*

HAART in Rome to discuss Human Trafficking with Pope Francis

By Winnie Mutevu

Networking is one of the most powerful ways of having good organization and institutions do great things together. This is one way which makes individuals contribute and have their voices heard without competing with each other. In our world today, this is the only way we can afford to have an impact in our fields due to the diversity in the problems we face.

Pope Francis's wish was to have youths from all over the world who have been working with trafficking cases and prostitution or have been victims of these crimes to come together and find solutions for our nations in ending these objectifying crimes. This led to a symposium on Young People Against Prostitution and Human Trafficking: The Greatest Violence Against Women being held on the 15th and the 16th of November 2014. The Pope has rightly identified these crimes as ones of the most urgent social challenges for the globalised world.

The symposium took place in the Casina Pio IV in the Vatican which is the headquarters of the pontifical Academy. It aimed at giving young people from all over the world a chance to speak about some of the following topics:

- Condemn prostitution as a human rights violation and trafficking in persons as a crime against humanity around the world, beyond the particularities that each country adopts
- Strengthen the visibility and/or promote actions aiming at prevention adopted as an instrument of rights recognition and defense.
- Strengthen family structures as an anchor and support of a world of possibilities and opportunities for all to build a more just, equitable and inclusive society.
- Empowering young people to play a leading role within the state and civil society to change the paradigm and imagine a world without violence and prostitution, free of human trafficking.

HAART, being a COATNET members, was requested to provide a young person who has been dealing with victims of human trafficking in the past two year. I happened to be chosen for the role and I was required to provide a paper on “Young@HAART – Youths fighting human trafficking in Kenya”.

On the first day of the symposium, I shared my experiences with dealing with victims of human trafficking and how I have seen them transform and become super survivors. The challenges we encounter in our field in Kenya, like lack of political will to implement the Trafficking in Persons Act and lack of cooperation from law enforcers, seemed to be the norm in most of the countries that were represented at the symposium. However, from the African countries which were represented, Kenya was the only African country where we have its people being trafficked to Europe and other continents in the world. Forced labor is the most common form of exploitation in Kenya but we have a growing sex tourism industry down at the coast where we have alarming numbers of children involved in prostitution being reported every day.

Women, men and children must be rescued, rehabilitated and reintegrated to form a new global family where everybody has an important role to play to ensure that we live in harmony, peace and love. Traffickers are highly organized in forming their networks, and so must we be if we want to defeat them.

As we celebrate this Christmas, let us ensure that our activities do not fuel human trafficking. Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Other young people from all over the world (Africa, Asia, Europe, and North America) also had a chance to share their experiences in their field of work when it comes to fighting against modern forms of slavery. Asian and European countries appeared to be source and destination areas for trafficked people for sexual exploitation. Some organizations were also purely dealing with the hospitality sector where they directly deal with hotels in fighting modern day slavery. We were all using similar methods to combat the crimes and the delegates were open to share their instruments and strategies with the other delegates to implement in their own countries. HAART borrowed a few of these and we hope to integrate them in our programs next year.

A number of survivors of human trafficking also had a chance to share their experiences and the impact they have had on their governments and other victims of trafficking. The work they are doing in their countries is commendable. It was clear from all the presentations that human trafficking and prostitution are global problems. All sectors need to be involved for us to be successful in eliminating these crimes out of our world by 2020.

The Pope came and shared his views concerning this issue on the last day of the symposium. This clearly showed how committed he is and how this was an initiative that is close to his heart.

Key recommendations:

- Prevention of trafficking in persons
- Advocacy to have the policies on trafficking of persons implemented
- Dignified shelters for survivors of trafficking
- Networking and use of existing structures in the religious institutions
- Training on safe migration
- Pushing the government to do all that which needs to be done in fighting human trafficking and prostitution as clearly stated in the declaration made after the two day symposium.

These were the main recommendations which were brought forward and representatives from all countries requested to implement them in their programmes.



Awareness Against Human Trafficking

P. O. Box 26893 - 00504 Nairobi
Kenya

Phone: +254 738 506 264

E-mail: info@haartkenya.org

WE ARE ON THE WEB!!!

PLEASE VISIT US AT:

HAARTKENYA.ORG

Follow US ON FACEBOOK

FACEBOOK.COM/HAART.KE

Upcoming events

- 10 workshops at the grass root level organized by our volunteers
- Training of partners
- 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

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



This month we are dedicating the volunteers of the month to two brave women who were among the victims of trafficking in Libya. We cannot share their names or their identities in any way, but they kept us informed at every step of the way and were crucial in not only saving themselves, but also their friends at the Embassy. They sent the pictures above on WhatsApp.