

# Stop Trafficking !

*Anti Human Trafficking Newsletter*



Awareness

Advocacy

Action

April 2016 Vol. 14 No. 4

This issue highlights the connection between corruption and various forms of human trafficking.

Sponsored by the: Sisters of the Divine Savior

## Co-Sponsors

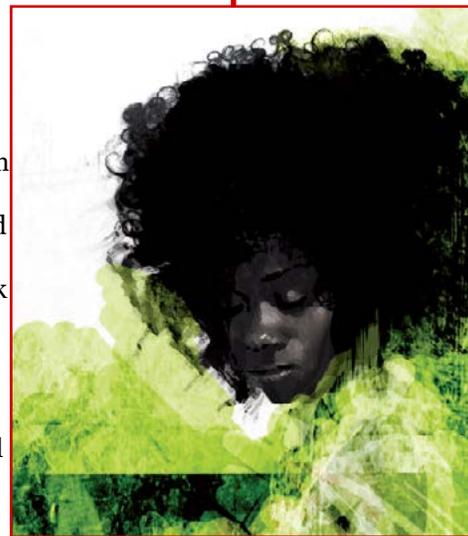
- Adorers of the Blood of Christ
- Benedictine Sisters of Chicago
- Benedictine Sisters, Mother of God Monastery, SD
- Benedictine Sisters of Mount St. Scholastica, Atchison, KS
- Cenacle Sisters, N. Amer. Prov.
- Congregation of Notre Dame
- Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes
- Congregation of St. Joseph
- Daughters of Charity, Prov. of St. Louise
- Daughters of Charity of St. Vincent de Paul, Prov. of West
- Dominican Sisters of Adrian, MI
- Dominican Sisters of Mission San Jose, CA
- Dominican Sisters of Peace
- Dominican Sisters of San Rafael, CA
- Dominican Sisters of Sinsinawa, WI
- Dominican Sisters of Springfield, IL
- Felician Sisters
- Franciscan Sisters, Little Falls, MN
- Franciscan Sisters of Peace
- Franciscan Sisters of Perpetual Adoration
- Franciscan Sisters of the Sacred Heart
- Holy Spirit Missionary Sisters
- Marianites of Holy Cross
- Maryknoll Sisters
- Missionary Sisters of the Society of Mary
- Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters
- Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary
- Religious Sisters of Charity
- School Sisters of Notre Dame, Shalom North America
- School Sisters of St. Francis, PA
- School Sisters of St. Francis of Christ the King
- Servants of the Holy Heart of Mary, USA Province
- Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary
- Sisters of Bon Secours USA
- Sisters of Charity of the Blessed Virgin Mary
- Sisters of Charity of Cincinnati, OH
- Sisters of Charity of Halifax
- Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word, Houston
- Sisters of Charity, Leavenworth, KS
- Sisters of Charity of Nazareth, KY
- Sisters of Charity of New York
- Sisters of Christian Charity Mendham, NJ & Wilmette, IL
- Sisters of the Good Shepherd
- Sisters of the Holy Cross
- Sisters of the Holy Family, Fremont, CA
- Sisters of the Humility of Mary
- Sisters of Mercy of the Americas
- Sisters of Notre Dame, CA Prov.
- Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, USA
- Sisters of the Presentation, San Francisco, CA
- Sisters of Providence of St. Vincent de Paul, Canada
- Sisters of St. Francis, Clinton, IA
- Sisters of St. Francis of Colorado Springs
- Sisters of St. Francis of the Providence of God
- Sisters of St. Francis of Redwood City
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Carondelet, Los Angeles
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Cluny, USA & Canada Prov.s
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Orange, CA
- Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace
- Society of the Divine Savior USA
- Society of the Holy Child Jesus, Amer. Prov.
- Society of the Sacred Heart, St. Louis, MO
- Ursuline Sisters of the Roman Union, USA

## Force-Fraud-Coercion-Corruption

### The Journey from Nigeria to Italy

In 2015 a 19-year old Nigerian woman swore an oath that led her to be trafficked to Europe as a sex slave. *"I thought that when I came here they would look for a job for me but I didn't know it was prostitution,"* she said. Dora (not her real name) told her story from the safety of an Italian shelter for trafficked women.

Hoping to escape destitution on the outskirts of Benin City where she was born, she took on a \$34,000 debt with what turned out to be a criminal network in exchange for passage to Italy and employment once she arrived. The deal — encouraged by her family — was sealed in a traditional and traumatic religious ceremony. A juju priest forced her to drink a strong alcoholic beverage laced with kola nut, strip partially naked and hand over her underwear, before warning her to obey every order she was given. *"The man told us that if we don't pay the amount, the curse is going to*



Dora cont. pg. 2

### Corruption and Human Trafficking

Trafficking in persons (TIP) and corruption are closely linked criminal activities, whose interrelation is frequently cited. Yet, the correlation between the two phenomena, and the actual impact of corruption on trafficking in persons, are generally neglected in the development and implementation of anti-human trafficking policies and measures.

Only after recognizing the existence and the effects of corruption in the context of human trafficking, can the challenges posed be met. It is thus important to examine how corruption actually contributes

to the growth of human trafficking. The U.N. Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) has been tracking this relationship since 2008. A 2011 study by the UNODC entitled, *'The Role of Corruption in Trafficking in Persons'*, provides detailed evidence of the effects of corruption.

Corruption cont. pg. 3



## Awareness

**Dora** cont. from pg. 1

kill us,” she said of the shaman who presided over the ritual. “And if we run away, the curse is going to kill us.”

This juju ceremony was just the beginning of a five-month, 2,500-mile-plus trip across Africa in minivans, motorcycles and pick-up trucks that brought Dora to Libya’s Mediterranean coast. There, she joined the ranks of more than 160,000 other migrants who had made a risky boat crossing to Sicily during 2015, among them an increasing number of trafficked young women headed for prostitution.

Along the way, she nearly starved to death in the desert and had all her money stolen. “People tried to rape us many times,” she said. In the war-torn Libyan capital of Tripoli, she was held by a Nigerian man who frequently became drunk and violent. One night he threw her food away, kicked her in the stomach and pushed her to the floor. “He beat me with a belt, he beat me like a goat. He said we were not behaving properly — and we should not think we can behave like this with our clients in Italy.”

Dora asked, “What do you mean clients?”, only to hear the response, “Don’t you know that when you get to Italy you’ll be working as prostitutes?” A few weeks later, she set sail for European shores from a beach in the

Libyan coastal city of Sabratah, on an overcrowded rubber vessel that nearly

capsized. “When I saw the dinghy I shuddered, I trembled, and then I started to pray.”

The Nigerian women trafficked as sex slaves are not like the refugees who have fled the battlefields of Syria or years of conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq. Nor are they escaping repressive regimes such as that of Eritrea, in the Horn of Africa. Though they are not running from war or dictatorship, they run from a lack of hope in the future. Nigeria is Africa’s biggest economy and most populous nation. Yet only a small elite benefits from the wealth of the country’s vast oil exports.

Myria Vassiliadou, the EU’s anti-trafficking co-ordinator, believes Nigerians in Italy are among the “most vulnerable” victims of modern slavery. She fears that their plight is being “rendered invisible” in the current debate over migration and “the influx of everybody who is coming to Europe at the moment. The nature of the crime is such that these people are hidden,” she explained.

It has been nearly three decades since Nigerian girls and women began appearing in noticeable numbers at night on Italian streets. But in 2015, the Italian-Nigerian sex trade connection has experienced a new boom. The vast movement of refugees and migrants seeking safe harbour in the west is being exploited by ruthless human smugglers who see an opportunity to bolster their trade.



Of the almost 900,000 migrants who landed in Europe after travelling across the Mediterranean this year, about one-fifth have come through Italy. Of those, almost 5,000 were Nigerian women, a fourfold increase over last year.

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) said more than half are being trafficked for

prostitution. “In the past we never saw these kinds of numbers,” stated a migration lawyer for IOM based in Rome. “Libya has become a logistical hub and the traffickers have become very well organized along the route and at getting the women on board the boats. The conditions of physical enslavement are horrible and have gotten worse.”

Humanitarian workers familiar with the problem say the profile of the exploited Nigerian women is also changing: they are more frequently very young — often below the age of sexual consent — and increasingly recruited from rural, poorly educated and impoverished segments of Nigerian society. “The increase in trafficked minors is very scary — these adolescent victims are more easily manipulated and attracted by superficial things,” IOM stated. In the past, many of the Nigerian women had a more straightforward journey to their new lives in Europe. Traffickers arranged fake documents and the women and girls boarded flights from Lagos to airports in Rome and London. According to those familiar with the trade, immigration officials on both sides sometimes looked the other way.

The civil war and chaos in Libya has opened up the opportunity for a new land-and-sea route. This entails much lower costs, since no forged passports are required to cross porous borders — a few bribes may suffice — and there is no need for expensive plane tickets. However, it is also much more perilous, and many women have ended up risking — or even losing — their lives.

Sadly, there remains a ready market for these victims in rich, industrialized countries, including across the EU. The problem is particularly acute in Italy, which accounts for the most verified cases of trafficking in the 28-country bloc due to a noxious combination of its geographic position in the southern Mediterranean, the power of domestic organized crime in poor regions where the state is weak, and a persistently high demand for sexual services.

(<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/26f1a120-990f-11e5-95c7-d47aa298f769.html>)



## Awareness

3

### Corruption *cont. from pg. 1*

The term trafficking in persons is often used indiscriminately with the term smuggling of migrants. While the two phenomena are distinct crimes and are dealt with in different international instruments, the two crimes may overlap and trafficking in persons may be easily confused with smuggling of migrants when traffickers move their victims from the country of origin to the destination country, possibly through one or more transit countries, without complying with the relevant migration laws and regulations of the countries involved. This highlights the importance of using indicators that reveal recruitment and exploitation, in order to correctly identify the situation as trafficking in persons where appropriate. In fact, the implications of failing to identify trafficking in persons is significant for the victims of the crime, who in such cases are not being provided assistance and protection as required, but are simply repatriated, with the high risk of being re-trafficked. Far from being an effective measure, this undermines substantially any fight against crime.

What follows are examples of corruption within the realm of TIP crimes.

#### **The TIP Chain**

**When:** The trafficking chain consists of the recruitment of victims, the provision of documentation (identity papers, visas, permits), the transport of victims, which may include border-crossing, their exploitation, as well as the laundering of the proceeds of the crime.

**Who:** Corrupt actors within this chain of activities may include police, customs officers, embassies/consulates,

border control authorities, immigration services, other law enforcement agencies, intelligence/security forces, armed forces (national or international), local officials, persons/groups/parties with influence on public officials, as well as private sector actors, such as travel agencies, airlines, transportation sector, financial institutions, banks, etc.

**What:** Corrupt acts include ignoring, tolerating, participating in and organizing trafficking in persons, ranging from violation of duties or corruption and involvement in organized crime.

#### **The Criminal Justice Chain**

**When:** The criminal justice chain includes the drafting and adoption of legislation, crime prevention, preliminary investigation, search, seizure and confiscation of proceeds, prosecution, trial and the enforcement of sanctions.

**Who:** Corrupt actors may include parliamentarians, government officials, police, customs border control, immigration services and other law enforcement agencies, prosecutors, investigative judges, intelligence/security forces, local officials, as well as persons/groups, parties with influence on public officials.

**What:** Acts may include passivity (e.g. ignoring, tolerating, and avoiding action) or actively obstructing investigations, prosecutions and judicial proceedings, revealing and selling information, betraying and altering the course of justice. Lack of awareness, capacities and skills may cause such behavior, which may range from mere violation of duties to corruption and involvement in organized crime.

### **Protection and Support of Victims**

**When:** This stage includes the provision of support, protection and shelter to victims of trafficking in persons.

**Who:** Actors involved may include non-governmental and civil society organizations, as well as public social service institutions.

**What:** Corrupt behavior may range from passivity and “trade offs”, to revealing or selling information on victims.

### **Hypothesis on the relationship between corruption and TIP:**

- Organized trafficking requires systemic corruption;
- Corruption is central to the success of traffickers and therefore criminals consider it a necessary investment.
- Corruption is possibly the main cost factor for traffickers.

The ODC Study goes on to provide an analysis of relevant international legal instruments and further suggests practical steps to address the issue of corruption in TIP.



([https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2011/Issue\\_Paper\\_-\\_The\\_Role\\_of\\_Corruption\\_in\\_Trafficking\\_in\\_Persons.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/human-trafficking/2011/Issue_Paper_-_The_Role_of_Corruption_in_Trafficking_in_Persons.pdf))



## Awareness

# Child Brides: Kidnapped and Forced to Marry

*"My mother was kidnapped to be a bride. My older sister was also kidnapped. Almost all of my relatives were bride kidnapped,"* confesses a young woman from Kyrgyzstan in a short film, 'After the Rain,' which exposes bride kidnapping and child marriage in Kyrgyzstan. She, too, was kidnapped and forced to marry at 16. *"I didn't know anything about marriage. It was so difficult because I did not love him. I had no choice but to give in. But I never gave him my heart."*



Another woman, age 52, recounts how she was kidnapped twice at the age of 14. Living with her husband's family, she gave birth at age 15. Her mother-in-law locked her and the baby in a room and starved them. The young girl could not nurse and so her baby died after one month. As she weeps, she says, *"I always carry a heavy guilt that I could not save my child; that I was the one that killed my child."*

(<http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/girls-voices/the-child-brides-of-kyrgyzstan-kidnapped-and-forced-to-marry/>)

Nazgul, then 19, was refilling cups of tea at the roadside café where she worked when three young men arrived. She served them and returned to the kitchen. When she reemerged, the men grabbed and carried her to their car. After pushing her into the backseat, they sped down the road to a neighboring village.

Once there, Nazgul was taken inside an unfamiliar house where strangers forced a white wedding scarf on her head. A single teenager that morning, Nazgul was a married woman by nightfall. It was the first time that she had met the man who would become her husband.

Now separated from her husband and with two young sons, Nazgul has no job, no assets, and no support from her husband or her in-laws. She has nothing beyond the generosity of her family and lives in a small house with her parents and siblings. She does not have access to or control over land. Her husband's family owns a home, land and livestock, but – like thousands of other divorced or abandoned young women – Nazgul has no rights to their property under law or custom and does not receive child support. She frequently struggles to find food for her children and other necessities, like winter clothing.

Despite the challenges she faces, Nazgul has plans for the future. In the short-term, she would like to sue her husband for child support. In the long-term, she dreams of buying her own plot of land in the village for a house and garden. She will raise her children there, near her family. She will plant potatoes and corn for food. And she will do it without a husband. *"No, I will not remarry,"* she said. *"I think that it's enough."*

## Bride Kidnapping in Rural Kyrgyzstan

Nearly 1 in 10 girls are married before the age of 18 in Kyrgyzstan. A large proportion of child marriages in the country happen as a result of bride kidnapping, according to the U.N. Population Fund. Although it is illegal, bride kidnapping is common in rural Kyrgyzstan. According to the Women's Support Center (WSC) in Bishkek, almost 12,000 women and girls are kidnapped every year. Of these, more than 2,000 are raped as a way to "seal the deal" and to discourage them from running home to their parents. Many more experience physical violence at the hands of their kidnapers, poor living conditions, and shattered dreams and hopes for the future. Thousands of kidnapped women who later divorce or are abandoned by their husbands are left impoverished and stigmatized.

Despite the widespread belief that bride kidnapping is a Kyrgyz tradition, the practice is relatively new. Researchers have found that, while consensual kidnappings historically occurred as a form of elopement, non-consensual kidnapping were very rare. But, in recent decades, the practice has increased as poverty, unemployment and the disintegration of traditional kinship structures engendered a sense of lawlessness and frustration among young men.

These men may not be able to afford a bride price (often a cash payment and gift of livestock to the bride's parents) or wedding. They may not perceive women to be their equal in decision-making ability. They may not,



## Awareness

### Kidnapping *cont. from pg. 4*

in fact, know how to approach girls whom they admire. So they kidnap.

Recent laws supported by local civil society organizations and forward-thinking Parliamentarians have strengthened the punishment for abducting a woman and forcing her into marriage. While abductors had faced a maximum of three years in prison, they now face seven. If the woman is under the legal marriage age of 17, the maximum sentence is ten years. Still, the practice continues and perpetrators are rarely prosecuted.

Bride kidnapping has negative repercussions for kidnapped women. Because child and/or forced marriages are illegal, these unions are not registered with the state. In many cases, couples live with the husbands' parents and have no assets of their own.

Even rights that the victims could usually claim in cases of divorce or abandonment – alimony, child support, and marital property – are not available because the legal provisions protecting their rights are not activated in unregistered marriages.

In addition, because these kidnappings happen to very young women, they interrupt the girl's schooling and leave her without the skills or education that she needs to support herself.

(<http://www.girls-notbrides.org/bride-kidnapping-and-land-rights-in-rural-kyrgyzstan/>)

## Childless United Kingdom Couples Forced Abroad to Find Surrogates

Almost two-thirds of all UK parental orders – legal rights conferred on parents who have commissioned a child from a surrogate – are now for a baby born overseas. In the past three years, more than 1,000 UK couples and individuals have secured the services of surrogates abroad, the highest number from any European country.

It costs around \$130,000 plus insurance to secure the services of a surrogate in the U.S. However, the price can be as low as \$35,000 in some countries, although many, such as India, where surrogacy was until recently a \$40,000.000 industry, are now closing their doors to foreigners.

In the past Nepal, Thailand and Mexico offered an affordable route to parenthood, and financial security for the surrogates, but they are also clamping down. Outside of the UK, gay and lesbian couples have long found themselves barred from accessing surrogacy services by most countries, with the exception of several U.S. states and Canada.

Attempts to keep costs down have seen the creation of “hybrids”, where an egg is fertilized in one country, often where the commissioning parents reside, and then implanted in a woman in a developing country, where a surrogate will be cheaper than in the west.

But, as countries outlaw access to surrogacy for foreigners, parental options are becoming increasingly limited and, in some cases, children born by surrogates for UK parents, or embryos ready for implanting, have ended up in limbo.

The changing international situation has led to renewed calls for the UK to do more to promote domestic surrogacy. Currently, surrogates in the UK are allowed to receive only expenses of up to \$21,000, and there is nothing to stop them renegeing on the arrangement.

In the U.S. everyone is legally informed, legally protected and empowered to make decisions. In the UK, surrogacy is based on trust as contracts are unenforceable. Because of this, people look at Canada and the U.S.

But bringing a child born to a surrogate back to the UK can also be problematic. “*The UK does not recognize an order made in another jurisdiction,*” said Anne-Marie Hutchinson, a leading expert on fertility law and a founder of the International Surrogacy Forum. “*As a matter of UK law, the surrogate is still treated as the legal mother unless and until the couple get a parental order.*”

Supporters of surrogacy claim there is overwhelming support in the UK to remove legal uncertainty over parenthood at the point of birth. They cite figures suggesting that almost three-quarters of surrogates oppose current UK law, which allows them to change their mind about handing over the baby.

However, the Surrogacy Arrangements Act makes it impossible for couples seeking a surrogate to draw up a binding contract recognized by the UK courts. “*I can give advice but I can't assist in negotiating a surrogacy because that would be illegal,*” Hutchinson said. (<http://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2016/feb/20/childless-uk-couples-forced-abroad-surrogates>)



Surrogacy in India.  
Photo: Mansi Thapliyal  
Reuters



## Advocacy

### Marrying Too Young

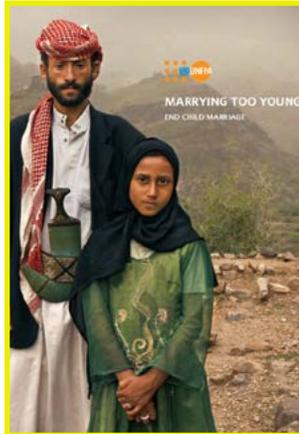
Child marriage is a human rights abuse. It constitutes a grave threat to young girls' lives, health and future prospects. Marriage for girls can lead to complications related to pregnancy and childbirth, and in developing countries these are the main causes of death among 15–19 year-old girls. Girls who are married are also exposed to sexually transmitted infections, including HIV. For a girl, marriage can mean the end of her education, can set aside her chances of a vocation or career, and can steal from her foundational life choices.

Choosing when and who to marry is one of life's most important decisions. No one else, however well-meaning, has the right to make that decision. The decision to marry should be a freely made, informed decision that is taken without fear, coercion, or undue pressure. It is an adult decision and a decision that should be made, when ready, as an adult. On that virtually all countries agree.

The Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), both human rights instruments, outlaw child marriage. The International Conference on Population and Development in 1994 (ICPD) called on countries to eliminate child marriage and to enforce laws that ensure free and full consent. Yet child marriage persists, especially in poor and rural parts of countries in the developing world. It may be part of local tradition; parents may believe it safeguards their daughters' future; poverty or conflict may propel it. But more often than not, child marriage is the outcome of fewer choices. Girls who miss out or drop out of school are especially vulnerable to it—while the more exposure a girl has to formal education and the better-off her family is, the more likely marriage is to be postponed.

Despite near-universal commitments to end child marriage, one in three girls in developing countries (excluding China) will probably be married before they are 18. One out of nine girls will be married before their 15th birthday. Most of these girls are poor, less educated, and living in rural areas. Over 67 million women 20–24 year old in 2010 had been married as girls. Half were in Asia, one-fifth in Africa. In the next decade 14.2 million girls under 18 will be married every year. This translates into 39,000 girls married each day. This will rise to an average of 15.1 million girls a year, starting in 2021 until 2030, if present trends continue. While child marriages are declining among girls under age 15, 50 million girls could still be at risk of being married before their 15th birthday in this decade. (Excerpted from 'Marrying Too Young: End Child Marriage' published 2012 by the United Nations Population Fund.)

(<https://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/MarryingTooYoung.pdf>)



### Kyrgyzstan Tries to Stem Bride Kidnapping

Protecting the rights of young, kidnapped women requires a multi-pronged approach. The newly introduced harsher penalties for those found guilty of bride kidnapping is the first step toward counteracting these behaviors; ensuring that the law is implemented is equally important. The next step requires finding ways to protect women's rights in unregistered marriages. In some other countries, for example, informal marriage is sufficient proof of a right to marital property. And, finally, community level programs must focus on identifying and addressing behaviors and attitudes that are harmful to young women, as it is societal acceptance that enables bride kidnapping.

Despite the stories of tragedy, there is a glimmer of hope, both from the women themselves and the younger generation to follow, that bride kidnapping will one day become a thing of the past.

*"Two friends from the village came to me asking me to help them kidnap a girl they knew,"* explains a young man interviewed in the film, 'After the Rain'. *"I told them "You shouldn't do it. Instead, I can help you meet her and talk to her. It will be better for all of us. You should ask yourself: what would you do if this was your sister?"*

Once released, the film will be shown in communities across Kyrgyzstan to spark conversations on this entrenched practice.

(<http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/bride-kidnapping-and-land-rights-in-rural-kyrgyzstan/>)



## Advocacy

### Forced Marriage

Forced marriage intersects with child abuse, sexual assault and rape, domestic and family violence, stalking, female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C), and human trafficking.

Over the past five years, a more comprehensive picture of the nature and scope of forced marriage in the U.S. has emerged. This growing body of research has demonstrated that forced marriage is a serious but neglected problem in the U.S. and that many survivors of forced marriage have experienced harm that is overlapping with other forms of violence and yet unique enough to require additional skills and awareness from service providers and others in a position to assist. Despite many advocates' best efforts, survivors of forced marriage and those at risk continue to fall through the cracks of the systems and programs set up to protect individuals from abuse. For these reasons, it is critical to recognize and connect the dots between the mechanisms of power, control, and coercion that may precede a forced marriage, and the forms of abuse that can follow it.



UNFPA's Action for Adolescent Girls  
Building the health, social and economic assets of  
adolescent girls, especially those at risk of child marriage

Programme document  
JN18.2014

### United Nations Works to Empower Adolescent Girls

As part of its 'Adolescent and Youth Strategy' approved in 2012 and its new Strategic Plan 2014-17, UNFPA is committed to stepping up investments towards ending child marriage and reducing adolescent pregnancy by supporting 12 countries' governments to reach the most marginalized adolescent girls, especially those at risk of child marriage and married girls, over the five years 2013-2017.

UNFPA expects the program to improve the lives of adolescent girls by:

- delaying marriage and pregnancy;
- improving sexual and reproductive health and HIV knowledge and practices;
- increasing the demand for and use of quality, rights-based, voluntary family planning;
- enhancing girls' autonomy, social networks, and participation;
- reducing school drop-out;
- creating an enabling environment to uphold girls' rights and entitlements.

([http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/UNFPA%20AAG%20programme%20document\\_25july2014.pdf](http://www.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/resource-pdf/UNFPA%20AAG%20programme%20document_25july2014.pdf))

### 'Stop Surrogacy Now'

'Stop Surrogacy Now,' founded in May 2015, brings together a worldwide, ethnically, religiously, and culturally diverse group opposed to the exploitation of women and the human trafficking of children by surrogacy.

'Stop Surrogacy Now' demands recognition that surrogacy exploits women (in many cases poor and marginalized) who are paid to bear children. Often these women are subject to coercion, restrictive or substandard living conditions, and poor health care. In addition, surrogacy carries many severe,

short- and long-term health risks. Many surrogates live as indentured persons with 24-hour monitoring of the "property" within their wombs.

'Stop Surrogacy Now' demands recognition that children conceived for surrogacy are quality-controlled: subject to sex-selection or abandonment for disability or simple change-of-mind. Children produced through surrogacy are objects of contract as well as products of inequitable bargaining power and unregulated markets. Most often, these commercially produced children experience the sudden and complete severance of the natural bond between mother and child and are intentionally deprived of contact with and knowledge of one or both biological parents in direct violation of the U.N.'s Declaration of the Rights of the Child.

Signatories to 'Stop Surrogacy Now' demand a complete stop to surrogacy in order to end efforts that would seek to legitimize and normalize trafficking children.

This reproductive tourism is usually viewed as unproblematic and almost an act of kindness on behalf of the commissioning parents, because, it is argued, the women who carry the babies have no other way to earn a living. But in Gujarat, and other poor, rural parts of India, parents of multiple daughters sometimes sell the older ones to trafficking gangs and pimps, who take them to cities to work as surrogates and earn money for their younger sisters' dowries. Surrogates in India are usually paid under \$8,000. Around 10,000 foreign couples visit India for reproductive services yearly.

Countries such as France, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal and Bulgaria prohibit all forms of surrogacy. In countries including the UK, Ireland, Denmark and Belgium, surrogacy is allowed where the surrogate mother is not paid, or only paid for reasonable expenses. Paying the mother a fee is prohibited. Commercial surrogacy is legal in some U.S. states and countries such as India, Russia and the Ukraine.

To sign in support of the Stop Surrogacy Now campaign, go to:  
<http://www.stopsurrogacynow.com/#sign>



Action

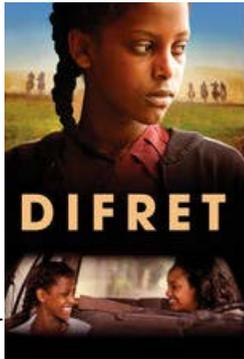
8

**Toll-Free 24/7 Hotline**  
**National Human Trafficking**  
**Resource Center**  
 1.888.3737.888  
 Text 'Help' at: BeFree  
 (233733)

## 'Difret'

Executive producer Angelina Jolie Pitt presents an award-winning 2015 drama based on the inspirational true story of a young Ethiopian girl and a tenacious lawyer embroiled in a life-or-death clash between cultural traditions and their country's advancement of equal rights.

When 14-year-old Hirut is abducted in her rural village's tradition of kidnapping women for marriage, she fights back, accidentally killing her captor and intended husband.



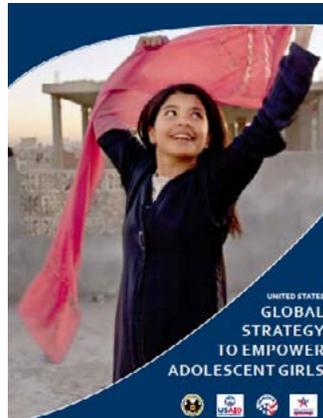
Local law demands a death sentence for Hirut, but Meaza, a tough and passionate lawyer from a women's legal aide practice, steps in to fight for her.

With both Hirut's life and the future of the practice at stake the two women must make their case for self-defense against one of Ethiopia's oldest and most deeply-rooted traditions. 'Difret' paints a portrait of a country in a time of great transformation and the brave individuals ready to help shape it.

(<http://www.difret.com/>)

### Study Guide

For a study guide for grades 7-12 to learn about the film, 'Difret', go to:  
<http://filmed.sffs.org/Asset/00001940/Difret>



## 'The U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls'

Aberash Bekele, the real person featured in the film 'Difret', helped call for the U.S. Government to launch a strategic plan for ending child marriage and other injustices by standing for significant rights for girl children.

'The U.S. Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls' was announced in March 2016.

Go to: <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/254904.pdf>

## Take Action for Girls Forced to Marry in the U.S.

<https://www.change.org/p/president-of-the-united-states-end-forced-marriage-in-the-united-states>

### Informative Web Sites: (Each contains information related to human trafficking)

#### **Nigeria to Italy**

[http://www.unicri.it/services/library\\_documentation/publications/unicri\\_series/trafficking\\_nigeria-italy.pdf](http://www.unicri.it/services/library_documentation/publications/unicri_series/trafficking_nigeria-italy.pdf)

#### **Child/Forced Marriage**

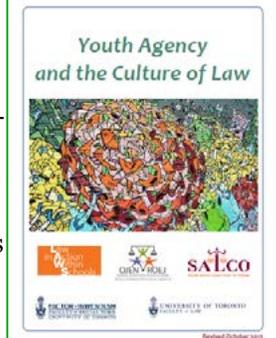
<http://www.unfpa.org/child-marriage>  
<http://www.tooyoungtowed.org/>  
<http://www.preventforcedmarriage.org>  
<http://www.girlsnotbrides.org/>

#### **Surrogacy**

<http://www.stopsurrogacynow.com/>

## Forced Marriage in Canada

The Ontario Justice Education Network (OJEN) of Canada prepared five modules to present to high school students to help them understand their rights in regard to marriage.



The modules cover: age of majority; guardianship; minimum age to marry; forced marriage; and emancipation or leaving home.

To obtain the modules, go to:  
<http://ojen.ca/resource/8898>

**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!*  
[www.stopenslavement.org/archives.htm](http://www.stopenslavement.org/archives.htm)

To contribute information, or make requests to be on the mailing list, please contact: [jeansds@stopenslavement.org](mailto:jeansds@stopenslavement.org)  
 Editing and Layout: *Jean Schafer, SDS*

### • 'Google Baby'

### • 'Breeders: A Subclass of Women?'

### • 'Outsourcing Embryos'

To see more on these films about surrogacy, go to:  
<http://www.stopsurrogacynow.com/films/>