

MODERN SLAVERY

By Malcolm Baird, RC Brighton North

What Can Rotarians Do to Help Alleviate Modern Slavery ? Part 1

A good and common question among Rotarian colleagues particularly after advising them, "THERE ARE MORE SLAVES ON EARTH NOW THAN AT ANY TIME IN HUMAN HISTORY".

The Global Slavery Index 2016 www.globallslaveryindex.org estimates 45.8 million in some form of modern slavery. The analysis covers 167 countries and includes an assessment and rating of Government responses to the issue. There can be different definitions of Modern Slavery, with the Index report covering situations of exploitation and control, inability to leave because of threats, violence, coercion, abuse of power or deception, with treatment akin to a farm animal, refer Appendix 1. 58% of those living in modern slavery are in 5 countries. An introduction to Modern Slavery (short video Sept 2015) assists our understanding.

<https://vimeo.com/140641794>

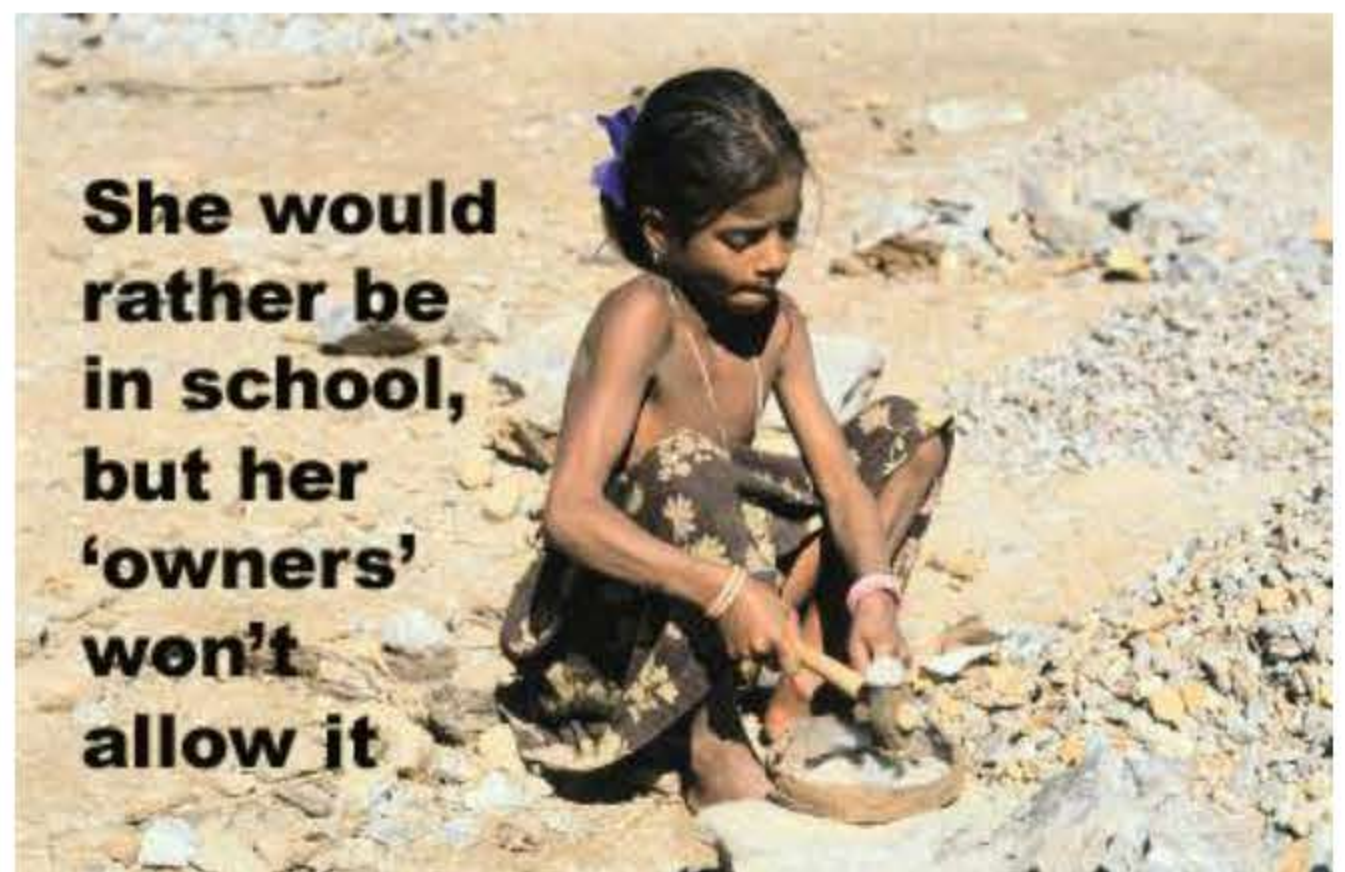
The Free The Slaves analysis is 78% are in industries where manual labour is needed, such as farming, ranching, logging, mining, fishing, brick making and in service industries, dish washers, janitors, gardeners and house maids and then 22% trapped in forced prostitution or Sex slavery. It is estimated of those in slavery, 55% are Women and girls and 45% Men and Boys, with approx 26% under the age of 18yrs.

<https://au.pinterest.com/VeriteFairLabor/products-made-with-forced-labor>

1. Firstly, **Create Awareness** in Rotarian circles and within the wider public, of the plight of millions who are physically and mentally held in servitude as slaves for commercial gain.

This can be done with Rotarians learning more on the subject by having speakers at Rotary Club meetings, District Conferences and Rotary Conventions - Speakers covering, Slavery, Human Trafficking and Corporate Ethical Supply Chains and projects that rescue and provide protection, refuge, rehabilitation and education centres. Having booths at Conferences and Conventions, promoting such projects.

Rotary International and Foundation has geared its humanitarian work around 6 Areas of Focus and alleviating Slavery does not sit squarely under any particular one of them. Rotary International, the Foundation, Districts and their Clubs do magnificent humanitarian work under all the 6 Areas of Focus. So What Can Rotarians Do to Help Alleviate Slavery, under the Areas of Focus ? Two stand out for longer term prevention:



2. Elevate, "Basic Education and Literacy"

One of the world's biggest challenges is the extent of poverty and inequality across the globe and certainly within many developing and 3rd world countries. The common belief is that the cycle of poverty can be alleviated / broken through Education. It would be highly desirable that every child has the opportunity of some education, to be able to read and write, to solve problems, have skills, trade skills, understand health and hygiene, have ethics and become self sufficient with skills for employment so as to contribute in the local community. Education for children can assist to lead a family out of poverty and provide hope and opportunity. Through education the cycle of poverty, the need for migration and the vulnerability to human trafficking and slavery can also be broken.

There are a number of Rotary Club and District examples of supporting "Basic Education and Literacy" projects. The School of St Jude, in Tanzania – "fighting poverty through education", is a prime Australian Rotary success example, which may have equals from other Rotary School funding Initiatives in other parts of the world.

MODERN SLAVERY – continued

3. Elevate – "Economic and Community Development" - Help Create and Develop more Viable Communities.

In the Rotary Foundation 2014-15 Annual Report under the Area of Focus, "Economic and Community Development" it reports The Canadian Adopt a Village in Laos projects, P18, outlines a prime example of Education Resourcing plus they include other Areas of Focus initiatives, building dams, levelling crop fields, installing water tanks, providing water purifiers, toilets, solar panels, school facilities, health and medical centres, the facilities needed by that developing community – covering many Areas of Focus. Providing long term Community facilities and thereby opportunity, growth and sustainable futures.

The Rotary International publication, Areas of Focus - Project Strategies, are an excellent guide.

The Rotary International Foundation would have many more examples of highly successful "Basic Education and Literacy" and "Economic and Community Development" projects. Publication and promotion of such projects, explaining the how and why of their success could prompt more applications, prompt other clubs funding support and / or the Foundation could offer \$2 for \$1 in grant funding to expand the impact and make a difference in these humanitarian areas of focus. This approach could over time help to alleviate modern slavery along with assisting in a number of Humanitarian Areas of Focus.

Let's promote more projects and their funding.



In the Next Edition of The Networker. Part 2

What Can Rotarians Do to Help Alleviate Modern Slavery ?

4. Rotarians to Influence Corporations, Governments and Consumers – Supply Chain Ethics & Legislation Enforcement
5. Put the subject of Modern Slavery on the Rotary International Agenda - and Develop a long term Strategy.

An articulated Strategy would demonstrate and enhance the reality of what Rotary International stands for, by changing opportunity in communities in greatest need. Rotary International would truly be revitalised, enhance and retain its reputation from its actions of being the leading Humanitarian Organization in the world.

If people do nothing, if we Rotarians do nothing, there will be little change and the scale of Modern Slavery will live on. Let's be the Rotarians that speak up and lead an abolition movement as part of our humanitarian endeavours.

Malcolm Baird is available for Club presentations.

Read about The Rotarian Action Group Against Slavery <http://ragas.online/>



The Child Slaves of the Brick Fields should/could be at school. The cycle of Bonded Slavery could be broken with education.