Exploring Human Trafficking as a Public Health and 'Glocal' Issue:

Future Considerations and a Plea for Finnish Society to take Action

Kathleen Grant

By exploring existing material on the human trafficking phenomenon, this article aims to build a rationale for future research and development on human trafficking issues. The scope of this study is placed within the context of public health and highlights child trafficking. The qualitative data analysis software ATLAS.ti 6.2 is utilized to sketch a conceptual network of human trafficking issues. A coding scheme was planned and administered where specific terms were chosen for analysis. The aim of this study is to explore the phenomenon of exploitation and human trafficking and learn the ways in which it is addressed in the context of public health. Examples of existing action against human trafficking are discussed especially in the light of child trafficking.

Global partnerships will also be discussed in terms of how they fit within the UN Millennium Goal of 2015. Considerations for future action for both local Finnish society as well as South Asian society will be addressed. The preliminary findings presented suggest that the human trafficking phenomenon is multi-faceted and should be understood as a 'glocal', intertwined public health issue.

Background

Many of us *feel enslaved* in some way, a 'slave' to our work or school assignments, household du-

ties, family relations and social pressures, societal rules and regulations. The sadistic reality is, many of us *are enslaved* in forms of child soldiers, child victims of sexual exploitation, forced labor, prostitution, organ trafficking, forced marriages; human trafficking is a result of natural calamities, poverty, social inequalities and so on and so forth. We read about this in the papers, hear about it on the news, learn about it in school, but often times *human trafficking* is something that is not taken as *a personal issue*. This is a wakeup call – *we all "benefit"* from this global industry which slaughters the emotional, social and physical well-being of our own human species, in one way or another. It is indeed a personal issue, but it is an issue that is so complex and multi-faceted, that the only way that we can try to combat human trafficking is by working together locally and globally. Human trafficking is not only a foreign problem, but one that is on virtually every society's doorstep. For this reason, it is a 'glocal' matter, and intertwined in the developed and developing parts of the world. Thus, all communities must join in on this challenge. The more victims, the more we should blame ourselves.

Human Trafficking and Health

An estimated 2.4 million people are victims of human trafficking (UNODC, United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund). An estimated 1.2 million of those trafficked are children (The IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Human Trafficking, 2007). Approximately 32 billion $ is generated within this abusive global industry (UNODC, Factsheet on Human Trafficking). This is all done in the name of modern day slavery. Human maltreatment comes in many

Kathleen Grant is a Doctoral Student at the Research Unit for the Sociology of Education, University of Turku, Finland. A Master of Social Sciences (Sociology), Åbo Akademi University, Finland, she has explored topics of migration, criminology, and comparative religions. Current research interests: intercultural education movement and critical discourse analysis.

forms. In the context of children, The World Health Organization (WHO) considers child maltreatment to comprise of five subtypes: physical abuse, sexual abuse, neglect and negligent treatment, emotional abuse and exploitation (WHO, Child Maltreatment). When it comes to inhumane treatment in the context of human trafficking, all of these subtypes can be interlinked. For the purpose of this article, a focus on the factors of health especially in the light of the subtype of exploitation and human trafficking will be discussed. Public health issues raised here do not, however, only reflect the health of child victims, but all human trafficking victims. Child trafficking and exploitation is highlighted here, however, as child victims can be viewed as the most vulnerable of trafficking victims (Uranjnik 2008).

Research Topic and Questions

An overview of the complexity of the human trafficking and exploitation phenomenon will be illustrated, as well as an understanding of why this is an urgent public health issue which should be understood in a 'glocal' context. Selected organizations that work in this area will be highlighted. A discussion on how this applies to the UN Millennium Development Goals of 2015 will follow. A proposal for Finnish society will also be raised. The following questions will be utilized as a guide throughout this exploration:
1. What is exploitation and human trafficking and how can these concepts be understood in terms of public health?
2. How do organizations react to Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking and who are involved in partnerships in relation to this and what actions do they take?
3. How does human trafficking apply to the UN Millenium Development Goals of 2015?
4. How can global partnerships focused on human trafficking between Finland and South Asia help contribute to the UN Millennium Development Goals by 2015?

Data and Method

In order to explore the research questions, a brief qualitative assessment of sources was conducted.

The sources chosen for data collection included selected documents from United Nations, scientific articles, and other relevant documents such as specific court cases of child human trafficking collected from United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's human trafficking case law online database. The qualitative data analysis software, ATLAS.ti 6.2 was utilized in order to better organize and explore the sources. ATLAS.ti 6.2 supports the classification of the data which can thus be screened for further applications. A coding scheme was planned and administered where specific terms were chosen for analysis. The terms chosen were: children; trafficking; action; partner; organizations; partnerships; health; implications; public health. Google Docs was used for the creation of drawings. The purpose of keeping the documents in ATLAS.ti 6.2 is to provide a starting point of a needs assessment and the building of a rationale for future research on human trafficking.

Results

How can exploitation and human trafficking be understood in terms of public health? What are the responsibilities of public health and how can this relate to human trafficking? What is currently being done to combat human trafficking, and how can this fit into the UN Millennium goals of 2015? The results can be divided into several sub-categories: The exploitation and human trafficking phenomenon; human trafficking as a public health issue; Existing efforts against human trafficking and child exploitation; Example human trafficking case; Global action against child trafficking; Working together toward the UN Millennium Goal of 2015.

1. The exploitation and human trafficking phenomenon as a public health issue

In order to address the complexity of the human trafficking phenomenon, conceptual network of the human trafficking phenomenon was created (Figure 1.). Data (United Nations Development Programme 2007; The IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Human Trafficking 2007;

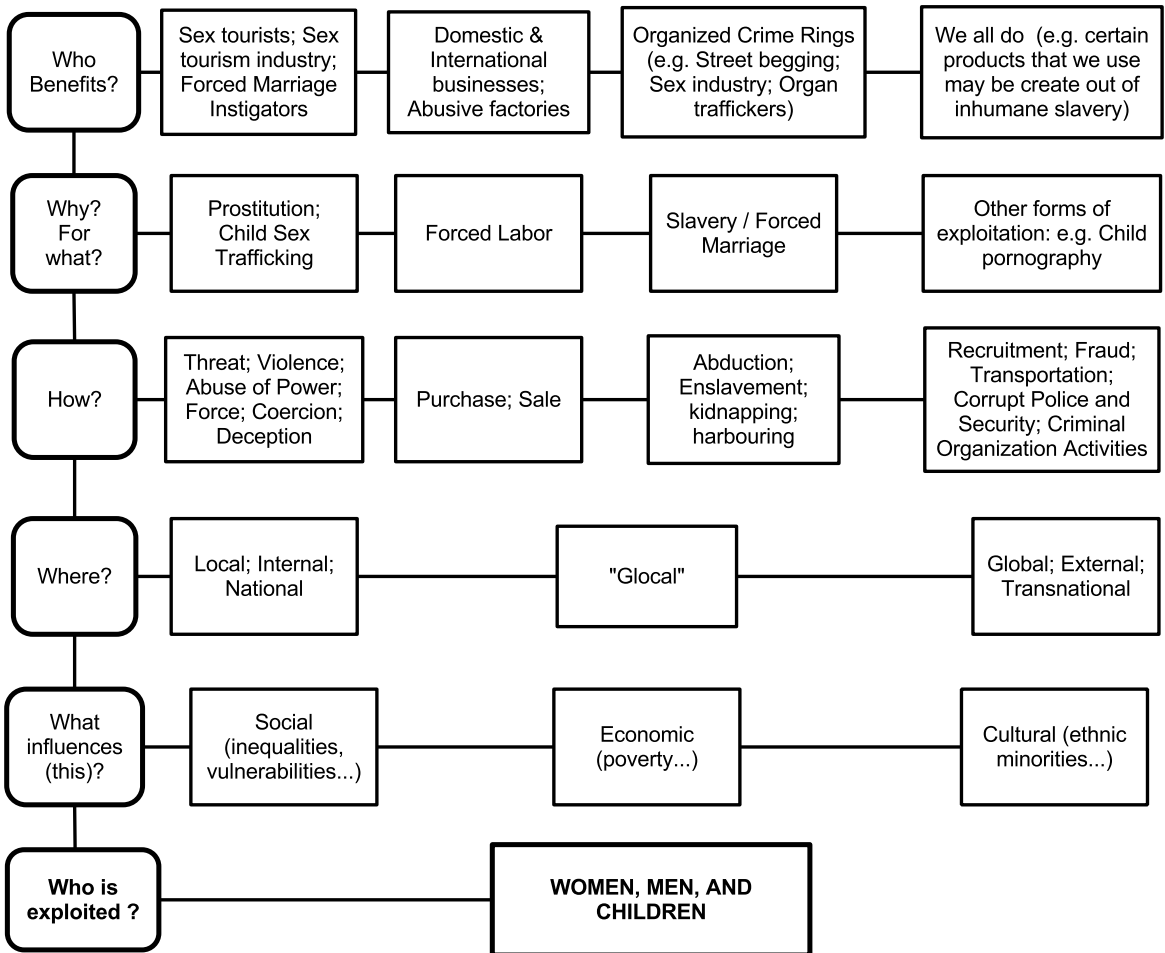| Who Benefits?	Sex tourists; Sex tourism industry; Forced Marriage Instigators	Domestic & International businesses; Abusive factories	Organized Crime Rings (e.g. Street begging; Sex industry; Organ traffickers)	We all do (e.g. certain products that we use may be create out of inhumane slavery)
Why? For what?	Prostitution; Child Sex Trafficking	Forced Labor	Slavery / Forced Marriage	Other forms of exploitation: e.g. Child pornography
How?	Threat; Violence; Abuse of Power; Force; Coercion; Deception	Purchase; Sale	Abduction; Enslavement; kidnapping; harbouring	Recruitment; Fraud; Transportation; Corrupt Police and Security; Criminal Organization Activities
Where?	Local; Internal; National	"Glocal"		Global; External; Transnational
What influences (this)?	Social (inequalities, vulnerabilities...)	Economic (poverty...)		Cultural (ethnic minorities...)
Who is exploited ?	WOMEN, MEN, AND CHILDREN			

Figure 1. Overview of the human trafficking and exploitation phenomenon

Transparency International 2011; Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Permanent Council 2005; Kloer 2009; UNODC, Factsheet on Human Trafficking; The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Index) was entered into the qualitative data analysis software ATLAS.ti 6.2 whereby a coding scheme using specific search terms was planned and administered for further analysis.

Figure 1 does not do justice to the complexity of this phenomenon and urgent social problem. The conceptual network of the human trafficking phenomenon represented in Figure 1 only brushes upon the surface of this multi-faceted global issue. Human trafficking is considered to some a global industry (United Nations Development Programme 2007).

When human trafficking is looked at through the business lens, the disturbing nature of this phenomenon is solidified. *How can we humans do this to our own species? How can so many of us turn our backs to this crisis?* A substantial amount of currency is involved, and a gruesome abuse of power. According to The United Nations Development Programme (2007), as of the time of publication, this industry was generating anywhere from five to seven billion U.S. dollars per year. However, the United Nations estimates that the total market value is at $ 32 billion. (UNODC, Factsheet on Human Trafficking).

This is not something that begins and ends in the developing world. Human trafficking is on the developed world's doorstep as well. The United

Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's Factsheet on Human Trafficking reports that as of 2010, Europe alone was making an estimated 2.5 billion € per year through sexual exploitation and forced labor, deeming it "one of the most lucrative illicit businesses in Europe" (UNODC Factsheet on Human Trafficking).

Human trafficking is not just an outside issue. It is happening virtually everywhere and even just a click away. This should not be an alien concept to anyone. It is not only global but local. Reasons for human trafficking clearly vary, but some of the root causes have to do with development issues. Local conditions may cause people to, e.g., want to migrate to what they believe are places of better opportunity. An increase in vulnerability can occur when social inequalities are in effect. Enablers of victimization include e.g. poverty, conflict, instability, and natural disasters. (see Transparency International 2011; Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe Permanent Council 2005; Kloer 2009).

The types of victims of human trafficking can be identified by push and pull factors. Transparency International (2011), the global coalition against corruption, describes the push and pull factors in more detail. Pull factors include, but are not limited to, "the prospect of gaining employment", "attractive living conditions" and "the demand for unskilled work". Push factors include, for example, "poverty and unemployment", and "war and political instability". (Transparency International 2011)

2. How is human trafficking a public health issue?

What does a trafficked victim go through? What happens to their minds, bodies, souls? And why should this be a matter of public health?

An estimated 2.4 million people "are trapped in modern-day slavery" and children are included in this population (United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, *United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund*). These are, however, just general estimates, as something so complex and often invisible as human trafficking is difficult or perhaps impossible to quantify (ibid: 7,61). Understanding human trafficking in terms of health is threefold: mental health, physical health and social health.

Figure 2 below highlights some of the psychological, physical and social health issues but there are limitations to this assessment. The illustration does not necessarily list all of such issues related to each category. Other types of issues are most probably missing from this, and only deeper analysis would increase the quality of sub-categories for each of the main categories.

As the illustration shows, there is a web of problems that the victim can face, some occurring before the trafficking commences, during the trafficking process and post trafficking. The other limitation of this drawing is that this only reflects the health concerns of the victim. Some health issues are gender specific while others can affect all victims. To make matters worse, there are other actors that need to be considered within the public health scope – the victims, the traffickers, the families of the victims, the families of the traffickers. For example, families who have been forced to be involved in trafficking crimes, or have suddenly learned that a family member has been involved in such crimes would naturally, suffer some forms of health problems.

Is this a public health issue? Indeed it is. Figure 2 highlights many of the health risks involved in the human trafficking phenomenon. All of the health risks were drawn from multiple sources (see United Nations Development Programme 2007; The IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Human Trafficking 2007; Volpicelli 2004). All health issues listed in Figure 2 are essentially connected to public health goals such as preventing epidemics; disease control; preventing injuries; encouraging and educating healthy behavior; helping communities post natural disasters; providing health services; policy involvement and development; assurance (Botchwey 2006). The illustration pushes forth the necessity of viewing human trafficking as a public health issue. Human trafficking involves a plethora of health issues involving physical, psychological and social elements. The process does not stop once the criminal/s is/are caught and charged, but rather should be seen as continual. The victim must have all of the tools and resources to cope with the aftermath of this horrendous, life changing experience. Thus, not just one type of service or organization is needed to handle the issue of
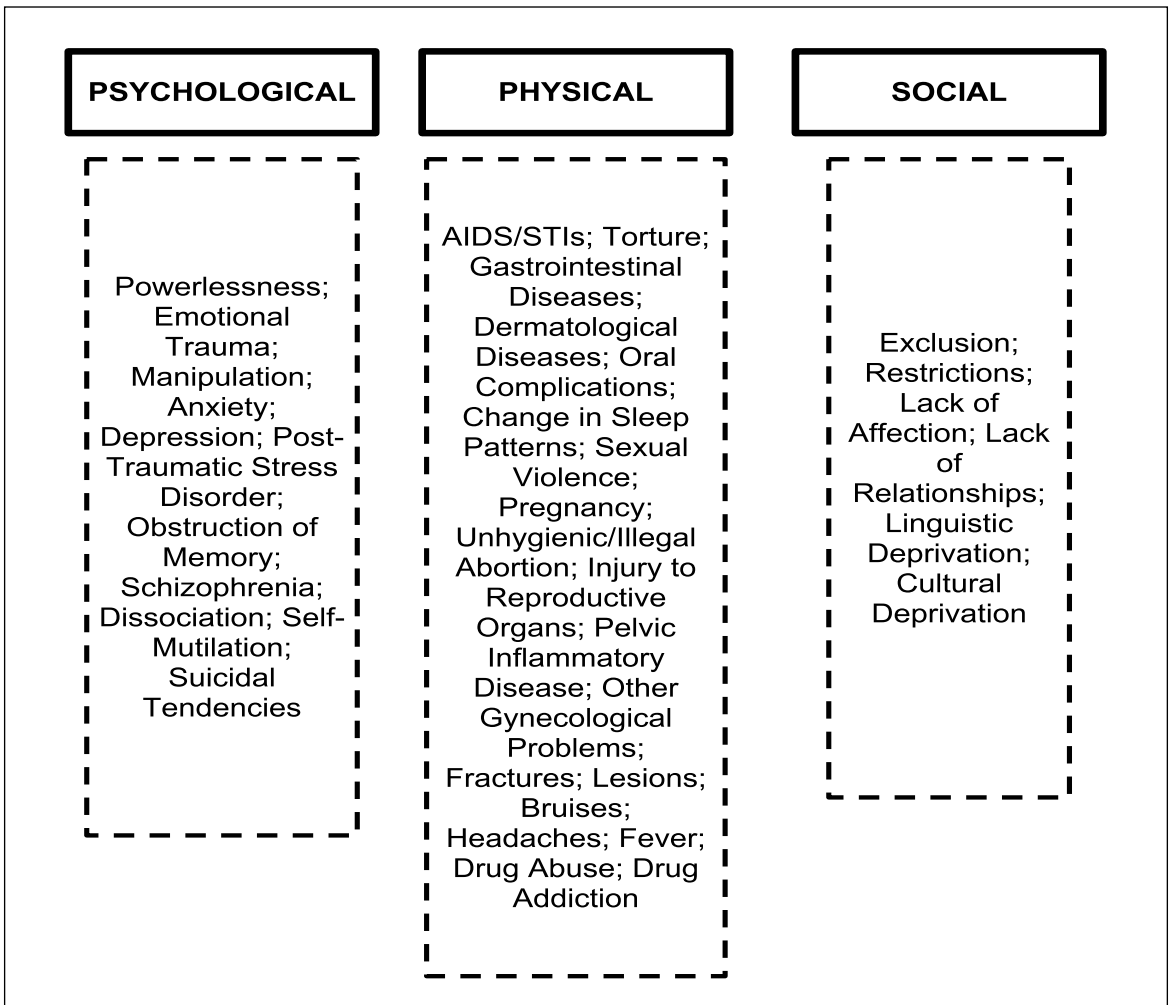
PSYCHOLOGICAL	PHYSICAL	SOCIAL
Powerlessness; Emotional Trauma; Manipulation; Anxiety; Depression; Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder; Obstruction of Memory; Schizophrenia; Dissociation; Self-Mutilation; Suicidal Tendencies	AIDS/STIs; Torture; Gastrointestinal Diseases; Dermatological Diseases; Oral Complications; Change in Sleep Patterns; Sexual Violence; Pregnancy; Unhygienic/Illegal Abortion; Injury to Reproductive Organs; Pelvic Inflammatory Disease; Other Gynecological Problems; Fractures; Lesions; Bruises; Headaches; Fever; Drug Abuse; Drug Addiction	Exclusion; Restrictions; Lack of Affection; Lack of Relationships; Linguistic Deprivation; Cultural Deprivation

Figure 2. Health problems of victims of human trafficking.

human trafficking; it takes both local and global community efforts. Thus, human trafficking in the framework of public health goals should be placed within a 'glocal' context. In other words, 'rather than being seen as a simple process of telescoping from the global to the local, the global and the local should be seen as intertwined', i.e. on 'glocal' grounds (Warf 2006).

Human trafficking affects people of all ages, but children are many times the most vulnerable. Marion Mansberger (2011, 622) raised the issue that boys may become traffickers someday, and highlighted the importance of educating boys about human

trafficking and the wider societal implications of injustices against women and children. While this is indeed important, it should not be forgotten that boys are often victims of human trafficking, too (UN. GIFT 2009). Thus, both boys and girls should be considered potential victims of human trafficking especially in the light of the push and pull factors raised in previous sections. Borrowing from UNICEF's statistics, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) reported that approximately 1.2 million children are trafficked each year (The IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Human Trafficking, 2007). While there is a plethora of motives for

trafficking and exploitation, according to IOM, the leading type (for both children and adults) is trafficking into sexual exploitation, stating:

> It appears to be the most profitable for the traffickers and the most physically and emotionally damaging for the victim because of the persistent physical, sexual and psychological abuse that accompanies it on a daily basis.

The damages for any human, regardless of age, is a terrifying thought; yet when a child is the victim, it is almost impossible to stomach. The child slaves rescued from trafficking have perhaps the highest demand for assistance in all sectors of society. Children cannot reintegrate into society the same way as an adult can. Children are at the mercy of adults. It is up to responsible adults to take action in helping those children who are most vulnerable. Diana Urajnik and Melanie Barwick (2008) suggest that the child's mental health is different than that of an adult. A child's mental health is considered "more multifaceted because of the unique developmental milestones that children experience" (Uranjnik 2008). According to Uranjnik and Barwick (2008), vulnerable children, i.e. those exposed to socio-economic problems, sexual violence, the witnessing of violence against others, and so on, all have an increased risk of poor mental health. In addition to poor mental health, poor physical health is a given.

3. Partnerships toward the fight against human trafficking and child exploitation

Many organizations are involved in a collaborative, global fight against human trafficking and exploitation. In the following sections, actions of selected organizations will be discussed, namely the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime's human trafficking case law database, Save the Children's partnership with IKEA, and a the charitable organization Plan.

3.1 The UN and a case law database

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (*Index*) has created a novel human trafficking case law database "to provide immediate, public access to officially documented instances of this crime." This

is a global effort, where information on cases can be uploaded and utilized for many different purposes (e.g. research, policy, governments, media, law, ect.); but a limitation of this database is that not *all* cases are added.

Selected cases were entered into the qualitative data analysis software ATLAS.ti 6.2 in order to explore the different types of trafficking: locations of trafficking; case specific events that took place (i.e. stories of the victims); the sentencing of the defendants. The chosen cases entered in ATLAS.ti 6.2, made it easier to build a better drawing of the complexity of human trafficking, shown in Figure 1 of this article. A deeper analysis of cases would be useful in order to gain a more in-depth qualitative study on human trafficking events. This could potentially add to knowledge on, for example but not limited to, various types of human trafficker profiles. Below is an excerpt from this database (Case No. 12.293/10):

> It was alleged that the defendants attempted to organise and facilitate the prostitution of a minor. The defendants offered the victim, N.G., transport from her home in the city of San Pedro to the province of Cordoba where it was intended that she would work as a prostitute in a brothel. To persuade the girl into accompanying them to the brothel the defendants promised her the prospect of high earnings (approximately ARS 15,000 per month). The defendants reportedly acted in a coordinated manner, each performing different tasks and roles within the criminal organization.

This case involved the acts of transportation, recruitment and transfer. The forms of this trafficking case are listed as internal and organized criminal group. This indicates that more than one or two people are involved in this case since it involves a criminal group. The means listed of this involved deception and abuse of power or a position of vulnerability.

3.2 Prevention

How can a deeper analysis of human trafficking cases help in combatting human trafficking? One way to work toward the prevention of human trafficking is to continuously gain deeper knowledge

of this multi-faceted phenomenon. The knowledge needs to be area specific in order to reach out to vulnerable communities. In response to the case highlighted in the previous section, the practice of deception is clearly a powerful practice in human trafficking cases. One plan of action could be help the community understand the ways in which people deceive.

Deception is practiced by trafficker especially in the light of job/monetary opportunities. Educating communities, especially women and children, as well as providing solutions on how to react to possible deceptive events is an imperative. Providing services where potential victims can turn to, to report possible traffickers, is needed. Moreover, the development of services where women and families in general, can practice safer means of generating income could decrease the chances of becoming prey to human traffickers. Creating and sustaining safe houses for the vulnerable would act as a tool for human trafficking prevention.

Educational institutions can utilize existing cases in research and development. Research and development is an important weapon in combating human trafficking. The United Nations has a hefty amount of tools and publications on human trafficking. (see UNODC. Tools and Publications). For example, the United Nations Voluntary Trust Fund aims "to provide the opportunity for people from all walks of life including Governments, the private sector, international organizations, NGOs and individuals to work together to help victims of human trafficking in a practical and tangible manner" (UNODC have a heart for victims of human trafficking).

3.3 Global actions against child trafficking

Save the Children is an example of an independent organization that has a program dedicated to child protection. One of the key focus areas of this program is child trafficking and exploitation. Save the Children states that "There are 215 million children engaged in child labor, with 115 million of those children in hazardous work" (Save the Children-*Protecting Children*). Key to combatting child trafficking, Save the Children has established partnerships. For example a partnership with IKEA was

created in order to work together to build a code of conduct against child labor (Save the Children, *Corporate Partners*). IKEA also works with Save the Children and UNICEF in efforts to educate children (IKEA, *Soft Toys*). Other partners are involved in various measures, such as fundraising strategies.

A charity-based example that specifically focuses on children as the target population is Plan. In order to address the needs of children in a global and local context, Plan emphasizes the importance of community engagement. While they focus on an array of issues, child trafficking is one of the problems in which they are trying to combat. Plan's program to combat child trafficking includes: "increasing community awareness of the dangers of trafficking, rescuing victims, ensuring rehabilitation and healthcare, and providing education and life skill training" (see Plan. What is Plan Doing?). Plan strategy includes: education; economic security; water and sanitation; health; sexual health; emergencies; protection and child participation.

The organizations and groups working on this issue are all valuable in special ways. There are many more actors involved but the point is that more networking is always needed in improving the lives of people. More community-based approaches in different social realms are vital, working face-to-face with communities and building services that will bring results. Learning from actions plans in practice can also help pave the way forward for combating the cruel phenomenon of human trafficking.

4 Working together to combat human trafficking is key to the millennium goals for 2015

Continuous Educative measures, community-based practices, as well as research and development, and learning from existing practices like Plan, are key to solving the challenge of modern day slavery. One community effort at a time is like baby steps toward a larger goal. Assessment on what is already being done in one's own community is needed in order to identify existing gaps. Once those gaps are found, a shared health goal can be created in partnerships for health development collaboration, involving government, international agencies, civil

society, and private sector representatives (see Partnership for Health Development). This shared health goal can then be one step toward the bigger goal of combating human trafficking. Understanding human trafficking as a 'glocal' issue will help in tackling this complexity social problem.

Moreover, these efforts can directly connect to the UN Millennium Goals for 2015. The Millennium Development Goal for 2015, (see section 1 of the United Nations General Assembly 2010) relates to this report's topic of human trafficking and the general public health scope as well as child health needs:

> *Millennium Development Goal 1: Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger*
>
> *Taking appropriate steps to assist one another in the elimination of the worst forms of child labour, strengthening child protection systems and combating trafficking in children through, inter alia, enhanced international cooperation and assistance, including support for social and economic development, poverty eradication programmes and universal education.*

4.1 Thinking glocally – Getting Finnish communities involved in global partnerships

Building partnerships for development is the key to the millennium development goals. One proposition would be to involve the Finnish communities of all ages, in the fight against human trafficking with the focus on raising funds, working together to gain knowledge, and develop community-based approaches and solutions for areas where human trafficking is rampant. For example, the UNDP suggests that "[i]t is estimated that 300,000 to 450,000 people are trafficked within Asia each year, of which more than half take place in South Asia." (UNDP 2007)

The more involved the more knowledge will be gained in hopes of preventing future trafficking cases. Educating people of all ages in Finnish society in parallel with citizens in South Asian societies, could promote an attitude toward helping those in need and working together in a 'glocal' context. Educating the youth in Finland will also help in preventing trafficking of children, even in Finnish society. No

society is a safe from the human trafficking phenomenon. This is why collaborative work should be conducted in efforts to create together novel community-based approaches in the developing and developed world. Specific localities could be of focus. For example localities within South Asia would be relevant, since this is not only where a large number of humans are trafficked each year, but even a region where trafficked victims found in Finland come from. (see Yle UUTISET [a] & [b]).

At the university level, cross-national partnerships with Finnish and South Asian universities could be established in a joint effort to create a project. Focus could be on human trafficking, public health and seeking ways of tackling the social problem together. This will only add to research and development but to raise awareness of key issues within this problem. Of course, projects that focus more closer to home, e.g. the Baltic region, would be another suitable region specific approach to various strategies. However, there are projects that focus on this already (see Sidoti 2010), and therefore other region specific projects should be considered.

Conclusions

The authors plea for future action

I feel personally compelled to do something about human trafficking, as I was immersed in the invisible society of traffickers and trafficking victims. It is something I have been exposed to since birth; I am not a victim nor am I a trafficker, but I have been in direct contact with traffickers and trafficked since childhood. It is something that the older I get, I feel a responsibility to be an actor in the fight against this social and global crisis. I had the opportunity to interview people in the state of California, USA in 2007 who were either involved in the trafficking of humans, or those who were trafficked themselves. These interviews have yet to be analyzed, but they are collecting digital dust as time goes by, waiting to be used in further knowledge building on this phenomenon.

Different types of human trafficking are indeed entering Finnish society. It is a relevant issue to

focus on even in a society where crime and social inequalities may seem – to many – non-existent. Nevertheless, with a critical eye, we can indeed visibly see it on the streets, as, for example, beggars may be victims of trafficking. In the city of Turku I witnessed a girl no older than ten begging for several days. I had wondered when Finnish officials of some sort would do something about it. I realized later that I should have done something about it – I should have taken action. If I cannot be compelled to take action, who will? This is why I emphasize that everyone should understand human slavery as a personal issue. Other cases are not so visible but still relevant and occurring even if it is hard to see – e.g. some prostitution cases, as well as forced labor cases. Reports of human trafficking cases are popping up in Finnish news more and more. In an article titled "Finland takes steps against illegal immigration from India", Yle, a Finnish news source, reported in 2011 that illegal immigration, including human trafficking is on the rise (Yle UUTISET 2012 [a]) In early February 2012, Yle reported that 26 people were detained in Finland, France and Belgium on suspicion of being involved in a human trafficking criminal organization participating in the trafficking of Sri Lankans. (Yle UUTISET 2012 [b]) In a later news report in February 2012, the preliminary completed investigation of illegal human trafficking was reported, revealing that an estimated 350,000 € of profits off of illegal sex trade occurred in Finnish society (Yle UUTISET 2012 [c]). More cases like these are coming to surface.

This is not to say that Finland is not taking action against human trafficking, however. Quite the contrary. For example, Heuni, an affiliate of the United Nations, as well as the Ombudsman for Minorities are key players that have the power to be heard in the human trafficking discourses in Finnish society (see Heuni & Ombudsman for Minorities). But it is important to continuously educate the public in order raise awareness of the problem. Communities need to take action – a problem this large cannot be conquered alone. This phenomenon is diverse. It is out of hand. It is everywhere. *Slavery is still very much a current issue, not just a thing of the past.* Unfortunately many of us do not realize that it is even on our local society's doorstep.

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