

Stop Trafficking !

Anti-Human Trafficking Newsletter



Awareness

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1 This issue highlights the violence experienced by those who are being trafficked and prostituted globally and domestically. Methods for self-healing for victims and care-givers are included.

June 2006
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Prostitution=Violence

FL Serial Killer 'Regular' Customer

Three women (ages 34, 35 and 45) were shot to death in the south Florida area since December 2005. A 38-year-old prostitute, and acquaintance of the women, thinks they were likely killed by someone they knew and in places they frequented. *"It is plausible that the women may have been with the person in the area (where they prostituted) and killed there and then taken somewhere else,"* police said.

The veteran prostitute knew the victims were not the type to frequent the area often. *"The person who killed these women is someone they knew,"* she said. *"They would not get in a car with just anyone because they had their regulars. They were cheap regulars, but they were regulars."* So far, the man police are seeking has murdered one woman a month, starting in late December 2005. All victims had been shot at close range.

Another prostitute said she stopped walking the area soon after the killings began and started working for an escort service. Sobbing she said she ran into an old customer of hers, who frightened her. *"He talked about the serial killer and he tore my belt. I called the cops, but they did nothing."* (March 18, 2006, [### Nigeria: Prostitution Nightmares](http://www.news-journalonline.com/NewsJournalOnline/News/Head-</p></div><div data-bbox=)

One Woman's Experience

"In strip club prostitution, a woman was sexually harassed and assaulted. Strip-ping required her to smilingly accommodate customers' verbal abuse. Customers grabbed and pinched her legs, arms, breasts, buttocks and crotch, sometimes resulting in bruises and scratches.

Customers squeezed her breasts until she was in severe pain, and they humiliated her by ejaculating on her face. Customers and pimps physically brutalized her. She was severely bruised from beatings and frequently had black eyes.

Pimps pulled her hair as a means of control and torture. She was repeatedly beaten on the head with closed fists, sometimes resulting in unconsciousness. From these beatings, her eardrum was damaged, and her jaw was dislocated and remains so many years later.

She was cut with knives. She was burned with cigarettes by customers, who smoked while raping her. She was gang-raped and she was also raped individually by at least 20 men at different times in her life. These rapes by johns and pimps sometimes resulted in internal bleeding.

Yet this woman described the psychological damage of prostitution as far worse than the physical violence. She explained that prostitution *'is internally damaging. You become in your own mind what these people do and say with you.'*

(Farley; see accompanying article., pg. 5)

'Rose' thought she was coming to Europe to study and earn some money with a part-time job. *"Two people working in a travel agency arranged my journey. But once we arrived in Europe, we were locked in an apartment for a month and a half,"* she recounted. *"They emptied our bags and seized our documents."*

'Sophie' told a similar story. She thought she was coming to work in a shop or a factory to give her family a chance of a better life. *"I thought I would be free in Europe,"* she said-wistfully.

The *International Office for Migration* (IOM) estimates 70,000 women live in Italy after being trafficked for sexual exploitation. As many as half are Nigerian. (Twenty-seven percent of France's street-workers were African in 2003, a rise of 17 percent since 2000. Most come from the west African states of Nigeria, Cameroon and Ghana.)

Traffickers in Italy demand on average more than 50,000 euros (US \$60,000) for travel expenses and accommodation, with the girls having to work for them until that debt is paid off. Women who resist working as prostitutes and strippers are beaten and gang members threaten their families in Nigeria with physical harm, police said.

Nigeria cont. pg. 2



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Women Abused in Sex Videos

Six women assisted in the investigation into an Ohio prostitution ring. As a result of the investigation, about 700 videotapes were collected from the residence of a 46-year old man. More than 300 of those confiscated videos contained hard-core pornographic footage, including sexual acts between women and animals. In addition to bestiality, other cruelty was evident. In some of the scenes, large sex toys were inflicting "obvious pain" to the women, officials said. It appeared the women were taking narcotic pain medication to endure these acts.

The videos were being sold via the Internet using a site that has since been shut down, officials said. The man admitted grossing in excess of \$23,000 per year during the past few years. Police estimated the tapes made approximately \$174,000 in business sales at \$20 per tape. (December 14, 2005; http://www.mariettatimes.com/news/story/new65_1214200585830.asp)

Teenagers Murder Thai Women

Two 19-year old teenagers will spend 25 years or more in prison for killing two Thai prostitutes. They bound the women with cable ties and rope and threw them alive into a crocodile-infested river in northern Australia. (http://www.news24.com/News24/World/News/0,,2-10-1462_1706145,00.html)

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Life Sentences for Men Who Killed Czech Prostitute

Three young Germans of Russian origin were given lengthy jail sentences for the kidnapping, rape and murder of a prostitute in the Czech Republic.

A German regional court found that the three men had planned to sell the sex worker from a Czech border city to a brothel in Germany. The judges said the leader of the group planned the kidnapping because he was 30,000 euros in debt.

After failing to beat her into submission, they raped and killed the 37-year old woman for fear that she would report them to the police.

Two of them received life sentences, the third was handed a fifteen-year prison sentence. (Jan. 10, 2006; <http://www.radio.cz/en/news#2>)

Nigeria *cont. from pg. 1*

"I think I'll be able to finish paying my debt in one more year," said 24-year-old 'Naomi,' who came to Italy to earn a living for her younger siblings after their parents died. "I will pay. I don't want to offend them. I know there will be so many problems back home if I don't."

"That is a fear often held by women forced into prostitution," said Sister Valeria, who has spent time in Nigeria's Edo State, and now works with victims of trafficking in Italy. Traffickers often coerce victims by exploiting their belief in voodoo rituals. "They often make a sachet with the girl's hair or underwear and even menstrual blood and they keep it," she said. "Girls truly believe that if they reveal the names of these people or don't pay them back, horrible things will happen to them and their families."

Even before the girls learn the reality of their new life in Europe, they have often undergone excruciating journeys from their home continent. The

high-priced voyage from West Africa to Europe is most often via the Sahara Desert, where it is easier for people to move about clandestinely with no papers. "We walked for months," said 'Sharon,' who made what she called a "merciless journey" through the desert to reach the northern tip of Africa from where she could take a boat to Europe. "Many people died. Sometimes we would drink our urine," she said shaking her head at the memory.

The plight of West Africans desperate for a chance at a better life in Europe was exposed after several migrants were killed trying to scale a wall into Spanish enclaves in Morocco. The incident and ensuing mass deportations of Africans pushed the issue to the fore at subsequent meetings in Brussels between African and European leaders. During those meetings, the European Commission proposed that member states come up with a plan to strengthen efforts to prevent people being trafficked for sexual and labor exploitation. But many believe that the focus needs to be back in Africa, tackling the root cause of illegal immigration. "Exploitation feeds on poverty," said Sister Florence, who leads an organization called the *Committee for the Support of the Dignity of Women* based in Benin City, southern Nigeria. "We are hungry here. The Nigerian economy is very bad and keeps getting worse every day. So children, especially daughters, become people's source of income."

Teresa Albano, who works for the IOM in Rome, said in nine out of ten cases, the families have signed their daughters away knowing full well what they are destined for. "The girls are not free to decide for themselves and say no," she said. "When the girls sign the 'contracts,' a family member has to be the guarantor, and there is always a clause that says girls will accept any job the organizer will offer in the destination country."

For those girls who do want to break out of the bondage, there are few options. They are on Italian soil illegally with scant resources. The Italian legal

Nigeria *cont. pg. 6*



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Prostituted Youth's Ordeal

A New Zealand massage parlor owner was the first person to be charged and convicted under the new NZ Prostitution Law Reform Act. He received one year and nine months for employing and earning money from a 16-year old prostitute.

The girl told how he ensnared her with promises of big money and a glamorous lifestyle. *"This is quite possibly the biggest mistake I will ever make in my life. The biggest, and it is never going to go away,"* she said.

He charged \$120 an hour for clients who came to his home. The girl was required to see as many as seven clients per day.

"I couldn't even look at myself in the mirror; I was ashamed to be around people just because of what I thought I was," she said. *"I feel like a dirty little whore"*. It was not the rich, thrilling life she had anticipated. *"There is no glamor to it whatsoever. It's rough and it's raw and it's dirty."* (May 9, 2005; http://tvnz.co.nz/view/news_national_story_skin/542820%3fformat=html)

Ambassador John R. Miller, responding to a Dec. 13, 2005 NY Times article entitled, 'A New Law in Tijuana Regulates the Oldest Profession,' wrote, "A more appropriate term for prostitution would be 'the oldest oppression.'"

(Amb. Miller is Director of the U.S. Department of State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons.)

UK Girls Groomed for Prostitution

Girls as young as 12 in Leeds, England are being targeted in schools and shopping centers by criminal gangs for prostitution. Gangs are operating on a nationwide basis.

The Coalition for the Removal of Pimps (Crop) is a national charity working to end the sexual exploitation of children and young people.

New research conducted by Crop in late 2005 indicated:

- Girls between 12 and 14 are targeted to exploit their relative inexperience and naivety. Flattery and exciting experiences are used to win girls over and encourage isolation from existing friends and family.
- Boys of a similar age are used to make contact before girls are passed up the network.
- The work of the gangs is largely hidden and renders parents powerless to intervene.
- Parents often realize the depth of the problem too late and agencies are often unable to distinguish the early grooming stages from normal teenage courtship.
- Effective intervention by agencies is also hindered by blaming the girls for not walking away or for choosing to get involved in prostitution. However, the research identifies the alarming success of the grooming process.
- Pimps pursue a number of strategies to control the girls. These include alternating affection with violence and abuse, illegal drugs and other criminal activities.
- The pimp's violence and that of the men who pay for her become accepted as inevitable and her obedience to her pimp's demands is seen as the only way to reduce physical and sexual harm. The violence and abuse becomes a regular event that the girl resigns herself to. (<http://www.leedstoday.net/ViewArticle2.aspx?SectionID=39&ArticleID=1253014>)

"The issue isn't about what their [prostituted women's] choices are, the issue is about the framework," said an assistant philosophy professor at the Univ. of NH. *"[Prostitution] wouldn't be an option unless there were men who felt there was an 'object' that they could buy."*

Murder: Outcome of Trafficking Girls for Prostitution

A neighbor heard a noise and a truck driving away. He went to look and found a teenage girl crumpled on the street, bleeding profusely from her head. She did not make it to the hospital alive. 'Jane Doe' lay abandoned in the Santa Ana, CA morgue for months.

Police, trying to identify her, released a photo of a girl with piercing blue eyes and fire-engine-red hair. A prostitute told police she thought the girl was from Georgia. Eventually, after more than a year, authorities identified her as *Hanna Montessori*, the great-great-granddaughter of the founder of Montessori schools.

Because of her behavioral problems, Hanna had been shuttled between her divorced parents' homes. When social services put Hanna in a foster home, she ran away, was found, and ran away again. By running, Hanna put herself at increased risk to be exploited and abused, experts say. Up to a third of runaways and homeless youth engage in prostitution - or what is known as 'survival sex' - studies indicate.

Prosecutors say Hanna was the victim of a Garden Grove, CA car salesman with a history of assaulting young street girls. The 21-year old man was charged with Hanna's murder. He was also charged with raping and robbing both a 17-year-old girl and an 18-year old at gunpoint, and with forcing a fourth girl to perform oral sex while claiming to be a police officer. He faces 55 years to life in state prison. (Mar. 15, 2006, www.thestate.com/mld/thestate/news/nation/14103674.htm).



Awareness

4 Tribal Women Harmed

Fifty-two percent of the 100 interviewees prostituting in Vancouver, Canada were women from Canada's *First Nations*, compared with their representation in Vancouver generally (1.7-7%). Statistical results indicated: 82% with a history of childhood sexual abuse, by an average of four perpetrators; 72% suffered childhood physical abuse; 90% were physically assaulted in prostitution; 78% were raped in prostitution; 72% suffered post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); 95% wished to leave prostitution; 86% reported housing as one of their most urgent needs; 82% expressed a need for drug or alcohol treatment. The study discusses these findings in terms of the legacy of colonialism, the intrinsically traumatizing nature of prostitution, and prostitution's violations of basic human rights. (*Prostitution in Vancouver: Violence and the Colonization of First Nations Women* Transcultural Psychiatry, Vol. 42, No. 2, 242-271 (2005) Melissa Farley, San Francisco, CA; Jacqueline Lynne, Vancouver, BC; Ann J. Cotton, Univ. WA, Seattle.)

Indonesian Women Threatened with Black Magic

A Thai adult entertainment business operator and two other foreign women forced Indonesian women into prostitution, telling them that they would kill them with black magic if they escaped.

The suspects bought two Indonesian women from a local broker for 1.8 million yen each. They forced one of the women to engage in prostitution, after taking samples of her hair and fingernails, saying, *"If you escape, we'll use these parts of your body to put a black magic curse on you and kill you."* The suspects allegedly took all of the money that the victim made through prostitution.

The three admitted the allegations against them. (<http://mdn.mainichi-msn.co.jp/>)

Australian Street Prostitutes Face Threats, Violence

The Melbourne government faces renewed calls for prostitution tolerance zones and safe houses as a report showed street prostitutes regularly faced threatening and violent situations. An increasing number of prostitutes have mental health problems, which increases their vulnerability to violence.

In 2003, the Melbourne Magistrates Court started special monthly sessions to deal with charges against street prostitutes, such as use and possession of illegal drugs. Of those seen, 25% had health issues.

Court attendance rates among prostitutes had increased by 300 % since the initiative was introduced.

'Jem' said she had worked on the streets for about five years. *"My initial situation was homelessness and heroin. And weeks turn into months and months turn into years. The services don't know how to help us get back in touch with the real world."*

'Jem,' 33, said she was regularly robbed of her money by clients and had suffered several beatings. *"We need a network of safe houses like they have in Sydney,"* she said. (March 31, 2006, <http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/street-prostitutes-facing-threats-and-violence/2006/03/30/1143441279509.html>)

Prostitutes Bought, Sold, Forcibly Moved Canadian Study Shows

The young woman stands on a street corner in skimpy clothing, shaking from a chill, or more likely from her drug addiction. She was brought here from another part of the Canadian province. Despite growing awareness of international trafficking of women and children, the trafficking of Canadian-born women into prostitution remains invisible.

These women are moved quietly, put in cars and taken on "road trips." Pimps and traffickers buy bus and plane tickets for them and escort them to their new locations. At times, they are drugged, bound and abducted by rival pimp families or crime organizations, and wake up in new locations across the country.

"In Canada, everyone thinks international trafficking of women means women from Asia or Eastern Europe. They do not realize it is Canadian women from Toronto, who are taken to Calgary for the Stampede, or others who are moved around the country. These women are treated the same as immigrant women in the human-trafficking trade. There is lots of movement of prostitutes across Canada." said a social worker.

The criminalization of prostitution leads to forced migration and opens the door to traffickers, some prostitutes say. *"I was sold to different pimps and went to different cities,"* one said. *"With the bikers, we were moving or being moved, 'cause I was underage, and the heat [the police] was too much."* <http://www.theglobeandmail.com/servlet/story/LAC.20060501.BCTRAFFICKING01/TPStory/National>



Awareness

“Prostitution has much in common with other kinds of violence against women. What incest is to the family, prostitution is to the community.”

Melissa Farley Ph.D. 2004

Prostitution Violates Human Rights

“Prostitution and trafficking are experiences of being hunted down, dominated, sexually harassed and assaulted. ... systematic methods of brainwashing, indoctrination and physical control are used against women in prostitution.

There has been far more clinical attention paid to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs) among those prostituted than to their depressions, lethal tendency toward suicide, mood disorders, anxiety disorders (including posttraumatic stress disorder PTSD) dissociative disorders and chemical dependence.”

“... [P]rostitution is extremely dangerous for women. Homicide is a frequent cause of death.”

“Pimps and customers use methods of coercion and control like those of other batterers: minimization and denial of physical violence, economic exploitation, social isolation, verbal abuse, threats and intimidation, physical violence, sexual assault and captivity. The systematic violence emphasizes the victim’s worthlessness except in her role as prostitute.”

“Clearly, violence is the norm for women in prostitution. Incest, sexual harassment, verbal abuse, stalking, rape, battering and torture are points on a continuum of violence, all occurring regularly in prostitution....”

“In nine countries, across widely varying cultures, we found that two thirds of 854 women in prostitution had symptoms of PTSD at a severity

that was comparable to treatment-seeking combat veterans....In addition to acute and chronic PTSD, co-morbid diagnoses may include generalized anxiety disorder, mood disorders (including depressive and bipolar disorders), acute tendencies toward suicide, substance abuse and dependence, personality disorders, dissociative disorders, and symptoms of traumatic brain injury.”

“Despite the illogical attempt of some to distinguish prostitution from trafficking, trafficking is simply the global form of prostitution. Sex trafficking may occur within or across international borders, thus women may be either domestically or internationally trafficked or both. Young women are trafficked—taken and sold for sexual use—from the countryside to the city, from one part of town to another, and across international borders to wherever there are customers.”

“...Until it is understood that prostitution and trafficking can appear voluntary but are not really free choices made from a range of options, it will be difficult to garner adequate support to assist those who wish to escape but have no other economic choices. The conditions that make genuine consent possible are absent from prostitution: physical safety, equal power with customers and real alternatives.”

(Excerpted from *‘Prostitution Is Sexual Violence’* Melissa Farley Ph.D *Psychiatric Times* Vol. XXI Issue 12, pg. 7 - 10: <http://www.psychiatrytimes.com/p0410s07.html>)

Spain: Large Russian Prostitution Ring

Spanish police broke a crime ring believed to have flown hundreds of Russian women to Spain where they were forced into prostitution. The women were recruited in Moscow through newspaper ads promising well-paid jobs in Spain. They had visas and air travel paid for by Russian criminals, police said. In one raid, police found reservations for 190 air tickets to fly women to Spain.

Once in Spain they became the “property” of people who ran prostitution businesses in various cities. Women were forced to work as prostitutes in night clubs, massage parlors and private homes until they paid off debts for travel costs and other expenses, police said. In some cases they incurred fines for actions like being rude to clients, leaving lights on, or eating outside set meal times — thus increasing their debts.

Up to 400,000 prostituted women, 90% immigrants, are solicited daily by up to 900,000 men in Spain.

A debate over prostitution has been raging there. The *Spanish General Workers’ Union* (UGT), calling the statistics “alarming” is pushing for the “elimination” of prostitution, which it considered “not work, but a modern form of slavery, inequality and gender violence.”

The UGT report said that “95 % of prostitution is not voluntary”. As for the remaining 5%, “the description of voluntary must be viewed in the context of the social, cultural and economic conditions that women face.” Prostitution in Spain generates US \$3.5 billion annually. (January 16, 2006; http://www.khaleejtimes.com/DisplayArticle.asp?xfile=data/theworld/2006/January/theworld_January355.xml§ion=theworld&col=: April 18, 2006; <http://asia.news.yahoo.com/060418/3/2j8rn.html>)



Advocacy

6 Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation: Who Represents Women in Prostitution?

We, the survivors of prostitution and trafficking gathered at this press conference, declare that prostitution is violence against women.

Women in prostitution do not wake up one day and “choose” to be prostitutes. It is chosen for us by poverty, past sexual abuse, the pimps who take advantage of our vulnerabilities, and the men who buy us for the sex of prostitution.

Prostitution is sexual exploitation, one of the worst forms of women’s inequality, and a violation of any person’s human rights.

Many women in prostitution have been severely injured, some have died, and some have been murdered by their pimps and customers.

Physical violence, rape and degradation are often inflicted on us by customers, pimps, recruiters, police and others who gain from prostitution. The public either judges us as “whores” or thinks we make a lot of money.

The condition of women in prostitution is worsened by laws and policies that treat us as criminals and the scum of society, while customers, pimps, managers and sex business owners are not made accountable. Our condition is also made worse by giving licenses to prostitution enterprises and legal protection to pimps, customers and the sex industry

Most women are drawn into prostitution at a young age. The average age of entrance into prostitution worldwide is 13.

Victims of prostitution and trafficking have almost no resources to

help them exit. Programs that provide alternatives for women in prostitution are very few.

Women in prostitution dream of a life free from oppression, a life that is safe, and a life where we can participate as citizens, and where we can exercise our rights as human beings, not as “sex workers.”

We, survivors from Belgium, Denmark, Korea, the UK and the United States declare:

1. Prostitution must be eliminated.

Thus, it should not be legalized or promoted.

2. Trafficked and prostituted women need services to help them create a future outside of prostitution, including legal and fiscal amnesty, financial assistance, job training, employment, housing, health services, legal advocacy, residency permits, and cultural mediators and language training for victims of international trafficking.

3. Women in prostitution need governments to punish traffickers, pimps and men who buy women for prostitution and to provide safety and security from those who would harm them.

4. Stop arresting women and arrest the perpetrators of trafficking and prostitution.

5. Stop police harassment of women in prostitution and deportation of trafficked women.

6. Prostitution is not “sex work,” and sex trafficking is not “migration for sex work.” Governments should stop legalizing and decriminalizing the

sex industry and giving pimps and buyers legal permission to abuse women in prostitution.

As survivors of prostitution and trafficking, we will continue to strengthen and broaden our unity, help any woman out of prostitution, and work with our allies to promote the human rights of victims of trafficking and prostitution. (Oct. 17, 2005, http://action.web.ca/home/catw/readingroom.shtml?x=82636&AA_EX_Session=e8dc90a15b505564c9806ba78fcdcf06)

Nigeria *cont. from pg.2*

system provides a “social protection residence permit”, but that means denouncing the exploiters to the police, which is exactly what the girls fear. According to the *Caritas-Migrantes* group, which studies immigration trends, only 999 of these permits were granted to Nigerian women between 1998 and 2004.

Repatriation programs help some women return home on a voluntary basis. But there are many problems. “When the girls are released by the Nigerian police, after having undergone a mandatory HIV test, their traffickers are out there, ready to forcibly take them again,” said Albano at the IOM. If they manage to avoid the traffickers, the girls may run into to problems closer to home, said Sister Florence. “When the girls come back, they are expected to bring money. If they don’t, their families reject them and their trauma is twice as great.”

(<http://allafrica.com/stories/200511040175.html>)



Action

Toll-Free Hotline:
(Trafficking Information
and Referral)
1.888.3737.888

Capacitar International

Capacitar International, a non-profit organization, uses popular education methods to help people learn and use simple effective energy practices that foster healing and wellness. *Capacitar* recognizes the energy field interconnecting all being and the unity of body, mind and spirit within the person. Health and well-being result from the harmonious flow and balance of energy in the system. With stress and trauma, the natural flow of energy is blocked, resulting in pain, illness and emotional problems in the person and in society. People have within themselves an inherent wisdom and power to heal and return to balance and wholeness. *Capacitar* promotes the empowerment of people in their process of self-healing.

Capacitar (meaning 'to empower, to encourage, to bring each other to life') practices come from many ancient cultures. Current medical research shows the positive health benefits of many of these ancient practices. Some newer modalities (EFT, TFT and Polarity) are also used because of their effectiveness.



Trauma Healing and Transformation



Capacitar body-mind-spirit practices include:

- Tai Chi meditation, Pal Dan Gum and body movement
- Visualization and breathwork
- Active Listening and simple psychotherapeutic skills
- Acupressure for alleviating pain and stress
 - Fingerholds for managing emotions
- Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT) and Thought Field Therapy (TFT)
 - Hand massage, seated massage and Polarity
- Work with the energy system and chakras

Trauma Healing programs are offered in the United States, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Colombia, Argentina, Mexico, Northern Ireland, East Timor, Indonesia, Tanzania and South Africa. Participants include psychologists, social workers, police, medical professionals, teachers, therapists, mental health workers, popular health promoters, leaders of centers for abuse and recovery, prison chaplains and prisoners, those working with the traumatized and mentally ill, and grassroots people desiring to heal their families and communities.

Capacitar has developed manuals and training materials that may be ordered from the *Capacitar* website (see pg. 8).

Capacitar training technique and Manual

Healing Severe Trauma SANVED: Surviving through Creation

Sohini Chakraborty, a sociologist and dancer, directs SANVED, an NGO based in Calcutta of India, which helps victims of human trafficking through creative dance therapy. SANVED grew from an NGO running four shelters in India, where trafficked young girls and women are brought to assist their healing and reintegration into society.

SANVED presented a dance therapy performance and information session in 2004 in Washington D.C. Ms. Chakraborty explained how she started this creative therapy program. "After getting my Master's degree in sociology, I began to explore how dance and movement in general, including yoga and martial arts, can assist victims of human trafficking in the stage of rehabilitation." She also conducted various research projects on the relationship between trauma, healing and creative expression.

Following her introduction, Ms. Chakraborty and her two student dancers — both survivors of human trafficking — presented the dance, accompanied by melodic, nearly meditative Indian music.

It told the story of trafficking from the victim's perspective, with highly emotive and heavy movements choreographed as to evoke a sense of the struggle for liberation. The dancers worked with their own bodies to highlight a victim's confusing, and many times hate-filled, relationship with their bodies after unwanted involvement in sexual activities.

SANVED cont. pg. 8



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SANVED

cont. from pg. 7

“This reaction is common among victims of sexual assault and is one of the most important aspects of any therapy. The victims must learn to accept and respect their bodies again. Physical movement is one of the most effective ways of achieving this therapeutic milestone,” explained Ms. Chakraborty.

The dance evoked deep imagery and sentiment of the experience of sex trafficking and offered the audience a very rare opportunity to witness the pain, both physical and emotional as articulated by facial expressions, that a victim might have lived. The closing section, performed to John Lennon’s “Imagine”, featured more spirited and energetic movements, which allowed the faint glimmer of hope to emerge.

The lack of special effects, lights or fancy equipment, added to the natural



expression of the piece. The dancers projected the rawness in their movement as it was clear their energy came from their own personal experience.

After the performance, the two survivors described their rehabilitation experiences. In their concluding discussion, the dancers expressed gratitude towards the dance therapy. One said, “It finally helped me break the silence within.”

Breaking the Cycle of Violence and AIDS

The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that nearly one in four women will be raped, beaten, coerced into sex or otherwise abused in her lifetime — sometimes with fatal consequences.

In the context of HIV/AIDS, and in situations of war and conflict this reality of violence against women intensifies — and becomes especially deadly. Almost half of all people living with HIV/AIDS today are women, approximately 17 million.

Violence against women is both a cause and consequence of rising rates of HIV infection: a cause because rape and sexual assault pose a major risk factor for HIV transmission; and a consequence because HIV-positive status makes women more likely to be targeted for abuse. Deeply rooted in unequal power relations, sexual violence occurs because women cannot negotiate safe sex or refuse unwanted intercourse.

UNIFEM sees three major actions that would break the vicious cycle: First, countries must pass and enforce laws to deter acts of violence against women and reduce the spread of HIV. While many have strong laws in place, these are rarely implemented effectively, reducing their positive impact. Second, women who have suffered abuse must be encouraged to speak out. A life free of violence is their right. We have to break the culture of shame and stigma so that women can share their experiences and concerns. Third, we must continue to raise awareness on the relation between violence against women and HIV/AIDS. The media is a key actor in this effort. It is also crucial to engage men and boys in this campaign — so they can be part of the solution and not part of the problem.

At the 2005 World Summit, heads of state and government emphasized that progress for women is progress for all and committed to eliminating discrimination and violence against women. (Noeleen Heyzer, Executive Director, UNIFEM; http://www.unifem.org/news_events/story_detail.php?StoryID=373)

Stop Trafficking! is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among religious congregations, their friends and collaborating organizations, working to eliminate all forms of trafficking of human beings.

Use the following web address to access back issues of *Stop Trafficking!*
<http://homepage.mac.com/srjeanscha-fersds/stoptraffic/index.html>

To contribute information, or make requests to be on the mailing list, please use this e-mail address:
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(Each contains information related to human trafficking)

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