

**Slavery in the Modern World, by Hannah Johnson, Lancaster University BA Hons student, 2015**

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*WARNING: In preparing for the role play scenario, students must only research the conflict using reputable mainstream media sources, such as The BBC, CNN, ITN, The Guardian, The Times, The Independent, The Telegraph, etc. Briefing papers are provided to explain the broader context of the conflict.*

### **Background and Context**

Slavery is most commonly associated with the transatlantic slave trade, the Arab slave trade or the slave trade throughout the Roman Empire. It is often considered a historic and archaic product of western colonialism which has ceased to exist in the modern world. Mauritania was the last country to abolish slavery, in 1981, and officially brought in legislation that made it illegal in 2007. However the reality is that slavery is just as, and possibly more, rife now that it ever has been in the past. It has been estimated by some charities that there are more people currently enslaved than ever there was at the height of the transatlantic slave trade. Victims of trafficking more often come from developing countries where poverty can lead to them being lured into slavery with the promise of a job in another country and are instead trafficked to elsewhere in the world and enslaved.

Victims of trafficking are trafficked into areas such as the sex trade, forced labour, domestic servitude, begging rings and bonded labour, but there are many more forms of modern day slavery. It is impossible to accurately determine how many people are currently enslaved and many charities and researches have given up trying. However, given the number of displaced and vulnerable people that has resulted from the recent refugee crisis, the number of trafficked people is expected to rise. Every country in the world comes into contact with trafficking in some way, whether this is as a source of trafficking victims, a country slaves are brought through or the slaves' destination. The reality is that every country globally has an impact on trafficking and so has the power to do something to prevent it.

However, combatting human trafficking is a challenge. It demands the interaction of the governments of all countries involved. It is facilitated by a demand for people in areas such as the sex industry and by a demand for cheap labour and produce. People are made more vulnerable to being victims of trafficking through poverty, a lack of education and gender inequality and so efforts to reduce these can reduce the number of people who may be

trafficked. Ultimately, there are many factors that contribute to trafficking both in developed and developing countries.

There are many levels at which people are involved in combatting the issue of trafficking. International institutions can put in place conventions to outlaw trafficking and place pressure on those governments that are not working to eliminate it in their own countries. On a national level governments may put into place legislation to prosecute traffickers or initiatives aimed at combatting the root causes of trafficking and the demand for it or at identifying and supporting victims. Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) may also work to raise awareness and funds to address human trafficking through campaigns and charity events. These NGOs may work internationally or within their country of origin. Equally, they may work independently or alongside their governments. Similarly, research into the prevalence of trafficking and the experiences of victims can also serve to highlight ways that it can be addressed.

In the garment industry, there have been reports of several layers of human trafficking. Businesses in developed countries may buy products from factories where workers work in dangerous and unhealthy conditions or are tied into forced labour. Furthermore, these factories and clothing businesses may source their cotton from countries where cotton harvesting is done by those who are forced to do it by their governments, such as in the case of two of the biggest cotton producers: Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan.

Many Governments, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) (such as charities), some clothes retailers and individuals are committed to eliminating human trafficking in the garment industry. However the ways in which these actors seek to address human trafficking vary based on their influence and resources. You will act as one of the groups involved or concerned with trafficking in the garment industry.

### **Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this role play scenario is to improve understanding of contemporary slavery and how organisations influence political decisions, by:

- a) researching and discussing the issue of human trafficking and the difficulties in eliminating it,
- b) adopting the aims, roles, attitudes and motivations of the country or organisation represented,
- c) interacting with the different groups, utilising the tool of ‘the media’ to achieve the aims of groups in the roleplay,
- d) experiencing and interacting with forms of political action that young people can actively take part in.

### **Preparation**

The participants in the role play will discuss how human trafficking in the garment industry can be addressed and whose responsibility it is to do so. Limited instruction will be provided as to the nature of the groups, with the onus lying on participants to develop their own

understandings as they approach the event. Facilitators will discuss and help clarify these understandings during the research and preparation period in the role play as well as throughout the rest of the day. Participants will:

**in advance of the event,**

- a) use recommended resources, group outline and own research to prepare for the roleplay. Focus particularly on their group's opinion on human trafficking in the garment industry, the role they play within it and any actions they may possibly take

**at the event,**

- a) establish the aims, interests and position of the group on the issue of human trafficking
- b) determine their relationships to other groups involved
- c) identify roles within the group, e.g. Prime Minister, Foreign Secretary, CEO, Campaign Director, Manager, Interviewer
- d) identify the main objectives for your group and how you wish to achieve it, such as lobbying, reporting, etc. (As long as it is safe! If there is any doubt, please seek clarification from the facilitators)
- e) interact with other groups - charities may want to set up campaigns, governments may want to discuss methods of collectively addressing issues or put pressure on other countries to act in a certain way
- f) pay attention and adapt quickly to events that occur or are reported in the media
- g) utilise the resources and people available to you, for example, if your group needs a certain statistic, requesting it from the UN Office on Drugs and Crime may be helpful. Send people out to other groups to find out information, but equally decide whether revealing information to other groups can be beneficial to you or not

**after the event,**

- a) reflect upon the dynamics of the issue of slavery, particularly in relation to the complexity of addressing something like human trafficking which is clearly inherently wrong, yet difficult to stop

**Key Actors**

There are ten groups within this role play, each performing different roles in order to facilitate a debate. Ideally, each group should contain 5 students, making a total of 50 participants, but group sizes can vary according to the number of participating students.

It is possible for groups to operate with three or four members, but no fewer, as there will be insufficient numbers to sustain group activities, while it is difficult for all members of a group to participate fully if there are more than six in each group.

If there are too few students to allocate optimal numbers of students to each group, it is wise to reduce the number of groups. Start by withdrawing groups which are likely to have very similar interests to other groups.

**UK:**

## *Government*

- western, liberal democratic government with a good record with regard to combating human trafficking
- will generally react to campaigns and address issues raised
- accountable to your citizens and the issues they raise and feel an element of responsibility as a developed and influential country to place pressure on nations where human rights abuses, such as forced labour, are taking place.

## *NGO*

- aims to combat human trafficking
- can work with other charities to run campaigns and lobby for change in government's efforts to human trafficking
- ideas for campaigns can involve petitions and letters to governments, media campaigns, reports for statistics, and interviews with workers in the factories
- possess a good amount of resources and contacts
- also concerned with the UK retailer and the sources of their clothes and cotton.

## *Retailer*

- managers of a UK clothing company
- ultimately concerned with beating competitors to produce the highest quality clothing for the lowest possible price
- have some moral concern regarding your practice, raise money for charity and give to cancer research but prefer a state of ignorance, to avoid complicity
- buy garments from a factory in Bangladesh and cotton is supplied by Uzbekistan. Both are cheap and although there are rumours of poor working conditions in these factories and forced labour in cotton harvesting, it is not known for certain whether these conditions exist in your factories
- are under pressure to justify choices

## **Bangladesh:**

### *Government*

- rapidly developing country, but still continues to face complaints of human rights abuses, poverty and inequality
- textile industry is the largest manufacturing sector and is a big source of economic growth, exporting garments to the western world

### *NGO*

- campaigning on behalf of the workers in the factory
- need to emphasise interaction within the state
- ideas for campaigns can involve petitions and letters to governments, media campaigns (but consider the conditions of the media in Bangladesh) and interviews with workers in the factories
- limited amount of resources though, so you can't be over zealous!

### ***Factory (2 groups)***

- one of the many Bangladeshi ready-made garment factories
- supply clothes to western clothes retailers
- most of the workforce is female and some are children
- can have some members of the group acting on behalf of the managers of the factory and others as workers
- will of course have different priorities, so try to identify what they are and why they emerge

### **Uzbekistan**

#### ***Government***

- one of the top exporters of cotton and one of the fastest growing economies in the world, and are keen to maintain this status
- have a history of using forced labour, including that of children, whilst harvesting cotton although legislation has been introduced prohibiting it

### **External organisations**

#### ***Media***

- report on everything that happens as it happens, such as interactions between state governments, the campaigns being run by various NGOs
- can also publish and request reports from the NGOs or the UNODC if you think they are relevant

#### ***UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC)***

- responsible for gathering data and statistics on crimes such as human trafficking
- role will be to find appropriate statistics from the sources recommended and others you find and present them to other groups
- must be careful that the statistics you provide are up to date and relevant to the group you are providing them to
- can also interact with the media team to publish statistics relevant to all the groups

### **Resources**

In advance of the event, you are asked briefly to look through relevant news sources to conduct some preliminary research on the topic. Enclosed below are some links to news stories on the topic. It is very important that you only read news from credible news agencies, such as the BBC, Guardian, Telegraph, Times, Independent, etc.

At the event, please bring with you your laptops for the purposes of research and communication.

You will be able to follow updates from the Media team through the main projector.

## Overview of Trafficking in the Garment Industry

- A good summary report on Trafficking in the Garment industry: [http://bis.lexisnexis.co.uk/blog/posts/Human-Trafficking-in-the-Cotton-Industry\\_lo-res\\_web-4.pdf](http://bis.lexisnexis.co.uk/blog/posts/Human-Trafficking-in-the-Cotton-Industry_lo-res_web-4.pdf)
- Examples of what can happen within the factories: <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/apr/22/garment-workers-in-bangladesh-still-suffering-two-years-after-factory-collapse>
  - <http://prospect.org/article/inside-bangladeshi-factories-real-story>

### UK

- Guidance on UK legislation regarding human trafficking: [http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/h\\_to\\_k/human\\_trafficking\\_and\\_smuggling/](http://www.cps.gov.uk/legal/h_to_k/human_trafficking_and_smuggling/)
- Examples of anti-trafficking NGOs: <http://hopeforjustice.org/>
  - [http://www.antislavery.org/english/slavery\\_today/forced\\_labour/](http://www.antislavery.org/english/slavery_today/forced_labour/)

### Uzbekistan

- Cotton industry and possible responses to it: <http://www.cottoncampaign.org/>

### Bangladesh

- Factories: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangladesh\\_textile\\_industry](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bangladesh_textile_industry)

## Important considerations

Injunctions or interventions will be made by the role play facilitators throughout the scenario. These will ensure that groups will have to think on their feet and respond to changing circumstances. The facilitators must decide if and when to use the injunctions.

Groups can make injunctions or interventions themselves, where realistic. All injunctions and interventions must be approved by the role play facilitators.

All injunctions or interventions intended for general consumption will be released by the Media team, but the actors making injunctions or interventions can make them in secret to specific groups. It is up to the recipients of those secret injunctions or interventions as to whether they wish to reveal them to the Media, but the Media is entitled to try to uncover secrets.

The Media team will release information through printed sheets of paper that will be disseminated physically to the groups.

## Interventions

- a) UK NGO is to be told part way through (about 10:15) that they have **confirmation that the UK retailer is buying garments from Bangladeshi factories where the workers are not treated well and the cotton is sourced from Uzbekistan where forced labour is being used.**
  - i) They must decide on an appropriate campaign to raise these findings and approach the retailer by 10:30.
  - ii) Media group also informed at same time as UK NGO and must choose whether to publish this knowledge or allow the UK retailer to explain themselves first.

- b) In response to the revelation in a), the UK retailer **must announce a press conference and prepare a statement** to read out at the press conference at 10:30.
  - i) One member from each group can attend this press conference that will take place in the external organisations room and group members are encouraged to ask questions, considering the opinions of their own country or organisation on the matter.
- c) Following the press conference, the media team can interview: UK Government, Uzbek Government, Bangladeshi Government, Bangladeshi NGO and Bangladeshi Factory to get their **responses to the findings** and publish them as they see fit.
- d) Reveal to **one member of the Bangladesh workforce that another factory has collapsed** and there is an even more real danger of the factory in which they work collapsing.

### Information for Facilitators:

#### Practical resources:

- Ideally 4 rooms for the groups and/or a large space where interactions can be kept reasonably separate.
  - Main room should be capable of housing 50 students
  - 4 rooms capable of holding between 5 (Uzbekistan group) and 15 (UK/Bangladeshi etc.) students
- A laptop for the media team with access to a PowerPoint or Word document that can be viewed online by other groups
  - Preferably they should also have access to a camera, electronics and recording devices
- All groups should have access to laptops or PCs
  - Ideally one laptop per team - these should be utilised to research online articles and access resources
- Paper and pens/pencils/coloured pencils/ other resources for NGO teams to be able to create posters
  - Less given to Bangladeshi NGO as have fewer resources available to them
- A television to display video clips and interviews produced by the media team
  - Alternatively, a projector and screen should be used
- The facilitator will provide ‘runners’ who can take information to each room; interventions should happen fairly frequently during the negotiation/lobbying period and groups will need to react to developments in a timely manner

#### Instructions:

- Assign students to groups prior to arriving
- Assign groups to rooms/ spaces
- Distribute timetable, instructions and group briefing to students as they arrive
- Distribute interventions at the appropriate moments to the appropriate groups
- Provide UK NGO with plenty of paper, coloured pens and other resources to demonstrate their relative wealth
- Bangladeshi NGO team should have significantly less resources

- Encourage students to interact between groups
- Direct students to resources list when they need direction

### **Timeline:**

**This timeline is indicative. It can be amended according to needs and resources available.**

**1 week in advance of event:** List of participants finalised by schools and groups allocated so as to enable participants to prepare for their allocated role and conduct basic research into the conflict.

A five hour timeframe enables adequate examination of the topic. A particular emphasis is placed on research, which is why a large time period is allocated to this stage.

**9:30:** Arrive at venue

**9:35:** Welcome talk and introduction

**9:45:** Research and preparation time in groups

**10:45:** Press conference

**11:00:** Break

**11:15:** Initial interactions within and between groups in reaction to interventions A & B

**12:30:** Break for Lunch

**13:00:** Time for group discussions for the NGO groups and government groups.

Discussion between workforce and management in Bangladesh factory and media and fashion retailer to try to save their public image.

**13:40:** Final preparation for the presentation of issues and solutions to all other groups.

Groups should determine who they wish to challenge, what challenges they'll make and how they may respond to other group's criticism or proposals.

Also what conditions they may have for other groups and what they want to get out of the discussion.

**14:40:** Final debate between groups regarding who should take responsibility for addressing trafficking in the garment industry, why and what they should do.

**15:00:** Debrief and mixed group discussion without being in the roles of the roleplay about how they think human trafficking in the fashion industry should be dealt with.

**15:30:** End of day

*The timeline is flexible. If the facilitators believe that the role play has reached a conclusion (such as a general agreement between major parties) in advance of the scheduled end, they can call an end to proceedings.*

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