

HOTLINE FOR MIGRANT WORKERS

Annual Report 2005



Message from the Chairwoman of the Board - Myriam Darmoni-Sharvit

During 2005, the mandate of the Hotline for Migrant Workers continued to grow. As our organizational capacity increased, so did the number of clients we were able to assist and the sophistication of our work methods. In this report, you will read about the issues, our activities and some of the people who make them happen.

Unfortunately migrant populations continue to desperately need our assistance. Although fewer migrant workers were deported in 2005, Israeli policy regulating migrant labor has not changed significantly. In fact, trafficking for labor continues unabated and is garnering increasing concern locally and internationally. Our presence in detention centers is crucial; we devoted significantly increased resources to relatively new populations including refugees (many from Sudan) and foreign minors. Meanwhile, the risk of deportation for children of migrant workers was unabated. As such, advocating for status of children continued to be one of our primary focuses.

We have observed steady progress in the area of trafficking in women. An increase in enforcement has led to more brothels going underground, thus decreasing the number of cases opened against traffickers. With the state now providing legal representation and some rehabilitative services to women, the focus of our activities shifted somewhat. They are increasingly aimed at achieving rights for women such as legal redress and work and stay visas and ensuring that the assistance provided by the State is sensitive to women's diverse and complex needs. We have also devoted more efforts to helping women leave the sex trade through our *Choosing Freedom* initiative.

Organizationally, we had a fertile year. Sigal Rozen, our Media Advisor, went on extended maternity leave mid year. She was temporarily replaced by last year's national service volunteers- Eli Shany followed by Romm Levkowitz. Zoya Komem, who is our Coordinator for the *Choosing Freedom* project, went on maternity leave in December and was temporarily replaced by Rita Chaiken from Isha L'Isha-Haifa Feminist Center. Three new national service volunteers joined us in 2005 including Shani Cohen, Shachar Shirman and Linoy Schwartz. They have been instrumental in our ability to assist more clients.

In December, we welcomed some new members to our Board of Directors including Yishai Hadas, Rabbi Dr. Ariel Pickard and Noga Shavit. They replaced outgoing board members Rabbi Levi Lauer and Hanny Ben Yisrael. In an effort to increase support from Israelis, we held a fundraising event. A tremendous success, we are particularly grateful to Lili Angel for all of her efforts in planning the event.

We continue to present to local and international groups. Notably, Nomi Levenkron educated various audiences about the harsh realities of trafficking throughout the US in March. The highlight of the trip was participation at a Jewish Women International conference on violence against women.

As always, we are grateful to our friends and supporters who enable us to do what we do. We welcome your participation.

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VOLUNTEERS

In 2005 over 150 volunteers worked with the HMW, providing assistance to migrants, helping victims of sex trafficking, as translators, in various professional capacities and by organizing special events.

Migrant Workers

Background

In 2005, the policy of the revolving door - deporting migrant workers while simultaneously bringing in new ones – continued:

- Since the establishment of the Deportation Police in 2002, about 50,000 workers have been deported.
- In 2005, the Deportation Police employed nearly 500 policemen and invested 250 million NIS (\$53 million) in deportation. A total of 6,526 migrants were deported in 2005. In 2004 the number was 18,669.
- During the same period, the government issued 77,000 permits for employing migrant workers.
- Each new legal worker coming to Israel pays up to \$10,000 in illegal recruitment fees to manpower agencies and employers.
- Despite deportation, the number of Israelis employed in sectors where migrant workers are issued permits has not increased significantly.
- Israel is one of the few countries in the world where workers are bound to their employers in order to maintain legal status. If, for whatever reason they are not working for the employer written on their work permit, even if the employer is abusive, they become "illegal" and risk deportation.
- Nearly two thirds of migrant workers in Israel currently lack legal status as a result of the binding policy.

Instead of an exclusive focus on deportation, we believe that the money could be better used for enforcement against violating employers.

Years of failed policy is beginning to attract the attention of policy makers inside and outside of Israel. For example:

- The State Comptroller, in his 2005 report, stated: “The removal of migrant workers, which was supposed to be undertaken while strictly maintaining their human rights, was a series of failures.”
- A committee established by the Ministry of the Interior to deal with challenges to immigration recently published initial recommendations. These include abolishment of the binding policy, issuing of three year visas, closing the Deportation Police and enabling those who have spent at least 10 years in Israel the option of citizenship.
- The US State Department has begun to express concern over trafficking for labor, not just prostitution. Its 2005 Human Rights report on Israel stated, “The law prohibits only trafficking in women for the purpose of sexual exploitation; however, trafficking for the purpose of labor as well as for prostitution remained a serious problem.” The report also noted “Some employers forced individual laborers who entered the country, both legally and illegally, to live under conditions that constituted trafficking.”
- In 2005, we observed an increased willingness by the Enforcement Unit of the Ministry of Industry, Trade and Labor to prosecute abusive employers.

The Israeli government is slowly recognizing the short-sighted and counter-productive nature of its policy. We believe that we will witness significant movement on this issue in the coming years.

Maria’s Story

An Indian national, Maria was brought to Israel in 2000 by an Indian family employed in the diamond industry. She worked all hours of the day and night, every day of the month, cooking, cleaning, ironing and doing all of the housework. Once a year, Maria was entitled to an unpaid vacation of up to a month to visit her daughter (nine years old) and family in India. Upon arrival in India, she received half of her yearly salary from her employer’s brother (\$2,000). The other half of her salary was paid to Maria’s brother only after she returned to Israel - this to ensure she returned to work. Her passport was confiscated at all times by her employer or his family in India.

After four years of employment she was granted one day a month off. On those free days, she would go to church. There, she spoke with the priest about her plight- and specifically about a prohibition by her employers to visit her daughter in India. Concerned, the priest contacted us and we agreed to help her escape. On July 13th, after a series of complicated arrangements, we picked her up and took her to a Christian hostel in Jaffa. Since that time, we have made many efforts on her behalf:

- We identified a lawyer who agreed to represent her for damages in labor court against her employers.
- We filed a criminal complaint with the police. The case was closed for lack of public interest and a subsequent appeal filed by us was denied.
- We have been working obtain legal status for Maria. On her behalf, we requested that the Ministry of Interior recognize her as a victim of trafficking. This would make her eligible for the same temporary visa that women trafficked sex receive. Due to the lack of response, we are filing a legal petition on her behalf.

Migrant Workers

Crisis Intervention

Telephone Hotline: In 2005 our telephone hotline operated from Sunday to Thursday between 10:00-18:00 and Friday from 9:00-13:00. Volunteers answered about 400 calls a month. They provided information and assistance on topics such as release on bail, rights during arrest and deportation, refugee status, false arrests and police violence. In addition to helping about 4,700 callers, the Crisis Intervention Center provided paralegal representation to 962 workers in dealings with various governmental authorities. This is an increase of 64% percent from the 586 we assisted in 2004. The success rate of our representation also increased substantially - from 50% to 77%. This advocacy included sending 1,804 letters to various government offices on behalf of individual clients.

Visits to Detention Centers: HMW volunteers made 183 visits to three detention facilities around the country, meeting with 1,800 detainees. They offered information, legal advice and moral support. Volunteers also provided detainees with humanitarian aid such as phone cards, books, and clothing. In addition to monitoring prison conditions, volunteers analyzed rulings on deportations handed down by the Deportee's Court in detention. The information was used to check government statistics, in HMW publications, for press releases and as the basis for legal action.

Hard to Reach and New Populations: In 2005, we placed special emphasis on reaching Thai and Chinese workers – currently underserved due to linguistic and geographic barriers. Fifteen Thai and Chinese speaking volunteers greatly assisted us in these efforts. Accordingly, 11% of our callers were Chinese and 32% were Thai. We also began to assist new populations located in detention centers. These include large groups of unaccompanied minors and an increase in refugees, particularly from Sudan. You will read more about these issues below.

Closed Skies Procedure: Increasingly we are using a procedure whereby migrant workers in Israel can gain new employment as an alternative to deportation. It has many flaws but we view it as an important measure in breaking the cycle of deportation and bringing in of new workers. We assisted 425 workers in implementing 'closed skies' in 2005. Of these, 115 were Thai and 69 were Chinese.

National Service at HMW

Shachar Shirman, a 19 year old, grew up on kibbutz Revadim located in the center-south of the country. She was involved in social activism from the age of 15, when she began participating in exchanges between Arabs and Jews.

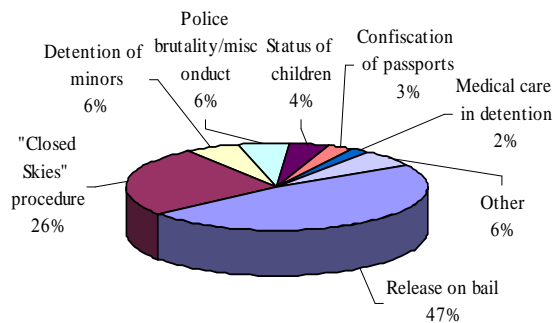
Prior to joining HMW, Shachar spent a year volunteering with an Arab/Jewish youth group called Reut Sadaka. In this context, Shachar attended an annual activism festival in Lod. There, she heard Executive Director Shevy Korzen speak about HMW and mention that we were looking for volunteers.

Shachar decided to join our staff because, as she said: "I liked the idea of using my time in a very activist oriented way. The work - including everything from writing letters to visiting detention centers - is interesting and satisfying. There is a lot of pressure to be effective because I can help release someone from detention. Although our clients really suffer, I have learned that it is possible to make a significant difference in their lives."

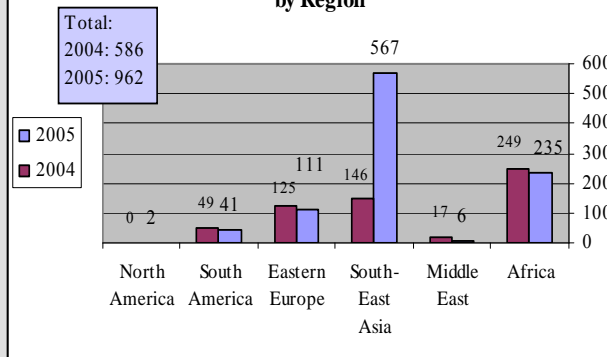
The work is challenging. Shachar mentioned that "The most difficult aspect is probably meeting clients in detention. Their morale is very low because they are not criminals and have never been in prison before. Although they are usually very grateful, sometimes they take out their frustration and anger on us. I wish I could do more to help them."

Through the HMW, she has learned about Israel, globalization and herself. She says, "I know more about how power is used and decisions are made in Israel. I see on a daily basis the impact of global political and economic forces on the individual. I've also become better at relating to people - both those with authority and those who are affected by their decisions."

Letters Sent to the Authorities by the CIC in 2005
(1,804 letters)



Workers Represented by the CIC 2004/2005
by Region



Migrant Workers

Legal Action

Judicial Review of Deportation: The aim of this petition, filed with the Association for Civil Rights in Israel (ACRI) in 2002, is to ensure that under the Law of Entry into Israel, migrant nationals enjoy the same rights as Israelis under arrest. We requested changes in the law, advocating for judicial review of arrest within 24 hours by an independent judicial court and for release from detention (on bail) in all but extreme cases. In 2005, we witnessed some progress; migrants must be seen within four days of detention, judges are now employed and supervised by the Ministry of Justice and a pilot for translation of proceedings in prison tribunals has finally begun. However, the law not yet been changed and in early 2006, with ACRI, we submitted another petition.

Detention and Deportation of Abandoned Minors: Unaccompanied minors, escaping famine, war and orphan hood have been entering Israel in increasing numbers. Primarily from countries in Africa such as Guinea, Ghana and Sudan, the youngest known to date is 12 years old. The State of Israel regards the youth as illegal immigrants and would like to deport them. Due to our intervention, deportations have been temporarily halted. However, many youth spend months on end in detention without education, social support or hope.

In 2005 the HMW Crisis Intervention Center handled 61 cases of minors who arrived in 2004 and 2005. In 45 cases, we were able to obtain temporary release from prison, some were deported and others remained in detention. However, a long term solution for these youth is still lacking. As a result, we filed four petitions on behalf of minors requesting that proper protection mechanisms be in place before deportation, and that where the safety of the children cannot be insured in source countries, Israel should provide temporary residency and care for these children. The District Court ruled against them and subsequently, together with ACRI, we appealed to the High Court. In the meantime, the minors have been released and their deportations temporary halted. We continue to seek temporary solutions for them until a more permanent solution is found.

Release on Bail: Until recently, procedures for migrant workers wishing to be released on bail were much more stringent than those required for Israelis. This made the procedure extremely hard to implement. Following a petition filed by the HMW in December 2004, the court ruled that migrants should be allowed to post bail 24 hours a day, at three places in the country, and that cash bail as well as bank notes should be accepted. We are closely monitoring the very slow implementation of this ruling.

Airport Terminal: Prior to a recent legal petition, the State did not allow migrant workers to meet with their attorneys in the airport terminal as they were being deported. This prevented filing last minute appeals stopping the deportation. As a result of a petition filed with ACRI, attorneys can now meet with clients until they undergo the security screening and afterwards in some cases.

Summary of Legal Activity

With the help of volunteer lawyers and law students and in collaboration with other NGOs, the legal department handled 34 petitions and suits regarding migrant workers:

- 12 petitions to the High Court of Justice related to fundamental migrant worker issues
- 16 petitions to the District Court representing individuals in precedent setting cases
- 6 tort suits for unlawful detention and injuries caused by police violence.

Chinese Caregivers

In 2005, we witnessed a new phenomenon - the bringing in of 400 Chinese workers to be employed as caregivers. When paying fees of \$5,000 or more for the right to work in Israel, no one in China informed them that knowledge of Hebrew or English was a job requirement. Within a month or two of arrival, virtually all the workers found themselves without jobs - fired by employers because of an inability to communicate. We represented 10 workers in this situation including the one below.

L. Z.'s Story

L. Z., 38 is from the Ji Ling region of China. She is married with a fourteen year old son. L.Z. arrived in Israel on the 5th of March 2005, after paying \$9,000 for a permit to work as a caregiver. In China, she signed a five year work contract promising her a salary of \$1000 a month. When introduced to her potential employers by the manpower agency, they refused to employ her due to an inability to communicate in English. The manpower agency then said they would try to find her another employer and three months later offered her a different job- under the condition that she pay an additional \$600, a sum she could not afford. At that time the HMW took her case.

We submitted a petition to the District Court on her behalf. As a result, the Ministry of Interior agreed to permit her to work in a job where her language skills do not pose an obstacle. The court accepted our request that the Ministry of Interior develop a new procedure allowing caregivers in this situation to be employed in jobs relevant to their skills.

Migrant Workers

Public Policy

Sudanese Refugees: Due to the current genocide and unrest in the Darfur region of Sudan, refugees have been fleeing to the neighboring countries of Chad and Egypt. In Egypt, many suffered at the hands of security forces. Consequently, over 200 have crossed the border into Israel, primarily young men but also women, children, and unaccompanied minors. They were subsequently caught by the IDF and transferred to detention for illegal entry.

In Israel they are caught in a tangle of bureaucracy. Israel would like to return them to Egypt but, following objections from the UN and human rights groups, has not implemented a mass return. This is due to a past situation whereby Sudanese refugees in Israel were returned to Sudan and subsequently murdered. Yet Israel classifies them as enemy nationals and refuses to grant them asylum. Some have been detained for a year or more while others have spent months in prison without seeing a judge. The HMW has been working with the media to garner public attention to issue, has promoted the granting of asylum to these refugees and has filed legal petitions on their behalf. We also provided them with humanitarian aid while working to secure their release to kibbutzim.

Children of Migrants: About 1700 of children of migrant workers currently reside in Israel, and some 600 are enrolled in school. Most of them have lived in Israel from birth or a very young age. They speak Hebrew, identify with the State of Israel and consider themselves Israeli in every way. The HMW has been advocating for the government to recognize them and grant them legal status. We worked with the public, the government, the media and the legal system - using every tool available to advance citizenship. Although some limited progress has been made, the vast majority face imminent deportation. Because we fear the worst will be realized, many of our activities in 2005 were focused on children.

- **Legal Petition:** Criteria for citizenship have been established by the government but are quite narrow. Thus, the number of children who have received citizenship to date is significantly lower than what the Ministry of Interior estimates. With ACRI, we submitted a High Court petition in which we requested the cancellation of two of the more restrictive criteria for citizenship - the birth place of the child, and the requirement that parents entered the country legally. To the children, these criteria are meaningless as they do not see a difference among themselves. Furthermore, they are patently unfair to children who were born six months too late or who are being punished for something that is not their fault.

- **International Migrants Day:** Activities at our International Migrants Day event focused on children. These included a panel discussion, performances by migrant children and signing of a petition on their behalf.

- **Think Tank:** We participated in a working group meant to garner support for the plight of migrant children. It consisted of staff at a school attended by many migrant children, representatives from NGOs and concerned public figures including university professors, people with ties in the political world and successful business people.

- **Youth Training and Advocacy:** We believe affected children are the best ambassadors for their own case and are empowering them to take an active role in their fate. We recruited a group of 15 teenagers to develop and implement ideas promoting their cause. They attended a course of eight meetings where they learned skills such as presenting their case to the media (given by Shatil), lecturing on the issues and educating the public. This group also built coalitions with youth groups and developed a website and blog. They decided to tell about their lives through pictures, by photographing what it means to them to be an "Israeli". The course was very empowering for the children. As Neta, 15, from Columbia commented, "Through photography, I am really just trying to tell my own story, what I feel and my secret. My secret is that I live two separate realities. In my day to day environment, no one knows, except for my parents and brothers, that I am the child of migrant workers and have no rights in Israel. My mom told me not to say anything because we might get reported to the police. They have already arrested my mother a few times but thankfully she was released."

Activities Targeting the Public

Lectures: We conducted 46 lectures and tours for academics, lawyers, jurists, students, teachers, civil servants, international groups and attorneys. We also conducted nine lectures for groups within the migrant community to speak about issues of concern, with particular emphasis on status for children of migrant workers.

Media Items: In 2005, we initiated over 193 media items on migrant workers. These included 132 newspaper articles, 35 television appearances and 25 radio shows. We also assisted with one documentary. Our media focus was on children of migrants, deportation of minors and Sudanese refugees.

International Migrant's Day: On December 17, we held a film and cultural festival commemorating "International Migrants Day." This was in conjunction with the Tel Aviv Cinematheque, the community of migrant workers and human rights organizations. At the event, we screened four films, sold food prepared by migrant communities, arranged presentations by children of migrant workers, asked participants to sign petitions, held a panel discussion on the topic of children and distributed information. We noted increased attendance by both the migrants' community and the general public in comparison with previous years.

Trafficking in Women

Background

Between 1000-2000 women are believed to be trafficked into Israel every year to work in the sex industry, as part of a worldwide trade. They are victims of violence, threats and rape by traffickers, smugglers, pimps and clients. The women are forced to receive up to thirty clients a day, seven days a week, thirty days a month. Most of the women are from Russia, Moldova, Ukraine and Uzbekistan with numbers increasing, relatively speaking, from Uzbekistan and Ukraine. We are also seeing more women re-trafficked into Israel.

In the last few years we have observed an increase in enforcement against this crime. Although this is a welcome phenomenon, it has a few unwelcome side effects which have negatively impacted our work. Brothels are going underground - instead women are increasingly placed in discrete apartments and escort services. This makes it harder for us and the police to locate the women. Consequently, it is more difficult to reach those who wish to leave the trafficking cycle. Because finding the women is difficult for the police, we are seeing fewer women in detention and fewer cases are being opened against traffickers. Traffickers have stopped revealing themselves to women in person, thus weakening any potential testimony against them. Although there is some improvement in awareness on the part of the authorities, particularly police investigators, women's cases are more frequently handled by the Deportation Police who view them as illegal aliens and prostitutes rather than survivors with special needs. The majority of women continue to be arrested, detained and deported for illegal entry.

Consistent with our long term goal for Israeli society to take responsibility for this issue, we are happy to report that the State has begun to provide legal representation for all trafficked women. Also, the shelter is now accepting women irrespective of whether they choose to testify or not. The State, rather than us, is increasingly providing assistance to women – both in the legal sphere and in the opening of the shelter. As a result, our future work will focus less on providing direct assistance to women and more on issues of principle such as legislation, policy, training and assistance to women who are not provided assistance by the State. You will read more about these issues below.

Punishments against traffickers in 2005 ranged from plea bargains of four months to 18 years in prison. The average sentence rose from four years to five. However, plea bargains remain the norm. Confiscation of traffickers' property, although still rare (six cases), is on the rise. Unfortunately, most of the money still remains in the hands of traffickers, and when confiscated, goes to State coffers.

According to the law, the maximum legal redress a trafficking survivor can be awarded in a criminal case is 228,000NIS. In these cases, the lawyer from the state prosecutor's office, who is representing the State against the traffickers, can decide to request compensation. Although it is recommended that attorneys make these requests, in practice they often do not. Of the 27 women testifying in criminal cases in 2005, only 13 were awarded compensation ranging from 2,000-15,000 NIS. In most of these cases, the traffickers didn't pay, and even when they did, the women had difficulty claiming the money because they could not open a bank account in which to receive it. Consequently only four women actually received compensation.

Trafficking survivors may file civil cases against their traffickers through labor or tort suits. Lawyers from the Legal Aid department of the Ministry of Justice represent them in these cases. To date, they have filed 69 cases on behalf of women residing in the shelter.

Did You Know?

- According to estimates, 800,000-900,000 women are trafficked every year, mainly for the purpose of sex.
- The Israeli State-sponsored shelter accepted 103 women in 2005. Twenty four were referred by the HMW.
- In the past, trafficking worldwide was viewed as a problem of organized crime. Increasingly there is a focus on the roots of the problem such as client demand and poverty in source countries.
- During the years 2004-2005, 17 requests for temporary residency were submitted by the Legal Aid department of the Ministry of Justice on behalf of women residing in the State sponsored shelter. Of those, seven were granted, four were denied and six women are still waiting for an answer.
- In 2005, the US issued 136 T non-immigrant visas and granted 484 continued presence requests to trafficking survivors.
- Swedish law, passed in 1999, criminalizes the client and not the woman working in prostitution.
- Members of the European Parliament have recently called for a European-wide campaign dedicated to informing the general public about trafficking and to reduce client demand.
- The US Department of Justice recently reported a significant increase in the filing of cases against traffickers. In the fiscal years 2001-2005, 91 cases were filed, a 300% increase over the five previous years. Convictions during this same period rose by 109%.

Trafficking in Women

Crisis Intervention

Direct Assistance: Twenty five volunteers made 77 visits to the 3 detention facilities where trafficking survivors are detained, and provided assistance to 117 women. We referred 33 women who wished to give testimony against their traffickers to the police. Twenty four of them were subsequently moved to the shelter for prosecution witnesses. A safe and coordinated return home, with the assistance of International Organization of Migration partner agencies in countries of origin, was provided for four women. In addition, volunteers and staff made 32 visits to the shelter for prosecution witnesses.

We continue to cooperate closely with the anti-trafficking clinic at the Hebrew University law school. Seventeen out of 25 of our regular volunteers are Hebrew University law students. In addition to conducting visits to detention centers, they assist with research, and in some cases, representation. We also greatly benefited from law students at Tel Aviv University and some long-time Russian speaking volunteers who continue to be dedicated to our anti-trafficking project. We see working with law students as an important vehicle for social change; they form the next generation of the legal elite in Israel and we hope many will continue to be dedicated activists for human rights in whatever career they choose, whether in the private sector, government or academia.

Natasha, 24 years old, was trafficked from Ukraine 3 years ago. While waiting to give testimony, she got pregnant and gave birth to a baby boy. She and her baby son entered the newly opened shelter in early April 2004. Unfortunately she was not able to benefit from the shelter's program of rehabilitation through meaningful employment because she had no option of putting her son in daycare. In early 2005, we approached the Ministry of Welfare to request funding for daycare. In a precedent, which will benefit other mothers at the shelter, we received a positive answer. Throughout 2005 she testified against four of her traffickers and was also able to work. Natasha completed the process of giving testimony in August of 2005 and received an extension to her visa allowing her to continue her rehabilitation in Israel. She decided that the child would be better off with her family in the Ukraine throughout the duration of her stay. However, her visa prohibits her from leaving the country. We helped her request a leave of absence from Israel and permission to re-enter the country. The request was approved and she brought her son to the Ukraine in early 2006.

The State-Run Shelter- Maagan: At the close of 2005, the state shelter had been in operation for nearly two years. 2004, the shelter's first year in operation, was largely a time of learning for staff and the various authorities running the shelter. In 2005, we have seen stabilization and growth in terms of work methods and conditions for the women.

Women now enjoy significantly more freedom and are regularly awarded work and stay visas. A stronger emphasis on rehabilitation and education ensures that virtually all women engage in meaningful work. This prepares them for normative employment upon return to home countries. It also raises their sense of self-worth and provides them with much needed job skills and income. The women also benefit from a computer room and occasional field trips to sites of interest.

With the aim of improving the functioning of the shelter, HMW participates on a steering committee and engages in on-going dialogue with shelter staff. Through the steering committee, which includes NGOs, staff, the police and the Ministry of Social Welfare, we help to influence shelter policy. Our on-going communications are focused on sensitization and education of staff while providing a supportive and impartial ear for staff and women.

Profile of a Volunteer

Anastasya, a 22 year old law student at Hebrew University, immigrated to Israel at the age of 16 from Russia. In Israel without her family, she initially stayed on a kibbutz. Following army service, she enrolled in the law department at Hebrew University.

Pursing a law degree felt like a natural choice for Anastasya. She said "I wanted to work with people and the topic interested me." Anastasya decided to join the anti-trafficking legal clinic because "I don't think trafficking is sufficiently appreciated or developed in Israeli society, but very important." Being a Russian born immigrant gives her the ability to communicate with the women and better understand their culture.

At the clinic, Anastasya visits women in detention, writes letters on their behalf and is assisting a trafficking survivor in requesting damages. She said the most difficult aspect of the work is "meeting women who are reluctant to speak or receive assistance. It feels very discouraging." On the other hand, Anastasya gets great satisfaction from helping women who accept her assistance - whether it is transferring them to the shelter, or encouraging them to testify against their traffickers.

On a more practical level, she has gained a lot from the clinic. Anastasya said "The clinic is sharpening my people skills and giving me practical experience in applying legal principles to real cases." On a civic level, work with the clinic has increased Anastasya's awareness of social issues and the importance of giving back to the community. She added, "Even if sometimes it feels like my contributions are small and insignificant, volunteering gives me the sense that everyone has something valuable to contribute." In her future practice, she will be looking for opportunities to help the common citizen.

Trafficking in Women

Legal Action and Public Policy

Visas: Currently only women who agree to testify against their traffickers, and whose testimony is needed by the State, are awarded work and stay visas. These visas are valid until they complete giving testimony however in some cases women are awarded extension visas. We believe that all trafficked women should be entitled to extended stay allowing them to rehabilitate - irrespective of whether they give testimony or not. This is particularly true for women with extreme humanitarian needs such as those with AIDS, or those who are threatened by traffickers. In 2005 we submitted applications on behalf of six women who had given testimony but were not entitled to State representation. In one case the woman was awarded a visa, in two cases the applications were denied and we are still waiting for answers from the rest.

Friends of the Court Status: We were awarded amicus curiae status in a case involving a disabled man. The court ruled that as a part of his compensation package, the insurance company should finance visits to prostitutes. These are, in most cases, victims of trafficking. We joined in the insurance company's appeal, claiming that the court is promoting the abuse of women and organized crime. Consequently, the State Attorney has also joined the case backing our claims.

Training: In 2005, staff trained Administrative Tribunal judges, Deportation Police officials, police investigators, the Ministry of Justice and some international officials. The focus of this training was on identification of victims, ways to encourage them to give testimony and how to treat their cases with appropriate sensitivity. We view the training of State agencies and attorneys as very important. Due to implementation of a law stipulating legal representation for all trafficked women, the Legal Aid department of the Ministry of Justice is now providing representation to women in civil cases. We are assisting the Legal Aid department in identifying women in detention who would like representation. They are also consulting with us on ways in which they can be effective in both working with the women and on their behalf. We anticipate training will increase in 2006.

The Next Generation of Lawyers: In 2005 we increased cooperation with Universities including the law schools at the College of Management - Rishon L'Zion, Tel Aviv University and Hebrew University. We are seeing that years of cooperation are starting to pay off as there is more interest in the topic on the academic level. Cooperation ranges from training (Tel Aviv University) to co-sponsorship of a major conference on human trafficking (College of Management). In each institution, the director of our trafficking program, Nomi Levenkron, has taught courses on the issue. This is important on many levels; we are educating the next generation of lawyers, expanding knowledge of the issues with influential people in Israeli society and improving representation offered to women.

Client Demand: We were pleased to release our report on the client entitled 'The Missing Factor' in Hebrew in April. It was sent to 350 decision makers in Israel including the Minister of the Interior who responded by personally sharing his positive impressions with us. The English version was released in October and sent to an additional 200 people internationally. We continue to distribute the Russian version of our trafficking report to experts, representatives of relevant organizations and the women themselves.

The Knesset Committee Combating Trafficking in Women: The HMW is regularly invited to participate in Knesset committee meetings on the issue of trafficking in women. Also attending these meetings are the police, the State shelter and other agencies who work with trafficking survivors. Led by Zahava Gallon, the committee initiates legislation, conducts research and helps form policy in Israel. It publishes a yearly report on the state of trafficking in Israel including recommendations for legislation.

Pending Legislation: A comprehensive trafficking law, which broadens the definition of trafficking to include trafficking for labor and trafficking of organs, is in final stages of amendment with the Ministry of Justice. It includes important elements which will help survivors, including raising the minimum punishment for traffickers and establishing a fund with money confiscated from traffickers to be earmarked for enforcement and rehabilitation. Although this proposed law is a significant improvement over existing legislation, its weakness lies in the fact that it does not sufficiently specify how women will be rehabilitated.

Future Legislation: The State is currently pursuing the money behind trafficking as a prong in its enforcement strategy. This is on many levels including: The Ministry of Justice confiscates property of traffickers; the Tax Authority prosecutes traffickers for unpaid taxes; and the courts fine traffickers. Unfortunately, none of these revenues reach the victims. They are deported penniless- a situation which increases the likelihood they will be re-trafficked. We believe a special fund should be established with this money to be applied to legal redress and rehabilitation. This will ensure once and for all that women are able to break out of the

Public Awareness: On August 15, 2000, arson was committed against a building with a brothel. The women located at the brothel were locked in and unable to escape, and two were killed. Since then, the anniversary of their death has been proclaimed a memorial day for victims of trafficking. On August 16th in 2005, a media campaign took place featuring free advertisements in newspapers, on the radio and on television. Lili Angel, a board member, was instrumental in arranging this campaign. In addition, a memorial service took place on Golomb street, where the brothel was located. Shevy Korzen, our Executive Director spoke, along with representatives from other NGOs. In December, an unveiling took place at the cemetery where they are buried, attended by MK Zahava Gallon.

Lectures and Media Items: We conducted 62 lectures primarily for academic and school audiences, as well as the general, public reaching approximately 1800 people. We initiated 51 media items including a yearly total of 31 newspaper articles, 9 radio shows and 11 appearances on television, most with a focus on the client.

Exhibition: In March we sponsored an art exhibition entitled 'Across the Road,' in cooperation with the Hebrew University. It featured photography, video art, sculpture, drawings and poetry. The focus was on the plight of trafficking survivors and the role of clients in promoting trafficking. Following the initial showing, it was featured at various events such as a conference in Jerusalem on trafficking in women and at the Haifa Women's Coalition

trafficking cycle and start a new life. In 2006, we will promote passing of legislation to establish a rehabilitation fund.



A picture from the Exhibition "Across the Road"

The Choosing Freedom Initiative

Background

In the last two years, we have witnessed many important developments in the fight against trafficking in women for the sex industry. Enforcement against traffickers and pimps is on the rise while women choosing to serve as prosecution witnesses enjoy healthcare, legal representation and housing in a shelter, all provided for by the State. Unfortunately, this represents only a very small number of women. The vast majority face arrest, detention and deportation back to home countries where the same dismal circumstances that led them to fall victim to traffickers await them. Courageous women wishing to escape from brothels are hampered by a lack documentation, money and knowledge of the local language and culture. Those who manage to escape and are not picked up by the police, risk falling into the hands of traffickers and pimps who return them to the brothels and punish them harshly. These women are in desperate need of a safe, supportive option providing them with the time, space and resources needed to make educated decisions about their future. Furthermore, for those who do not testify, there is a critical need for basic rights such as healthcare, emergency housing and repatriation.

Activities

In 2005, with partner agencies Isha L'Isha-Haifa Feminist Center and the Association of Rape Crisis Centers in Israel, we launched the Choosing Freedom initiative. Choosing Freedom aims to establish the legal and social rights, including medical care, emergency housing and repatriation, of all trafficking victims in Israel, not just prosecution witnesses. It reaches out to women who have been trafficked previously including those who are still in the country either in brothels, living on the outside or in detention centers. As such, it provides for women's short term needs for housing, food, etc... and gives them personalized assistance in examining and realizing their options for the future. They receive information on rights and options (primarily giving testimony or returning home) and assistance in realizing them. Simultaneously the organizations are implementing legal and public policy activism necessary to ground these needs and rights in law. This demonstration project is designed to serve as a model for the government both in offering a victim-centered approach and also as a way of providing services to all women. In 2005 we:

- Established project infrastructure and management.
- Developed a working model including overall design and day to day work methods.
- Undertook an outreach campaign including design of a flyer and stickers, and their distribution at various places where women are likely to enter alone and/or with people who may have access to the women.
- Provision of direct service: We assisted 75 women who were identified in brothels, in detention centers or who have been living in Israel illegally and requested assistance.

The project provided for women's material needs while Russian speaking staff offered a receptive ear, emotional support, and advice.

In this first stage, the project has had two major accomplishments:

1. We succeeded in obtaining a commitment from the Deportation Police to provide airfare for women who wish to return home.
2. As a result of the project, the Police have agreed to let women who are not prosecution witnesses stay in the State sponsored shelter. Those that reside there have access to many of the benefits of women who testify, including psychological and medical care.

The sticker



The Flyer



The Hotline for Migrant Workers

The Hotline for Migrant Workers (HMW), established in 1998, is a non-partisan, non-profit organization, dedicated to (a) promoting the civil and human rights of migrant workers and (b) eliminating trafficking in women in Israel. We aim to build a more just, equitable and democratic society in Israel where respect for the other and protection of the weak are paramount civic and political values.

We see as vital eliminating exploitation of women and violence against them, the proper treatment of non-Jews amongst us and supporting the broad enforcement of laws, policies and procedures that promote equality and justice, as part of the humanistic and universal values that Judaism teaches and on which Israel was founded.

Please send checks to: The Hotline for Migrant Workers, 33 Ha'hashmal Street, Tel-Aviv 65117, Israel, or contact Lisa Richlen at: lisa@hotline.org.il.

U.S. tax deductible contributions of at least \$100 may be made via the New Israel Fund. Contributions should be marked as donor-advised to The Hotline for Migrant Workers and sent to The New Israel Fund, PO Box 91588, Washington DC 20090-1588. U.S. tax deductible contributions of at least \$25 may also be sent (and must be made payable) to P.E.F. Israel Endowment Funds, Inc., 317 Madison Avenue, Suite 607, New York, NY 10017 with a recommendation that it be used for The Hotline for Migrant Workers.

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