People for Profit: Human trafficking in The Gambia

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Background

The Gambia

“The Smiling Coast of Africa,” is located in West Africa. The Gambia has a population of 2.1 million and 60% of them are under the age 21 (Oluseye et. al., 2014).

Internship at The Survivors of Human Trafficking

- The Survivors of Human Trafficking is a Non-government organization (NGO) which has 50 members who have all been victims/survivors of human trafficking
- The organization’s objective is to empower and advocate for survivors by providing them the resources necessary for reintegration into society. These resources include psychosocial therapy, capacity building, skill and job training workshops, funding for education, and business sponsorship
- They also provide case management for members, making the effort to prosecute their trafficker and bring them to justice
- The duties of the survivors is to provide sensitization and capacity training to the community (country-wide)

Questions

- Does the organization have an international outreach in terms of funding or case support?
- What is the main “procedural” aftercare service the organization strives to provide?
- What laws are present to prosecute traffickers and protect victims?

Activities

Positionality

I knew I would meet a survivor of human trafficking therefore I brought a pre-conception of how a victim of human trafficking would act in result of their trauma.

Internship Activities

- My job was to prepare for the upcoming Rotary visit; therefore I was responsible for writing and budgeting four grant proposals
  - The grants requested funding for programs that the organization wants to be able to continually provide for the members such as; psychosocial therapy, education funding, job training, and business funding
- The most important responsibility I had was to be an advocate for the members
  - Going to events with them
  - Engaging with community education on human trafficking (sensitization)

Observations

Small Organization Struggles

The Survivors of human trafficking was established in 2018, therefore it is still a new organization which poses many challenges.

- One challenge I faced was not having a chain of command
- Not having a chain of command led to power struggles
- In result of both challenges engagement in the organization lessened and international relationships where halted significantly i.e. funding and programs

Discussion

Personal Growth.

This experience taught me to be adaptable, have the confidence to take the initiative to find outside research resources, and resilience of the subject matter.

- I learned to be adaptable by adjusting to the ever-changing conditions in terms of power and projects.
- Being able to do outside research is essential to present a strong proposal or research since the information you need to present a strong case is not compiled in one organization
- I encountered heavy subject matter throughout the internship therefore I developed resiliency skills in terms of being able to sympathize but separate those emotions from my daily life

Conclusions about internship

- The Survivors of human trafficking wouldn’t be able to provide the services they do without international relations, proven by my task of writing grant proposals for Rotary.
- Psychosocial therapy is the main priority for victims to receive as an aftercare service since its essential for a victim’s rehabilitation, it has the highest proposed budget.
- There are no laws outlawing human trafficking but documentation such as the Palermo Protocols which was signed to prevent, prosecute. traffickers, and provide aid to victims of human trafficking.

References