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CHILD SLAVERY

Today, more than a quarter of the world's slaves are children. These children are forced to commit commercial sex acts, forced into a system of domestic servitude or employed in occupations that are mentally, physically, socially and morally harmful.

Despite the fact that many people believe that slavery no longer exists, an estimated five million children are in slavery worldwide, including in the UK.

Child slavery is often confused with child labour, but is much worse. Whilst child labour is harmful for children and hinders their education and development, child slavery occurs when a child's labour is exploited for someone else's gain.

Child slavery includes:

- Children used by others for profit, often through violence, abuse and threats, in prostitution or pornography, forced begging, petty crime and the drug trade
- Forced child labour, for example in agriculture, factories, construction, brick kilns, mines, bars, the tourist industry or domestic work
- Children forced to take part in armed conflicts
- Children forced to marry

Why do children work? Most children work because their families are poor and their labour is necessary for their survival. Children are often employed because, compared to adults, they are more easily controlled and are unlikely to demand higher wages or better working conditions. For poorer children from rural areas, school is not an option. Education can be expensive or schools are too far away.

As well as being a result of poverty, child labour also perpetuates poverty. Many working children do not have the opportunity to go to school and often grow up to be unskilled adults trapped in poorly paid jobs.

The terms around exploitation of children can be quite confusing so here is a short guide.

Child work. Some types of work make useful, positive contributions to a child's development, helping them learn useful skills. Often, work is a vital source of income for their families.

Child labour. Child labour is not slavery, but nevertheless hinders children's education and development. Child labour tends to be undertaken when the child is in the care of their parents.

Worst form of child labour. "Hazardous work" is the worst form of child labour. It irreversibly damages children's health and development through, for example, exposure to dangerous machinery or toxic substances, and may even endanger their lives.

Child slavery. Child slavery is the enforced exploitation of a child for their labour for someone else's gain.

Child trafficking. Trafficking involves transporting, recruiting or harbouring people for the purpose of exploitation, using violence, threats or coercion. When children are trafficked, no violence, deception or coercion needs to be involved, trafficking is merely the act of transporting or harbouring them for exploitative work. When away from their families, they are at the mercy of their employers.

Child marriage. Many marriages involving children will not amount to slavery, particularly between couples aged 16 to 18 years. But when a child didn't give their consent to a marriage, is exploited within it or is not able to leave, that child is in slavery.

Children in armed conflicts. Children forced to take part in armed conflicts don't only include child soldiers but also porters or girls taken as "wives" for soldiers and militia members. Children involved in conflict are severely affected by their experiences and can suffer from long-term trauma.

Facts about child slavery:

Worldwide 10 million children are in slavery, trafficking, debt bondage and other forms of forced labour, forced recruitment for armed conflict, prostitution, pornography and other illicit activities according to International Labour Organization (ILO); 151.6 million are estimated to be in child labour (ILO); 114 million child labourers are below the age of 14 (ILO); 72 million children are in hazardous work that directly endangers their health, safety and moral development (ILO); more than 700 million women alive today were married before their 18th birthday. More than one in three (about 250 million) entered into union before age 15 (UNICEF); 300,000 children are estimated to serve as child soldiers, some even younger than 10 years old (UNICEF); 15.5 million children are in domestic work worldwide – the overwhelming majority of them are girls (ILO).

In the UK, 981 children were referred to authorities as potential victims of trafficking in 2015 (National Crime Agency)

Preventing child slavery in the UK. Primarily, preventing child trafficking requires addressing and responding to the factors that make

children vulnerable around the world, including poverty, inequality and conflict. It also requires highlighting government policies that exacerbate vulnerability and prevent children getting the support they need. Many organisations, including ECPAT UK, have anti-trafficking programmes operating across the world, often working in collaboration with smaller organisations, and national and local governments. ECPAT UK has called for improved training for police, local authority staff, health practitioners, border officials and all frontline workers who are in contact with children in order to improve identification of risk.

There are now over 1,400 active investigations involving modern slavery across the UK. A £10 million Modern Slavery Policy and Evidence Centre has also been established to “significantly increase the ability to understand and prevent modern slavery from happening in the first place, based on evidence and research.

To strengthen the law enforcement response, in April 2015 the Home Office provided Police Transformational Funding (PTF) for an initial 12 months, to Chief Constable Simon Bailey (National Policing lead for Child Protection Abuse Investigation (CPAI)). The Prevention Officers have delivered both national and regional CSA/E Prevention Strategies to assist local networks and practitioners in tailoring their response, based on the contents of the aforementioned problem profiles. Alongside this the Prevention Officers have undertaken significant activity to raise awareness, improve practice and contribute to systemic changes in our collective approach to CSA/E.

Список використаних джерел

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