Entrepeneurship: Reaching the Vulnerable

Vietnamese Children Vanish from Dutch Shelters

In November 2016, four Vietnamese children were placed at a reception center for unaccompanied children in Ter Apel, the Netherlands. In internal communications between the refugee organizations involved, this choice was questioned and assessed by one employee to be ‘risky’.

In a report made by the staff at the accommodation facility, the boys were described as acting anxiously in the few days they stayed at the reception facility. They mostly stayed locked in their room and would only open the door slightly to look outside. Whenever they left the facility grounds one boy, who appeared to be the leader, would be in possession of all the documentation of the group and walk in front, followed by the other three who would walk a distance behind. What the boys did when they were outside of the facility is unclear.

They told other residents they were from China. The facility employees noticed that they lacked any luggage on arrival. Three days after their arrival, the four boys went missing from the premises of the facility. They were reported missing to police and the guardian organization, NIDOS. Findings from the Netherlands suggests that these boys were controlled by traffickers through debt bondage and wanted to get to the UK. (Case study from FOIA documents (2016). Internal communications COA, November 2016. Document requested by ARGOS/Lost in Europe.)

An investigation by a Netherlands news agency revealed that at least 60 Vietnamese children disappeared from two shelters in the past five years. Dutch police and immigration officials suspect the children end up in the UK working on cannabis farms and in nail salons.
Uzbekistan: Cotton Harvesting

In 2018 when the harvest began, a man was on sick leave from work at Ammofos-Maxam, a joint Uzbek-Spanish company and the main employer in the town where he lived. According to his parents, his supervisor called him repeatedly and demanded that he pick cotton. As the sole breadwinner in his family, he financially supported his parents and two brothers. His mother said he could not refuse to pick cotton because he feared losing his job. He could have hired someone to pick in his place for approximately US$ 120, but the family could not afford it.

He had worked at Ammofos-Maxam for five years and each autumn had been sent by his employer to pick cotton. The chairman of the board of Uzkinmosanoat signed an order in September, directing eight subsidiary companies, including Ammofos-Maxam, to send a total of 6,000 employees to pick cotton in the Dustlik district in Jizzakh, and to arrange their transportation, food, and accommodation. The order stated the action was in compliance with orders of the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Uzbekistan -- “On the Preparation of the 2018 Cotton Harvest and Harvesting of Ripe Cotton without Loss.”

A nurse described relentless forced labor, including cotton picking, that takes her away from her job. “I like working as a nurse. I always dream that every day I will be allowed to do my job. Because in total I only work as a nurse three to five months a year. Two years ago, I started to keep track of the days I worked as a nurse. It has turned out to be 109 days per year. The rest of the time I have worked in the fields, carried out public maintenance, and street cleaning. True, nurses who are a little older may do their jobs 5-6 months a year, but not at my age [38 years old]. To fulfill all orders from the top, officials send out people like me. If they need more work done, then they will also send out the older nurses too. More than anything I don't like working in the fields, weeding and picking cotton.”

The nurse said that she was sent to another district to pick cotton from October 7 to November 20 because the district department of health ordered each medical institution to send 20 pickers and she could not refuse without risking her job. She said she and 500 other pickers lived in crowded, cold conditions in buildings with no windows and tents, sharing just four toilets. There was a tent for supervisors at the field that included five employees from the district health department, the union leader, two employees from the district and one from the region.

The chairperson of a women’s committee who was tasked with recruiting cotton pickers, said that attracting voluntary pickers early in the season was easy but got much harder after the first pass. “At first it was easy to recruit pickers because it was possible for them to earn money. Later, no one wanted to go to the fields and we had to use different tactics, including threatening to cut off their welfare and child benefits to get them to pick.”

A teacher said she picked cotton voluntarily on weekends on a relative’s farm from the beginning of the season to the end of November, to earn some extra money. After the first pass, she stopped picking because it was no longer worth it. She said that after October 20, local officials assigned a cotton quota to every public organization in the district. Her school was required to provide 15 tons. She picked for 20 days after her director threatened to fire her when she protested. The school deducted money from teachers’ salaries to cover the cost of the 30 teachers it sent to pick cotton on overnight shifts in other districts. She said, “The director ordered us to tell children that their parents must each provide the school with five kilograms of cotton per day, not money. At first the school managed to collect two or two and a half tons per day but now we can’t manage 300 kilograms.”

Uzbekistan’s 2018 cotton harvest, which concluded in all regions of the country at the end of November, showcased the enormous challenges in uprooting the country’s deeply entrenched forced labor system. Children forced to help pick cotton has diminished considerably due to the Uzbek government’s genuine, public commitment to end forced labor in cotton production.
Vietnamese Youth cont. from pg. 1

The findings of the investigation raise serious questions about the efforts of EU states to prevent the trafficking of vulnerable children, and highlight the failings of the British and Dutch authorities to care for unaccompanied minors properly. The organization, Every Child Protected Against Trafficking (Ecpat), reported that there are more Vietnamese children than any other nationality identified or suspected of being trafficked into the UK. (https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2018/dec/15/uk-care-system-failing-trafficked-children-lost-and-missing)

When unaccompanied underage asylum seekers arrive in the Netherlands, the Dutch organization, Central Agency for the Reception of Asylum Seekers (COA), provides them with a guardian to support them through the asylum process. If the Dutch authorities believe a child may be at risk of potential trafficking they are taken to one of two protected shelters under COA management.

The head of the COA said that despite his organization’s efforts to protect Vietnamese children, many simply vanish from the shelters. “The minors disappear, no matter what we do,” he said. Internal emails from the COA and the police detail the lengths the Vietnamese children go to in order to escape the shelters – they often study maps, sharpen knives to open windows, and tamper with fire alarms. People working at the shelters try to prevent the children from escaping but are rarely successful.

Concerns about traffickers’ access to these shelters have been growing. The coordinator of the northern shelter said that the protected shelters are used by traffickers as staging posts, where children who have entered the country illegally and unaccompanied can stay while waiting to be collected by the trafficking gangs. “I realized the shelter was used as a stopover on the way to England,” a shelter manager said. The traffickers, some from eastern European countries, often wait in cars outside to pick up the children.

The UK is believed to be the end destination for the trafficking ring that starts in Vietnam via eastern Europe and the Netherlands and France. The Dutch police say the UK is an attractive smuggling destination because trafficked children can make thousands of pounds a month on cannabis farms and in nail salons.

Official UK figures show that hundreds of Vietnamese children are trafficked into the country each year, however the actual number is thought to be much higher. Vietnamese nationals are ranked consistently in the top three of groups identified as potential victims of trafficking in the UK. From 2009 to 2018, 3,187 Vietnamese adults and children were referred to authorities.


Mozambique’s Children at Risk from Poverty and Natural Disaster

Experts indicate post-disaster trafficking is common in developing nations as global warming disasters leave the already poor even more vulnerable.

In March 2019 Cyclone Idai devastated vast areas of Mozambique’s coastal areas before moving inland to neighboring Malawi and Zimbabwe. In areas in and around Mozambique’s port city of Beira hundreds were killed and millions affected. Torrential rains triggered floods that inundated vast swathes of farmland in one of the worst climate-related disasters to hit the southern hemisphere. Social institutions cannot function effectively, making it hard to find food and human-


Mozambique cont. pg. 4

Cotton cont. from pg. 2

Yet the government’s own centralized production system and real labor gaps—insufficient labor in less populous districts coupled with a drop in voluntary labor during the late picking season—continued to drive the use of forced labor across the country in 2018. Even as parts of the government undertook measures to prevent and investigate cases of forced labor, other parts of the government directed employers to order their workers to pick cotton to make up for shortfalls of local voluntary pickers, orders which vulnerable employees could not refuse. The government still relies on and extorts major national enterprises, businesses, and organizations, not only to supply thousands of employees as pickers, but also to bear costs for their transportation, food, and accommodation during harvest.

While significant increases in payment for cotton picking did increase voluntary participation in the harvest, especially early when cotton is most abundant and pickers can earn the most, this was not sufficient to cover labor shortfalls in low population districts or later in the season when working conditions worsened and pickers would earn much less. As a result, officials turned to public sector institutions as well as banks, enterprises, and businesses to send their employees to the fields or pay for pickers, to cover costs for these pickers, and, in some regions, to deliver cotton quotas.

In order to initiate appropriate reforms that address the underlying causes of forced labor, identifying structural problems and policies is essential. (Excerpted: Report pgs. 5-6, http://uzbekgermanforum.org)
Cobalt: Clean Energy & Abusive Child Labor

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) contains vast and significant mining resources including more than 1100 minerals and precious metals. The world market for cobalt is growing rapidly, with the DRC producing more than half of the world supply. Mining accounts for about 80% of the DRC's earnings. Yet, despite these vast riches of tin, gold, nickel, copper, and cobalt, the average Congolese citizen earns just $700 a year.

Numerous cobalt extraction companies in the DRC employ children as young as 7 years old to extract this mineral by hand or with rudimentary tools and no protective measures. According to UNICEF, roughly 40,000 young boys and girls (under 18 years) are used for dangerous mining activities in southern DRC, extracting cobalt. Children number 40% of all workers in the region's mines.

The working conditions for children at these mining sites is atrocious. Given the same status as adults, they work without breaks and without any basic measures for protection or security. In unbearable heat, with clouds of red dust and weak light, these children dig at depths of 200 to 300 meters and are at constant risk of asphyxiation, rockslides, or other accidental deaths, for a remuneration of 1 to 2 dollars per day, often acting as human mules for cobalt diggers.

Congolese activists face strong resistance from poor families, who have sent their children to dig for minerals in order to supplement their meager earnings. They believe they can make it into the middle class if they work as artisanal miners.

Cobalt is a key component in the lithium-ion batteries that power countless millions of smartphones, computers, and tablets. Cobalt provides a stability and high energy density that allows batteries to operate safely and for longer periods.

Its crucial role in future manufacturing is only now apparent. The global transition to renewables—the biggest energy shift in a century—could depend in good measure on how readily cobalt will be available over the next several years, and how expensive it will be to produce and refine.

To curb carbon emissions, automakers are ramping up production of electric vehicles. General Motors plans for an all-electric future. Volkswagen aims to have one-quarter of its production devoted to electric vehicles by 2025. Each electric-vehicle battery will need about 18 pounds of cobalt—over 1,000 times as much as the quarter-ounce of cobalt in a smartphone. Volkswagen, for example, expects it will need to build six giant battery factories within a decade simply to supply its electric-car plants.

The reliance on a single raw material is nothing new. The auto industry owes its existence to pumping crude oil out of the earth. But there is a key difference. Oil reserves are tapped in dozens of countries and under every ocean. By contrast, cobalt has until now been heavily concentrated in the DRC—a country beset by conflict, corruption, poverty, and dysfunction. That reality poses urgent ethical challenges for the technology, automotive, and mining companies that need cobalt—problems that, if not resolved, could threaten the very ability of those companies to win over millions of consumers to cleaner energy.

To read a current, detailed article and learn what companies need to do and try to do to overcome the abuse in cobalt mining, go to: http://fortune.com/longform/blood-sweat-and-batteries/ (https://www.humanium.org/en/child-labor-in-the-mines-of-the-democratic-republic-of-congo/)

Mozambique cont. from pg. 3

This leaves women and children at risk of kidnapping, sexual exploitation and trafficking. The United Nations (UN) estimates up to a million children were affected in Mozambique alone. Aid workers are particularly concerned about orphaned children and those separated from their families, who are fending for themselves. In addition to dangers of trafficking, a lack of food can also trigger an increase in early child marriages. Mozambique is among the top 10 countries in the world with the highest rates of child marriage - around 48% of girls are married before 18. This poses another risk for girls.

CCR CSR has been a pioneer consulting business on child rights in their supply chains for nearly 10 years, working in a growing number of Asian countries including China, Hong Kong, Myanmar, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Laos, Malaysia and Indonesia. They have extensive experience and expertise in helping companies improve their direct and indirect impact on children and thereby strengthen their sustainable business. Examples of three initiatives follow. (http://www.ccrcsr.com)

**Laos: A Youth Training Program**

According to International Labor Organization (ILO) figures, 41.1% of youth (aged 15-25) are unemployed and out of the education system in Laos. Many lack access to decent work and training opportunities. Therefore CCR CSR has implemented a youth inclusion project in Laos for Mekong Timber Plantations. The program aims to create work opportunities for youth in its forestry nursery, plantations and associated support services by helping management identify suitable workstations for juvenile workers, training management about responsible recruitment and juvenile worker management, and delivering a series of skill-building training sessions to the young workers. Young workers receive training in literacy skills, financial literacy and basic computer skills, and learn about gender-based violence and workplace discrimination.

*Mekong Timber Plantations* is committed to ensuring its operations have a positive impact on children and youth. Upon completion of this program, plantation managers will have the capacity to continue running the program independently, creating highly sought-after skill-building opportunities while also building up a skilled labor force.


**Children Working at Home**

CCR CSR and Save the Children Deutschland have teamed up to produce a new ground-breaking study on “Home-based Work in Textile Supply Chains and its Impact on Children.” Although homeworkers are largely invisible, the International Labor Organization (ILO) estimates that 300 million people worldwide are producing goods in homes, not in factories. Some of them enter global supply chains without the knowledge of brands.

In addition there is little information on the risks or benefits that this unregulated part of global supply chains can have on children.

The ‘Home-based Work’ report will identify pragmatic solutions for brands and factories to use so that risks become opportunities and that children’s rights are protected.

(https://www.ccrcsr.com/content/four-countries-four-voices-how-businesses-can-impact-lives-children)

**Children’s Voices: Four Countries, Four Stories**

CCR CSR and the Global Child Forum created a 7-minute film in which children speak about how child rights’ projects improved their lives, while at the same time inspiring businesses to invest in child rights.

The film includes four short stories from China, Vietnam, Bangladesh and Myanmar. In each country, children and/or their parents introduce viewers to one child rights project that has positively impacted their lives.

“What’s so special about this film is that it gives voice to children whose individual stories are often lost in impersonal statistics or missing from formal discussions about child rights. We are proud to be able to share their stories while at the same time highlighting the positive impact businesses can have on the lives of children when they embrace child rights initiatives.”

Ines Kaempfer, Executive Director of CCR CSR
The Responsible and Ethical Private Sector Coalition against Trafficking

RESPECT endeavors to facilitate debate among diverse stakeholders; provide relevant contributions to the research basis; build linkages to other crimes; and develop effective public policy towards a more effective global response to human trafficking.

The goal of RESPECT, together with the business community, is to:

• Raise awareness and build understanding of human trafficking in global supply chains;
• Provide a platform for peer exchange, to share knowledge, present and improve best practices and existing strategies for countering human trafficking in supply chains, and to develop new initiatives to implement going forward;
• Publish industry-specific case studies for use by a wide audience;
• Provide stakeholders and decision makers (mainly from the private sector) with the tools they need to identify, map, and combat human trafficking in business supply chains;
• Generate momentum amongst the business community to share knowledge among them in the pursuit of improved prevention and mitigation of human trafficking.
• Engage businesses and provide them with training tools.
• Create a forum for the business community to share its experiences.
• Link businesses with the UN, NGOs and the youth to combat human trafficking.
• Raise awareness among the general public of the impact they can have on the issues of human trafficking in the private sector in their role as consumers.

There are three founding RESPECT organizations:

Global Initiative Against Transnational Organized Crime

Headquartered in Geneva, the Initiative comprises a network of nearly 100 independent global and regional experts working on human rights, democracy, governance, and development issues where organized crime has become increasingly pertinent. It commissions and shares research globally; curates a robust resource library of 2,000 reports and tools specific to organized crime; and uses its convening power to unite both the private and public sectors against organized crime.

The Global Initiative seeks to project the expertise of its Network members outwards and to make it available to a broader range of stakeholders, including through developing tools necessary to further the development of effective human trafficking responses.

Babson College’s Initiative on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery

The Initiative is an action-oriented think tank focused on addressing human trafficking and modern slavery through an entrepreneurial and private sector.

The mission of the Initiative is to:

• Bring together entrepreneurial minds, students, and influential business leaders; corporate, NGO, and governmental partners; and human trafficking and modern slavery activists from around the world in order to learn, network, and build innovative approaches to advancing human freedom.

• Leverage expertise and resources from Babson College to develop cutting-edge research, classroom approaches, and action-oriented initiatives to educate and activate current and next-generation business leaders in the fight against human trafficking and modern slavery.

International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Established in 1951, the IOM is the United Nations Migration Agency leading in the field of migration and working closely with governmental, intergovernmental and non-governmental partners.

With 166 member states, eight states with observer status, and 480 offices in over 100 countries, IOM is dedicated to promoting humane and orderly migration for the benefit of all. It does so by working to help ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people.

IOM has been working to counter the trafficking in persons since 1994. Over 90,000 trafficked persons have been assisted. IOM’s primary aims are to prevent trafficking in persons and to protect victims from the trade while offering them options of safe and sustainable reintegration and/or return to IOM cont. pg. 8
Open Apparel Registry (OAR)

The Open Apparel Registry (OAR) is an open source tool which maps garment facilities worldwide and assigns a unique ID number to each. The mission of the OAR is to maintain an open-source, neutral and publicly accessible database of every facility in the global apparel and footwear sector, for the purposes of enabling industry collaboration and improved identification of factories. The OAR compiles data from multiple sources including large datasets from multistakeholder initiatives (MSIs), brand and retailer supplier lists, facilities and factory groups, service providers, government databases and more. The data is published under an open data license, Creative Commons CC-BY-SA 4.0. The collated database is powered by an advanced name and address-matching algorithm, developed by geospatial software firm, Azavea.

The free-to-use tool can be accessed by any organization to update and standardize a supplier list against the database, view facility affiliations, and use the OAR ID as a unique and shared ID across software systems and databases.

The application uses statistical text analysis to compare newly submitted items to the existing list of facilities in an attempt to automatically match highly similar items. Where the similarities between items are weaker, the application will present a potential match, requiring confirmation from the contributor/user.

To contribute to the database, users must create a free account at the Register tab on the main toolbar. Anyone can sign up and contribute. Organizations can:
- Update and standardize facility names and addresses against the database;
- Understand affiliations of current and prospect facilities to identify opportunities for collaboration;
- Find potential new suppliers, listed with their credentials and affiliations;
- Leverage the OAR ID as a unique and shared ID across software systems and databases.

Users interested in browsing the OAR are able to search the site without creating an account.

For more detailed information on how the system processes lists, go to: https://openapparel.org/about/processing

Interactive Map for Business of Anti Human Trafficking Organizations

Given the rapid development of initiatives aimed at helping businesses fight human trafficking, the Global Business Coalition Against Trafficking (GBCAT), the RESPECT Initiative, and the United Nations Global Compact through its Action Platform on Decent Work in Global Supply Chains, identified the urgent need to provide a unified resource of information on stakeholders engaging with the private sector in the fight against human trafficking.

The Interactive Map for Business of Anti-Human Trafficking Organizations and the accompanying report is a resource for companies to find emerging partners and resources; for use by anti-trafficking organizations and the general public to improve coordination on the eradication of modern slavery; and a baseline from which existing and newly formed initiatives can move forward.

The User Guide can be found at: http://www.modernslaverymap.org/assets/Modern Slavery Map Report.pdf
To add an organization or update an organization’s tags, write: contact@modernslaverymap.org

The HER Project: Empowered Women, Dignified Work, Better Business

Business for Social Responsibility’s (BSR) HERproject™ is a collaborative initiative, bringing together global brands, their suppliers, and local NGOs to empower low-income women working in global supply chains. Its mission is to unlock the full potential of women working in global supply chains through workplace-based interventions on health, financial inclusion, and gender equality. (https://herproject.org/programs/herrespect)

Since its inception in 2007, HERproject™ has worked in more than 700 workplaces across 14 countries and has increased the well-being, confidence, and economic potential of more than 800,000 women.
**Film: ‘The Secret Gardeners’**

The 3.5-minutes film, produced in 2017, aimed to inform professionals about the exploitation of children who are forced by organized crime gangs to grow drugs in houses across the UK but who often face criminalization and prison.

It is hoped that the film, which is based on real-life experiences of children helped by Every Child Protected Against Trafficking (ECPAT-UK), will also educate members of the public who use cannabis about the ‘dirty’ supply chains of cannabis that may include child exploitation.

In 2016, there were 227 Vietnamese children identified as potential victims of modern slavery in the UK. In the first six months of 2017 there were 169 referrals of Vietnamese children to UK authorities, making it the top country for children being trafficked into the UK.

The film was also launched in Vietnam as part of an innovative education program in schools to help prevent young people from being trafficked. “In Ecpat’s experience, many vulnerable young people from Vietnam are treated as criminals before they are seen as victims of modern slavery, which only re-traumatizes them and makes it more difficult to gain their trust. Ecpat wants this film to help inform frontline workers about the rights of child victims of trafficking, as well as to reach out to children in Vietnam who may be at risk.”

ECPAT reported it has been receiving referrals about children from Vietnam exploited in cannabis cultivation for more than a decade, yet this is still a shock to many who use cannabis in the UK. Many people are unaware of the exploitation in cannabis supply chains and should consider the impact of their drug use.

To view the film, go to: [https://www.ecpat.org.uk/the-secret-gardeners](https://www.ecpat.org.uk/the-secret-gardeners)

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**Interactive Map for Business of Anti Human Trafficking Organizations**

The map can be searched according to four categories:

- **Type of Organization** (fund/foundation, initiative, NGO/NPO);
- **Geographic Focus** (global, Asia, Europe, Latin America and Caribbean, Middle East & North Africa, North America, Oceania, Sub-Saharan Africa);
- **Issues Worked On** (child labor, forced labor, organ removal, recruitment, sexual exploitation);
- **Industry Focus** (cross-industry, agriculture and forestry, apparel, construction, finance, food & beverage, information & communications technology (ICT), manufacturing, mining, tourism & hospitality, transport, and logistics).

To view the map, go to: [http://www.modernslaverymap.org](http://www.modernslaverymap.org)

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**Informative Web Sites:**

(Each contains information related to human trafficking)

**Interactive Map for Business of AHT Organizations**

http://www.modernslaverymap.org

**RESPECT**

http://www.respect.international

**Ascena Retail Group Inc.**

https://www.ascenaretail.com/women/

**Code of Conduct for Merchandise Suppliers**


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**IOM cont. from pg. 6**

their home countries. IOM also works with industry leaders in multiple sectors to champion the protection of the rights of migrant workers, helping companies adhere to ethical standards in the recruitment of migrant workers and addressing their concerns related to the exploitation and abuse of migrant workers, child labor, and human trafficking in their global supply

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**HerProject cont. from pg. 7**

See statistics: [https://herproject.org/impact](https://herproject.org/impact)


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**Stop Trafficking!** is dedicated exclusively to fostering an exchange of information among USCSAHT members, organizations and concerned persons, collaborating to eliminate all forms of human trafficking.

To access back issues, go to: [http://www.stopenslavement.org/past-issues-chronological.html](http://www.stopenslavement.org/past-issues-chronological.html)

To contribute information, please contact: schafer@stopenslavement.org

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