July 2011

www.acrath.org .au

ACRATH NEWS

ACRATH explores way to assist those who have been trafficked

On June 27 at the Melbourne Magistrates Court, ACRATH organised a meeting with Victims of Crimes Assistance Tribunal (VOCAT) and human trafficking groups. Present were a barrister, as well as people from Red Cross, Project Respect, the Magistrates Court, the Fitzroy Legal Service, the Dept of Justice Victims Support Agency, the Anti Slavery Project, Allens Arthur Robinson and ACRATH—Stancea Vichie, Therese Power and Christine Carolan. Christine writes "I was rapt that so many people were all able to work together to shine some light on the issue of financial assistance to survivors of trafficking into Australia. I was really reassured by the description of the Tribunal experience as a therapeutic experience with the applicant being recognized and validated. I would like to explore further the possibility of bringing applications into one court. I understand this is not simple but I think it is a conversation worth having. We are now talking about 'assistance' rather than compensation when we talk about what VOCAT can offer. I was disappointed that the inclusion of trafficking into the compensable crimes schedule wasn't possible. I was hopeful for a quick fix there. I was grateful for the advice to get the claims started as soon after a trafficking survivor could face making the claim". Christine Carolan offers us the following excerpt from a report from the Office of the UN High Commission for Human Rights. "It is a reminder that we are working on an issue of global concern. Maybe we can build some answers here to share globally." **Geneva (1 June 2011) - The United Nations Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in persons, especially women and children, Joy Ngozi Ezeilo,** warned that "trafficked persons are often seen as 'instruments' of criminal investigation, rather than as holders of rights." Concerned of the gap between the law and the practice, the expert reiterated that "as victims of human rights violations, trafficked persons have the right to an effective remedy for harms committed against them....Trafficked persons are rarely known to have received compensation, as they are often not provided with the information, legal and other assistance and residence status necessary to access it." http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/hrcouncil/docs/17session/A-HRC-17-35.pdf

Public Meeting May 30

The public meeting on May 30 at the Cardinal Knox Centre in East Melbourne brought together 109 people with a cross section of ages and backgrounds. Media representatives from KAIROS & George Negus were present. The participants were surprised by the shared statistics. They were encouraged by the work of ACRATH. Sr Louise Cleary discussed the crucial need to address why there is a high demand for trafficked persons. She said that there was a need to educate men and women about the "sexualisation and objectification of human beings". Louise shared practical ways to become involved in the combat against trafficking. Christine Carolan spoke of the campaigns against child labour and slavery in the chocolate trade. She quoted an Age report highlighting how public awareness of Fair Trade products has grown significantly. In 2009 Australian consumed 4.5 million dollars worth of Fair Trade and in 2010 purchases had grown to 74 million dollars worth of Fair trade chocolates. (Age 19/4/11) Sarah Birrell from Allens Arther Robinson Law Firm spoke of the difficulties of making successful claims for compensations for victims due to the sophistication of the Traffickers and the subtle forms of coercion used. Michaela Guthridge from Good Shepherd spoke on sham and servile marriages. She explained how deception and coercion are used to procure "wives." The meeting ended with a lively question time. It was good to see people moving towards the Fair Trade stall, signing up for the e news and looking for ways to become involved in ACRATH activities.

Sr. Louise Cleary csb

Christine Carolan

ACRATH thanks KAIROS Catholic Journal for the complimentary photographs & information from the ACRATH Public Meeting 30 May 2011.

Forum Human Trafficking at Social Policy Connections in Victoria

Social Policy Connections hosted a Forum on Human Trafficking on June 30 in Box Hill. Jennifer Burn, director of the Anti-Slavery Project based at the University of Technology, Sydney was the first guest speaker. She told us that she had just received a call from a trafficked woman whom she had first met in 2003. This woman is now in a loving relationship, pregnant and about to become an Australian citizen. A joyful conclusion for Jennifer as the woman had once told Jennifer that the Trafficker had said to her -"nobody cares about women like you." Jennifer spoke about modern day slavery as being "a prison without walls." She has 70 clients. Michaela Guthridge from Good Shepherd spoke on Forced and Servile Marriages. She gave examples of women who had been forced into marriage and often treated violently. She questioned whether the word 'marriage' was an appropriate word to use. Christine Carolan, from ACRATH challenged those present to educate themselves on trafficking issues, raise with others what they have learnt, buy Fair Trade products, fundraise to provide resources for women who have been trafficked & to look to policy development that will support these women.

Participants at the forum.

****

Australian Institute of Criminology Information Session.

At Mildura on May 26, the Australian Institute of Criminology (AIC) held an information session on Trafficking of Persons in Australia. As I was in the area I visited key people in Mildura and asked them if they could attend this session with me.

The AIC were exploring what those present considered to be 'trafficking'; what leads to this happening; who is likely to do it, and why it happens, as well as the consequences of trafficking for the victims. The AIC had reason to believe labour trafficking in the agricultural industry was occurring in the area, so this aspect of trafficking was their particular focus. Participants were told they would be kept informed of further developments but to be aware themselves of what might be happening. Sr Therese Power.

In recent months ACRATH Victoria have given 14 presentations in Secondary Colleges, at University level, at the Diocesan Social Justice Day and at Spirituality in the Pub in Wangaratta.

Photographed with ACRATH are students & staff from Presentation College Windsor and Galen College.

ACRATH Victoria move from Abbotsford on July 21 to The Kilbride Centre, 52 Beaconsfield Parade, Albert Park 3206. Please join us for our house warming at the Kilbride Centre on August 12th from 3.30pm onwards.

ACRATH supports the work of Project Respect.

On June 23, I attended a "Thank You event" conducted by Project Respect. Kelly Hinton, the Executive Director of Project Respect thanked those present for their support over recent years. Project Respect had contact with over 500 women in the sex industry last year and provided over 800 hours of individual counseling. Of these women 75% were single mothers: 70% spoke of childhood or adult sexual abuse and 60% had housing stress.

Funding is an issue for Project Respect so all donations are gratefully accepted and will assist this extremely marginalised, stigmatised group of women to continue to access the services that they need.

Donations can be donated online at www.projectrespect.org.au/donate.

I found the evening a most moving experience, as I heard workers (who are mostly volunteers) tell stories of women they are supporting.

Sr. Therese Power rsm.

ACRATH News from around Australia

AIC Meeting in Perth. On June 8th about 30 people gathered at the UWA Extension Campus in Claremont for an information session on Trafficking in Australia facilitated by members of the Australian Institute of Criminology. Four ACRATH members attended with other NGOs. On hand was a significant amount of written material, the fruit of up to date research on Trafficking in Australia and the Federal Government response in collaboration with a number of other agencies. One of the main purposes of the session was for participants to highlight to the AIC what areas we thought needed further research in WA. It was a very lively meeting with a great deal of sharing with WA agencies.

Presentations at WA Universities. ACRATH members recently spoke with students at Notre Dame University in their "Living Human Rights" Unit. The main focus apart from raising awareness was to encourage student engagement. As a result of this two students are to travel to Cambodia and Thailand and volunteer with NGO's working in Rescue and Recovery Centres who are on the ACRATH Aust-Asia Anti-Trafficking Contact list. A talk was also given at Murdoch University as part of the "Woman and Human Rights' lecture.

On May 25th some members attended **Anurahda Koirala's** talk at the Murdoch University. Ms Koirala was named 2010 CNN Hero of the year and was also awarded the Peace Festival Award. She has been contributing relentlessly to anti-trafficking campaigns in Nepal since 1993.

She is the chairperson and founder of Maiti Nepal. Seeing her was a great reminder of the difference a single person can make when they are so courageous and dedicated.

Guidelines for visiting brothels. Some members have been working on the guidelines for visiting brothels. Salvation Army have been of assisting us. Songkran gifts were delivered to help the women celebrate the Thai New Year.

Kathy Fagan.

News from ACRATH S.A.

We are continuing to add new members to our committee. Our newer members are involved in Catholic Education and assist us with our work of awareness raising, particularly in the schools. An event organised by the Australian Institute of Criminology will take place in Adelaide on July 29 from 10am to 12 noon at the Adelaide Convention Centre. We are promoting attendance at this event.

We have organised awareness raising events; several opportunities for viewing and discussion of the film 'Jammed' and a fondue party for post school leavers. We are continuing to inform ourselves in relation to the debate on the decriminalising of prostitution.

Sr Anne Tormey.

An article from ACRATH NSW, being a companion to those who have been trafficked into Australia.

The following account is about the women and men who have been referred by Salvation Accommodation, Red Cross and AFP into a project run by the Sisters of St Joseph in Sydney.

Sr Margaret Ng writes: "We have completed this year's course on 'Skin Care and Make Up'. It was good to see the women's confidence grow. Our visit to the Blue Mountains was a good opportunity to build community. We have recently started cooking classes as part of the Life Skills course. It has been a good way to improve the women's English and cooking skills".

ACRATH NSW Partnerships.

It was good to be part of the AFP discussions in Canberra and the meetings in Melbourne for the National Roundtable and the Housing Roundtable meetings. Also present were the CFMEU National Secretary, Michael O'Connor as well as the Master Builders Association representative. He expressed interest in the research being undertaken into the Construction Industry.
partnership with Australian Institute of Criminology, the Archdiocese of Sydney and the Sisters of St. Joseph will be underway by the end of the year.

Sr Margaret Ng. rsj

Stories from Cambodia. At the **ACRATH WA** May meeting we welcomed Chloe and Joel Bond. They shared their experiences of being in Cambodia for the last 3 years where they had been sharing in a role of managing a set of after-care homes through Destiny Rescue. The girls aged 6-18 had been either sexually abused in their home villages or were survivors of human trafficking. The project was made up of around 45 girls who were living in 5 homes. These girls were unable to live at home due to safety reasons so these after-care homes served as a safe place for rehabilitation, rest, counselling, beginning and continuing education, vocational training and preparation to return back to their communities. They felt that the biggest responsibility and constant challenges was maintaining and protecting the dignity of the girls. Photographed below is Brianna, Marie Therese, Joel & Chloe. Visit www.acrath.org.au to read more.

Nestle has extended the use of UTZ Certified cocoa to the entire Kit-Kat range in Australia. This is akin to Fair trade but not quite as good. We encourage you to keep sending postcards on behalf of the children who are trafficked into the plantations to produce our chocolates.

ACRATH Website. User friendly tips.

Have you seen the new look ACRATH website? Uploaded in April the site is interactive giving visitors the opportunity to record their comments on the various items that have been posted on the site. We would love to hear from you. Because the site is database rather than a series of pages it is easier to perform a search. Visitors have the option of searching by keywords or by a drop down list of categories. Making a donation to ACRATH online is simply a matter of clicking the donate button in the top right hand of the screen. This takes you to the donate page where you can follow the instruction to make your donation.

To keep up to date with new material posted on the ACRATH site register for RSS feeds. This can be done by clicking on the RSS icon at the top of the screen. If you use Outlook as your email program a message will be delivered to the RSS feeds box on Outlook. In Internet Explorer feeds can be viewed by clicking on the feeds tab in the favourites bar. To register for RSS feeds when using other browsers, instruction can be found in the browser's help line.

in just over two months there have been just over 5,000 unique visitors to the ACRATH site. We would love to see this number increase so that our site moves further up the google search list for human trafficking. Please encourage others to visit our site. It contains a wealth of information about human trafficking in all its forms as well as providing resources and suggestions on how to help fight against this in the modern day form of slavery. Sr Noelene Simmons ms

Sr. Angela in Cebu.

Angela Reed rsm, a member of ACRATH, is in Cebu, in the Philippines, working with 30 women who have been trafficked. These women have allowed Angela to interview them as part of her study & research titled "I have a voice". Angela writes, "They have been very generous in allowing me to interview them. Their honesty brings me to my knees. They have been through such horrific experiences, yet they have such a desire to move positively into the future". Angela is planning a graduation ceremony. She will present them with a "I have a voice" shirt. Angela hopes to continue the graduation celebrations at a beach resort.

Check the ACRATH website for the recently released Trafficking in Persons Report 2011

Thank you to all those who contributed to this edition of ACRATH. Sr Joan Kennedy pbvm (Editor)

You can partner with ACRATH to make a difference, you can:

1. Offer housing for people trafficked into Australia.
2. Contribute or fundraise towards the salary of a project worker who will advocate for crimes compensation.
3. Join the trail watch of traffickers in Sydney or Melbourne.
4. Educate yourself on human trafficking and share what you have learnt with others.
5. Fair Trade your home and work-place.

Slavery Still Exists Today.
Yes! Here in Australia.
Increase Awareness
You can help stop it!!

View our new look website on www.acrath.org.au

Published by ACRATH
The Kilbride Centre
52 Beaconsfield Parade
Albert Park 3206
(Our new address as from July 21 , 2011)

Australian Catholic Religious Against Trafficking in Humans.

And that is who we are - we represent more than 8000 women and men who belong to religious orders and who are passionate about eliminating trafficking and slavery in Australia.

We also work in collaboration with other groups and individuals –both government and non-government.

Our Inspiration

"Nobody has the right to treat you as her or his slave and you should not make anyone your slave."
Article 4 United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

"I have come that you may have life and have it to the full" ***John 10.10***