

Compassion Cracks Down on Human Trafficking

Today is **Human Trafficking Awareness Day** in the United States.

Today—and actually the whole month of January—has been set aside to reflect on the **state of slavery** in the world. Currently, there are 27 million slaves worldwide—a higher number than there has ever been at one time in history. Eighty percent of that 27 million are women, and 50 percent of that 27 million are children.

Human trafficking accounts for a wide range of violations, including the coercion of women into the sex trade to **forced child labor**. Compassion International does everything they can to prevent all of it.

“There are a lot of groups that do rescue, and we’re so thankful for them. But there are very few who actually are involved in the prevention part of it. And that’s where Compassion fits in,” says Compassion’s Kathy Redmond.

Compassion works to bring children across the globe out of poverty, a key component to fighting human trafficking as well. “Wherever there’s poverty, there’s this kind of risk,” Redmond explains.

Compassion has indeed come across many children who either have had relatives trafficked or who have been trafficked themselves.

“It’s a very easy way to make money for survival,” explains Redmond. “So in quite a few countries, we deal with mothers who have been prostitutes themselves to turn their kids over to that when they’re 10 years old.”

It’s a way to make money to eat in some nations. In others,

the poor kidnap children to use them to make money themselves. This is especially a problem in regions with a high demand for prostitution.

For instance, says Redmond, "With the Olympics going to Brazil, and the World Cup going to Brazil, there's a very lucrative market for **sex trafficking**. And they're already working on it now; the market is there."

Compassion cracks down on these horrors in a number of ways. The first and most obvious way is to just get kids off the streets, to feed them, to give them an education, to share the gospel with them and to therefore provide them a way out of the cycle of poverty. If poverty and **human trafficking** are so closely linked, eliminating poverty helps cut down the vulnerability of Compassion children now and later on.

Compassion is also able to go beyond the kids though. The ministry has been able to intervene and talk to mothers about trafficking, sharing the **freedom of Christ** with them as well.

Compassion also has some ministries directly in the heart of high risk areas, including a ministry in a neighborhood in India full of sex workers. Victims of the human trade then have access to Compassion workers and churches.

Compassion is working to make a dent in the growing issue of human trafficking, and you can help. Sponsoring a child might seem like just a drop in the bucket, but Redmond says that sponsorship can be the difference between ending up in a vulnerable life of poverty and escaping the cycle and the horrors that accompany it.