

***SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT***  
***2015-2016***  
***THE FREEDOM STORY***



# PREFACE

This study was a collective undertaking. As the first research project that The Freedom Story (formerly known as The SOLD Project) has undertaken, it was an exciting, at times frustrating, but overall positive and enlightening experience. The overwhelming majority of the Methodology, Results, and Concluding Discussion sections were written by Dr. Melissa Anderson-Hinn and Athalie Waugh (MA). Dr. Jade Keller developed curriculum for and trained The Freedom Story’s staff on best practices, offered articles, advice, probing questions, and edits for the Literature Review, and oversaw and offered advice on all stages of Phase II of the study. With the exception of a few sentences and the use of an interview of Bonita Thompson conducted by Dr. Anderson-Hinn, Dan Olson did the research for and wrote the Literature Review, Introduction, and Executive Summary, and also finalized the entire report.

In addition to the four authors of the report, several others contributed by offering insightful feedback and edits for the Literature Review: Paulina Machi, Sherry Lou, Shannon O’Malley, and Rachel Goble. Paulina Machi also helped collect and organize data on The Freedom Story’s scholarship students in preparation for the study and supported Dr. Anderson-Hinn in various ways throughout Phase I. As a research assistant for Athalie Waugh, Sherry Lou helped code and analyze data from the student surveys for Phase II.

We would like to say a special thank you to End Crowd for providing the initial seed funding for this project.

If anyone has been left out of the above list, it is by mistake and the sole responsibility of Dan Olson. He also bears the sole responsibility for the final form, and thus any mistakes, of this report.



# CONTENTS

- Introduction..... 4
- Executive Summary..... 5
- Literature Review..... 7
- Methodology..... 21
  - Ethical Considerations..... 21
  - Sampling..... 21
  - Phase I..... 21
  - Phase II..... 22
  - Limitations..... 24
- Results..... 26
  - Phase I..... 26
    - Demographics..... 26
    - Staff..... 26
    - Students..... 27
    - Parents or Guardians..... 33
  - Phase I Discussion..... 35
  - Phase II..... 38
    - Staff Survey Findings..... 38
    - Demographics..... 38
    - Strengths..... 38
    - Growth Opportunities..... 39
    - Male vs. Female Response Trends..... 41
    - Things to Consider..... 41
    - Scholarship Student Survey Findings..... 42
    - Demographics..... 42
    - Strengths..... 43
    - Growth Opportunities..... 44
    - Perceived Relationships..... 46
    - Things to Consider..... 47
    - Parents/Guardians Survey Findings..... 47
  - Phase II Discussion..... 47
- Concluding Discussion..... 48
  - Recommendations..... 48
- Bibliographic Resources ..... 52
- Contact Information ..... 55
- Endnotes..... 56

# INTRODUCTION

Human trafficking was first defined in 2000 at Palermo, Italy, in a UN sponsored treaty against transnational organized crime. As if naming the issue brought it into existence, numerous government departments, NGOs, and international legal regimes were established almost immediately to overcome this newly recognized blight on our common humanity. During the last decade the anti-trafficking community has grown. We're faced now with the challenge of establishing best practices and data collection to inform the fight for the long term. Even today, most of the resources devoted to fighting this social ill go to the rescue and rehabilitation of survivors or the prosecution of perpetrators. While these interventions are necessary, they are not enough in and of themselves.

When it comes to social ills, whether of crime or disease, it has long been recognized that prevention is most effective. It's cheaper, and it's more likely to produce lasting results. Nevertheless, aside from campaigns devoted to awareness raising, the anti-trafficking world has, for the most part, focused on rescue and rehabilitation. This work is so demanding that it's almost impossible to think strategically about the long term.

For the last eight years, The Freedom Story has worked to prevent the trafficking of at-risk children and youths in Northern Thailand. In the process, The Freedom Story has developed a five-prong model of prevention: scholarships, resources, mentorship, human rights education, and sustainability. The Freedom Story also identifies stories of beauty and hope arising from adverse circumstances and tells these stories through photography and film for two reasons. First, to provide healing and dignity to the communities they work with. Second, to expand awareness of the power of prevention and invite others into this work.

When it comes to the work of fighting human trafficking, reliable data is essential. Whether it comes to assessing methods of combating human trafficking or simply understanding the extent of the epidemic itself, it is incredibly hard (and in some cases even impossible) to find reliable data. When it comes to the effectiveness of prevention, this holds true as well. It is The Freedom Story's hope that some of the insights from this Social Impact Assessment, as well as the further research it has encouraged, will help fill this lacuna.

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This study is the first Social Impact Assessment of The Freedom Story’s work as it relates to its stated mission: to prevent child trafficking and exploitation through culturally relevant programs for vulnerable children and to share their stories to inspire creative, compassionate people to act. It was carried out in two phases.

The first phase began in January 2015 when an independent researcher, Dr. Melissa Anderson-Hinn, came to Chiang Rai, Thailand to begin the process by conducting focus groups and in-depth interviews with The Freedom Story’s staff and recipients. Over the course of three weeks, Dr. Anderson-Hinn conducted numerous in-depth interviews and group discussions. Dr. Anderson-Hinn recorded the interviews through both short hand notes and audio recordings. Several months later, she revealed the findings of her research to The Freedom Story staff.

Using Dr. Anderson-Hinn’s findings as a guide, The Freedom Story brought on another independent researcher, Athalie Waugh, to help develop and administer surveys for staff, scholarship students, and parents. There were two reasons for this: 1) to see if there was quantitative support for Dr. Anderson-Hinn’s qualitative findings, and 2) to explore the feasibility of conducting a longitudinal study.

This is the first research project that The Freedom Story has conducted and made available to a wider audience. It begins with an in-depth literature review that attempts to contextualize, both historically and in the present, the work that The Freedom Story carries out in Northern Thailand. After considering the international legal and juridical development of human trafficking as well as the history of human trafficking, the sex trade, and sex tourism in Thailand, it looks at current global inequities and the vulnerabilities that arise from these. Having established the context, the literature review concludes with a general introduction to The Freedom Story’s interventions.

After a brief discussion of ethics, the SIA’s methodology is considered. For Phase I, Dr. Melissa Anderson-Hinn interviewed 68 of The Freedom Story’s scholars, as well as several staff and parents, following Dr. Yin’s suggestion to researchers to consider interviews as “guided conversations rather than structured



queries.” The purpose of this method is to gain the deepest level of insight into the lived experience of those interviewed and, ultimately, the meaning they ascribe to their experience. For Phase II, Athalie Waugh developed surveys in conjunction with Dan Olson and Dr. Jade Keller along with input from the rest of The Freedom Story’s staff. Three surveys were developed: one each for scholarship students, staff, and parents. The surveys were translated and administered via an online link to a Google form. All surveys were administered in Thai. Waugh was responsible for coding and analyzing the data, with some help from a research assistant.

Dr. Anderson-Hinn’s findings are presented in narrative form and divided into sections by age and type of recipient. Pertinent highlights of each section are summarized at the end. For example:

Primary Student Summary:

- 32 primary students between the ages of 8-14
- Small group interviews ranging in size from 4-7 students
- 2 primary school students were interviewed in depth for descriptive phenomenological study
- Several homes were visited
- About 70%...

Phase II survey results are also categorized and sectioned according to recipients. There are two sections: Staff Survey Results and Student Survey Results. The parent surveys have yet to be completed at this time. The findings from each round of surveys are presented as either Strengths or Growth Opportunities, and, after any perceived relationships are considered, aspects of the findings that The Freedom Story is encouraged to look into further are highlighted in the Things to Consider sections.

Each phase is followed by a short concluding discussion, and a general Concluding Discussion, including Recommendations from the researchers who conducted each phase, wraps up the report.

In all, the findings are encouraging. While revealing ways that The Freedom Story has room to grow, the results show that The Freedom Story is indeed accomplishing its mission and that the students, staff, and parents who are affected by their work have experienced it as an overwhelming net-positive. The findings all suggest the need for further research. The Freedom Story is currently considering partnerships with researchers and universities for conducting its first longitudinal study.

# LITERATURE REVIEW

## SECTIONS

<b>HUMAN TRAFFICKING.....</b>	<b>PG. 8</b>
<b>TRAFFICKING IN THAILAND.....</b>	<b>PG. 10</b>
<b>THE SEX TRADE IN THAILAND.....</b>	<b>PG. 12</b>
<b>SEX TOURISM IN THAILAND.....</b>	<b>PG. 14</b>
<b>INEQUALITY AND VULNERABILITY.....</b>	<b>PG. 15</b>
<b>THE FREEDOM STORY.....</b>	<b>PG. 19</b>

“Good intentions are not always beneficial if they lack clarity and understanding... It may be that in our enthusiasm to push for policies, programs, and legal mechanisms, we neglect the voices of the people themselves. The help we wish to offer may become a hinderance to their personal goals. Further, there is also the possibility that due to our definition of human trafficking we may miss those who suffer exploitation because their stories are not as dramatic or newsworthy as others.”

- Siroj Sorajjakool

# HUMAN TRAFFICKING

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING AND SLAVERY: DO DEFINITIONS MATTER?

In the past two decades, human trafficking has captured the attention of global society as a major humanitarian issue.<sup>3</sup> The term itself has lost clarity in the process, perhaps in part as a product of the large response that this attention has garnered. Among discussions of it in activist circles, popular culture, and the news media, the term human trafficking is often used interchangeably with slavery. While this linguistic slight-of-hand galvanizes support for the anti-trafficking movement, some argue that this support is not worth the cost.

Janie Chuang, an immigration and human trafficking expert and legal scholar, argues that this conflation of terms weakens the global fight against human trafficking for several reasons. First, human trafficking, slavery, and forced labor are all defined separately under international law, and conflating them threatens to undermine the effective application of international law by creating confusion around legal definitions, definitions that require clarity in order to facilitate coordination among the world's governments. Second, by implicitly raising the threshold of what counts as human trafficking, the conflation of it with slavery threatens to compromise the mechanisms that exist to combat it — from the prosecution of traffickers to redress for trafficking survivors. As Chuang says, “In the US... we have already seen how strategic use of slavery imagery by the defense counsel in trafficking prosecutions can raise jurors’ expectations of more extreme harms than anti-trafficking norms actually require.”<sup>4</sup> Third, it simplifies the incredibly complex issue that human trafficking is, creating an uncomplicated narrative of criminals and those they prey upon. This villain versus victim story makes the marketing of solutions (whether those of NGOs or legal-political regimes) easier. However, the underlying structural realities that make human trafficking possible — from national migration laws to economic disparities — as well as the states that are often complicit if not directly responsible for these laws are often ignored in the process, leading to depoliticized solutions that increase activists’ sense of moral superiority while merely address symptoms rather than causes.<sup>5</sup>

The conflation of slavery with human trafficking is not the only problem that has been highlighted with the term. There are over twenty unique definitions for human trafficking, according to human trafficking scholar Maggie Lee.<sup>6</sup> Many other scholars and activists argue, to varying degrees, that this term cannot handle the burden of including within it the multiple forms of exploitation it claims to address. Perhaps it is best to think of activists’ and scholars’ views of human trafficking as creating a continuum. On the one end, activists conflate terms and quote statistics uncritically and with a zealous passion, shouting from the rooftops that this injustice must stop. On the other end, some claim the term human trafficking is a misleading and meaningless signifier.<sup>7</sup> The truth about human trafficking, as both a term and a corollary concept, is, however, likely somewhere between these two extreme reactions.

As a label, human trafficking is useful as a catch-all — covering various forms of sexual exploitation, debt bondage, forced labor, organ removal, and slavery. As a legal designator, human trafficking criminalizes a broad range of very real instances of extreme dehumanization, exploitation, and injustice, and this enables strategic coordination among states in the global fight against injustice in many of its multifarious forms.

“While important grey areas remain,” Fiona David, the Executive Director of Global Research for the Walk Free Foundation, says, “internationally negotiated definitions provide a level of certainty that allows international legal cooperation on this crime type.”<sup>8</sup>

Further, as an idea, human trafficking activates the popular imagination, inspiring individuals, NGOs, and



governments to contribute to the fight for a more just world. In the summer of 2015, an AP report claiming that Burmese men were being held in cages on the remote island of Benjina led to international outcry and an Indonesian government rescue mission.<sup>9</sup> The report proved correct, and the mission rescued 300 Burmese men who had been held against their will and forced to work with little to no remuneration. Speaking of the AP article and the subsequent rescue, Fiona David says:

Does it matter to the average reader whether these men were slaves, in forced labour or trafficked? I expect not. What matters is that the general public understands that situations of this nature still occur even today and that they have the capacity to influence these situations through their consumer choices and pressure on governments who continue to be complicit through inaction or willful blindness.<sup>10</sup>

Rooted in our biology, the tendency to reduce complex phenomena is a part of the human condition. Beneficial in certain contexts, it is destructive in others. While reducing the convoluted reality of human trafficking to simple narratives is not merely disingenuous but dangerous for reasons such as those outlined above, the proper response is not to throw out the term. Rather, it is to use the term human trafficking in a way that continues to allow for the complexity of the phenomena it designates to guide and direct the conversation around and battle against it.

## **THE PALERMO PROTOCOL**

A critical moment for this conversation and battle came in November 2000, when over 80 heads of state came together in Palermo, Italy to draft The Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women, and Children. This Protocol is one of the three protocols of The Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. (The other two protocols focus on the smuggling of migrants and the illicit arms trade.) As of December 2014, 166 countries have ratified both the Convention and this Protocol; it has come to be known as the Palermo Protocol.

In Article 3 of the Protocol, human trafficking is defined as:

The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring, or receipt of persons, by means of threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person, having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation...<sup>11</sup>

According to Palermo, an action must meet three requirements to be defined as human trafficking: there must be (1) a recruitment (2) by the means of deception or force and (3) for the purpose of forced labor of one kind or another. The Protocol goes on to say that, “The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered ‘trafficking in persons’ even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article...”<sup>12</sup>

Since the Protocol defines a child as someone under the age of eighteen, if a person recruits someone seventeen or younger for work in the sex industry or another form of exploitative labor, this recruitment falls under the definition of human trafficking even if force, coercion, fraud, or deception were not used.

Though not without problems, the Palermo Protocol created an international framework that enables nations to collaborate in their fight against human trafficking, versus working in isolation.<sup>13</sup> Human trafficking is a global epidemic, crossing over and connecting many borders, cultures, languages, societies, and economies; the Palermo protocol is a significant step in addressing it as such.<sup>14</sup>

## THE TRAFFICKING VICTIMS PROTECTION ACT

Less than a month after Palermo, in December 2000, Congress passed The Trafficking Victims Protection Act (TVPA), and President Bill Clinton signed it into law. The TVPA established minimum standards for combating human trafficking at a national level, as well as political and economic incentives for governments to do so. Since 2001, the Department of State's Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (birthed from the TVPA) has published the Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report each year. The TIP Report rates countries according to a four-tier system: 1 (the best ranking), 2, 2 Watch List (2WL), and 3 (the worst ranking). Countries put on a low-rank tier (tier 2WL or tier 3) face economic sanctions and other consequences.

Though the TVPA lapsed in 2011, it was reaffirmed in 2013 by the Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act (TVPRA). According to the TVPRA, any child, under age 11, or youth, between the ages of 11 and 24, that is used for the purpose of providing a sexual service is legally considered to be a "commercially sexually exploited child" (CSEC). This holds regardless of whether or not economic leverage, manipulation, fraud, coercion, threats, force, or violence were used. For children and youths under age 24, a commercial sex act is "any sex act on account of which anything of value is given to or received by any person."<sup>15</sup> The definition of a commercial sex act is similar for victims over the age of 24, though as long as neither coercion nor force were used, these people are not considered victims but criminals.<sup>16</sup>

The US Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons developed the TIP report and its tier placements as a way to acknowledge, document, and release information about how each country in the world is handling its role and responsibilities in combating (and ending) human trafficking. The TIP's methodology and sourcing of data both require significant improvement. Nevertheless, the TIP's tier placements are currently, and perhaps unfortunately, one of the best tools available for understanding and assessing this global epidemic at a national level.<sup>17 18</sup>

## TRAFFICKING IN THAILAND

### THE TIP REPORT AND THAI LAW

According to the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the US Office to Monitor and Combat Human Trafficking, and the International Labour Organization (ILO), any and every labor market in the world is at risk for this form of exploitation. Thailand is no exception. As a source, destination, and transit site, Thailand has many labor markets affected by human trafficking: the fishing industry (both on vessels and in seafood processing factories), agriculture, domestic service work, sex work, and child labor of all kinds.<sup>19 20</sup>

In 2016, the United States upgraded Thailand to a Tier 2 Watch List country – one that is making improvements but does not yet comply with the minimum standards established by the TVPRA. The upgrade comes after two years of being on Tier 3, the lowest ranking available. The four-and-a-half page critique of Thailand discusses the types of trafficking that are actively occurring within the country, the general demographics of its victims, the limitations of the justice system, issues fully meeting TVPRA standards, as well as the steps Thailand has taken to address human trafficking.

Taking a significant step in 2008, Thailand passed the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act, making it illegal to traffic anyone, with penalties ranging from four to ten years jail time if convicted. While this law

made significant strides towards addressing human trafficking — heavier penalties for perpetrators; compensation for losses, shelter, and other assistance for victims — the Thai government continues to make mixed progress in its efforts to enforce it. Among various levels of Thai law enforcement, concern remains about possible corruption.<sup>21</sup>

## **ENFORCING THE LAW**

An example of difficulties enforcing the law surfaced in the scandal that erupted at the end of 2015. In December, Thailand's senior police officer in the investigation of human trafficking, General Paween Pongsirin, fled to Australia seeking political asylum. From Australia, General Pongsirin claimed that his investigations into a site of over 30 graves, found near the Malaysian border, led him to the conclusion that senior Thai officials were implicated in widespread human trafficking, causing him to fear for his life. While 88 people connected to the case have appeared in court, including a high-ranking military general, General Pongsirin claims corruption remains, even at senior levels of the government. Upon his discovery, he aired his safety concerns to his superiors but was nevertheless transferred to a southern region of Thailand filled with insurgents and traffickers. When transferred, he told his superiors that he feared for his life. They offered no alternative, and he felt he had no choice but to flee.<sup>22</sup> Thailand's Prime Minister, Prayut Chan-Ocha (who took power through a military coup in May 2014) responded by rebuking people like General Pongsirin "who take corruption cases to outside countries and ask them to solve the problems." Prime Minister Prayut argues that these individuals only want social media fame and in the process destroy the country.<sup>23</sup>

In addition to problems involving corruption, Thailand's immigration and foreign worker laws, as well as its continued challenges in finding a solution to the lack of citizenship of many Hill Tribe members, all contribute to an environment ripe for exploitation and human trafficking.<sup>24</sup> While certain efforts of the government, such as the establishment of a new Prime-minister level anti-trafficking committee and regional collaborative efforts between law enforcement and NGOs to investigate and prosecute cases of child exploitation show promise, problems remain on a systemic level.

## **TRAFFICKING AND SEX WORK<sup>25</sup>**

Much research on trafficked persons in Thailand suggests that the majority of trafficking victims in Thailand come from outside its borders — from neighboring countries like Myanmar and Laos. This is certainly true in certain labor markets such as the commercial fishing industry (an industry in Thailand largely affected by trafficking), and may even be true for the more clandestine parts of the commercial sex industry. However, in the red light districts of Bangkok, and the other easily accessible commercial sex venues of Central and Northern Thailand, the vast majority of women, men, and children that are selling sex come from within the Thai border.

Home of New Beginnings is an NGO in Bangkok that, according to its website, "provides women who desire to start new with the physical, emotional, spiritual and educational support they need to break out of sexual slavery." After 30 years of rescue and recovery work, its founder, Bonita Thompson, reports that most of the women she interacts with in Bangkok are young Thai females who have traveled from the North or North East to earn extra income for their families. Much research corroborates her experience.<sup>26</sup>

It must be noted that many of the sex workers in Thailand are not victims of trafficking, let alone victims of slavery. To conflate sex workers with trafficking victims, let alone with slaves, is not only dishonest but robs many women and men of the agency they take on in choosing this form of labor. While commercial sex work should not be conflated with trafficking nor slavery, to speak about it as a profession freely chosen is, however, also disingenuous. Personal agency and absolute freedom are not synonymous. As

is examined further below, the binary of free choice versus coercion fails to capture the reality of most who enter into this industry both in Thailand and worldwide. Speaking of this very issue in Thailand, contemporary slavery researcher Kevin Bales writes:

It is important to understand that the direct link between sex tourism and slavery is small. With the exception of children The Freedom Story to pedophiles, most commercial sex workers serving the tourist boom are not slaves. There is no question that the women and girls working with sex tourists suffer extreme exploitation and degradation, but most are not enslaved through debt bondage that captures girls into brothels used almost exclusively by poor and working-class Thai men.<sup>27</sup>

## **THE SEX TRADE IN THAILAND**

### **WHAT THE NUMBERS SAY**

In 1992, Thai Police estimated that 800,000 sex workers were currently working in Thailand.<sup>28</sup> In 1995, a Coalition against Trafficking in Women (CATW) map, issued at the Fourth World Conference on Women, stated that the estimated number of prostitutes in Thailand was between 300,000 and 2.8 million. (In order for the higher estimate to be true, all girls and women between the ages of 15 and 29 years old who lived in urban areas in Thailand would have to be sex workers.<sup>29</sup>) In 2003, a Thai government report stated that only 81,384 sex workers worked in Thailand at that time.<sup>30</sup> A 2013 estimate put the number of children (under 18) involved in the sex trade at 60,000, which would make the overall number much higher.<sup>31</sup> However, even in 2003, some activists and organizations believed the number of Thai sex workers to be well above 2 million. In the same year, Kevin Bales estimated that the number of sex workers in Thailand was between half a million and a million, which aligns well the Thai police estimate in 1992.<sup>32</sup>

As these examples suggest, numbers of sex workers, let alone trafficking victims, are unreliable. When it comes to estimates of the number of those involved in underground economies such as sex work and human trafficking, collectors of data approach their research with varying interpretations of definitions, varying intent for collecting and distributing their data, and varying methods for gathering information. At times, numbers seem to be pulled from thin air. Often, such as with the above statistics, the methodologies used to come up with the figures are neither transparent nor peer-reviewed. As the Thai trafficking expert Siroji Sorajjakool says:

...interpretations of data fluctuate and have ways of growing in various directions in accord with the agenda people bring to their understanding of the topic. Data almost seems to have a life of its own.<sup>33</sup>

While numbers of trafficking victims and sex workers are likely inflated by numerous actors and for various reasons, it is worth noting that in one of the few peer-reviewed and methodologically transparent studies in this region a trend in the opposite direction is apparent. In the study paper, "Human Trafficking in Southeast Asia: Results from a Pilot Project in Vietnam," researchers found that out of 1,000 persons in the Tieu Can district, of the Trà Vinh province, in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam, 9.6 reported that they had been trafficked. These findings are interesting for two reasons. The first is that the International Labor Organization (ILO) estimate for Asia is three victims per 1,000 persons. The second, as the researchers report, is that while the ILO describes their estimates as "conservative," this notable difference is "made even more noteworthy by the fact that Trà Vinh is not believed to be a major source destination."<sup>34</sup> Thus, we see that the ILO's estimates are not just conservative but two-thirds too small when compared to the

actual rates of a region that, for geographical reasons, is not considered to be a major source region for human trafficking. We must be careful not to draw the conclusion from this inconsistency that the ILO's human trafficking estimates, or those of other governments or organizations, are always too low, but it should be considered when weighing claims that numbers are frequently inflated.

Though strict numbers are often unreliable, human trafficking is still a major humanitarian issue that may even be increasing.

## **DEVELOPMENT OF THE THAI SEX TRADE**

In 1855, the Bowring Treaty opened Thailand to foreign workers, and a large population of poor South China laborers migrated to Phuket, Thailand to mine tin. Chinese sex workers followed these migrants, and this is likely when sex work became entrenched in Thai culture. However, it was not until later in the 19th century that Thailand became known for its sex workers. At the time, according to Thai law, wives were divided into three categories: (1) women married respectfully by mutual family consent, (2) women responsible for the upkeep and running of the household, and (3) women purchased by their husbands solely for sexual gratification, which often happened to the poorest of Thailand's young women.<sup>35</sup> In 1905, slavery was abolished, and most of the women from categories 2 and 3 (considered slaves) were left homeless and destitute.<sup>36</sup> The leader of Siam (which became Thailand in 1938) at that time, King Chulalongkorn (Rama V), despite warnings from the queen and other bureaucrats, claimed that the nation did not have the money to support female education.<sup>37</sup> Desperate and homeless, many women in these precarious situations sold sexual services to survive.

During this era, Thailand's infrastructure expanded quickly. Roads, railways, temples, and palaces were built, mostly by the hands of millions of Chinese migrants. With this influx of workers came an increase in the demand for commercial sex.<sup>38</sup> In 1908, Thailand legalized sex work.<sup>39</sup> With the Venereal Diseases Control Act of 1909, the sexual services industry became regulated, though with minimal protections for the women involved, focusing instead on the health of the male customers, who were often soldiers.<sup>40</sup>

Thai sex workers adapted their services to meet changes in demand, servicing Japanese soldiers during WWII, British and Indian soldiers who remained to provide security afterward, domestic workers and soldiers in times of peace, foreign workers in development booms, and American soldiers during the war in Vietnam.

During the 1950s, the United Nations was very active in Thailand as well. Along with this activity came pressure to follow Western values, customs, and norms.<sup>41</sup> Many of the nation's elites, specifically the elite women, began to desire and work towards the abolition of sex work.<sup>42</sup> Ironically, however, while Western, progressive values were being promoted, the US was pumping millions of dollars in military aid into Thailand (a proxy in the Cold War), helping the Thai military expand exponentially, and in-turn creating greater demand for sexual services.

In 1960, the abolitionists had a win with the passage of the Prostitution Prohibition Act, making prostitution illegal in Thailand for the first time in over fifty years.<sup>43</sup> This act was not, however, a win for the vulnerable sex workers in the trade. It targeted sex workers, gutted the anti-trafficking language from a 1957 legislative proposal, and lightened the strict punishments for procurers, pimps, and brothel owners that a 1956 Penal Code had previously established. In addition, the disciplinary programs for the "reform of prostitutes" included in the act were designed with an eye to domestication versus vocational training.<sup>44</sup>

Perhaps the greatest irony of this history is the rise in the number of sex workers between the late 1950s, where the number was 20,000, to 1964, where the number ballooned to 171,000. A large reason for this

disconnect between the prohibition of sex work and its massive growth at that time was the influx of American military men, arriving in increasingly large numbers throughout the 1960s.

In part as a response to this influx, the Special Services Act was passed in 1966. This ambiguous Thai law provided (and continues to provide) a legal framework that regulates places of entertainment in Thailand that desire to provide “special services.” The law uses the Thai word yingbumruh, which literally translates as “woman who entertains men.” Culturally, however, this word is used to describe women who are paid to provide sexual services.<sup>45</sup> (Similar to the American term working girl.)

Within a year of this Act passing, in 1967, the US Government made an official deal with the Thai government to allow US armed forces members serving in Vietnam to come to Thailand for R&R (“rest and relaxation”) leave. From 3,000 US troops in 1964, the numbers increased exponentially — 9,000 in 1965, 35,000 in 1966, and a high of 48,000 in 1969.<sup>46</sup> R&R was quickly dubbed I&I (“intercourse and intoxication”) by the servicemen. Between 1965 and 1975, US spending in Thailand amounted to \$2 billion USD. Around \$850 million USD of this came directly from American servicemen, both those stationed in the country and those on leave from Vietnam.<sup>47</sup> It is no surprise that by 1974, over 20,000 places of entertainment connected to the commercial sex industry — from nightclubs to brothels, from massage parlors to karaoke bars — had been established nationwide.<sup>48</sup>

A representative example of this phenomena is Pattaya. A southern coastal city with warm weather and beautiful beaches about 100 kilometers south of Bangkok, Pattaya used to be a small fishing village. During the Vietnam War, however, it was one of several locations selected as an R&R site for American troops. As wartime and overseas based soldiers poured in for much needed R&R, the scene in Pattaya dramatically changed, which included many new bars, massage parlors, and brothels. Today it is a popular metropolis and beach resort for tourists and expatriates, receiving over 6 million tourists a year. It is also a known hotspot for sex tourism. soldiers and returning veterans paved the way for many others to come and engage in similar sexual fantasies: from elderly, established, foreigners seeking comparatively benign companionship and comfort to degrading and violent sex acts.<sup>49</sup> While not everyone that visits or lives in Pattaya is seeking commercial sex, many come for that reason. In her report for the Pulitzer Center, journalist Deena Guzder offers insight into the reality in Pattaya today:

The female concierge, who speaks only on the condition of anonymity, confides that she receives 65% commission for every woman she hires for a tourist. ‘Once a year, many U.S. soldiers come to Pattaya,’ she says, ‘and it is our busiest season.’ She continues, ‘Once a group of forty men requested only two women. One ended up in the hospital.’

## **SEX TOURISM IN THAILAND**

### **THE INCONSISTENCY OF THE THAI GOVERNMENT’S POSITION**

While sex tourism, in particular, and sexual services, in general, are widespread throughout Thailand, they are no longer legal. Active since 1996, The Prevention and Suppression of Prostitution Act is the central legislative framework making the sex trade illegal in Thailand today. Further buttressing this law is The Anti-Human Trafficking Act of 2008. Along with several Memorandums of Understanding between the Thai government, various NGOs, and other nations, as well Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties signed with other countries for collaborative criminal work, these two laws make up the legislative backbone of Thailand’s prohibition of sex work, sexual exploitation, and sex trafficking. Nevertheless, these laws, memorandums, and treaties tend to face challenges of proper enforcement.

## PROMOTING SEX TOURISM

It is no coincidence that since the 1980s Thailand has been known as a hotspot for commercial sex. After the Vietnam War, and despite laws officially prohibiting sex work, the Thai government did much to encourage, and even to promote, the transition of the sexual services industry and infrastructure. Built to cater to military men, the industry was reengineered to cater to tourists as well.<sup>50</sup>

In 1967, 80,000 tourists visited Thailand. By 1986, the number of tourists was just shy of 3 million.<sup>51</sup> This growth was in large part a direct result of a concerted government effort throughout the 1980s. Advertisements in both business magazines and extended by official Thai organizations, as well as international tourist brochures, boasted of the exotic appeal, sexual willingness, and passivity of Thai women, at times even referring to them as sex slaves.<sup>52</sup> Even promotional material for something as seemingly benign as air travel included images of women with provocative headlines such as this: “Some say its our beautiful wide-bodied DC-10s that cause so many heads to turn at airports throughout the world. We think our beautiful, slim-bodied hostesses have a lot to do with it.”<sup>53</sup>

In 2014, 24.8 million tourists visited Thailand, and the direct contribution to GDP from travel and tourism was 8.6% (42.7 billion USD). The total contribution to GDP from travel and tourism was 19.3% in 2014.<sup>54</sup> <sup>55</sup> These are expected to have risen in 2015 and 2016. While there is no established methodology for collecting data on how many tourists come to Thailand seeking commercial sex, a common number thrown about in anti-trafficking and abolitionist circles is that 60% of Thailand’s tourists are male, with 70% of these male tourists coming primarily for sex tourism.<sup>56</sup> If this is true, then of the 24.8 million tourists who came to Thailand in 2014, 10.4 million of them came to purchase sexual services. Again, we are left with only speculation as no legitimate source for these percentages appears to exist. It is, however, hard not to wonder how much of the 42.7 billion USD contributed directly to the Thai economy from tourism in 2014 went to the sexual services industry.<sup>57</sup> While the exact number of tourists visiting Thailand for commercial sex are unknown, there is wide consensus that with the growth of tourism, no matter the country, the growth of the sex industry follows.<sup>58</sup>

Bonita Thompson reports that sex tourists come from all over. While, according to her, the majority of Asian buyers are Japanese, there has been an increase in sexual service buyers from China and India in recent years. Many sex tourists come from Europe as well. However, Thompson states that Americans “buy Thai flesh” more than any other country in the world. While this is likely true in the Bangkok commercial sex industry where Thompson works, the literature on the subject largely agrees that the vast majority of those who buy sexual services in Thailand are Thais.

## INEQUALITY AND VULNERABILITY

Inequality is the necessary condition for exploitation worldwide. While inequality in social standing (e.g. immigrants versus nationals), gender, sexual orientation, race, or religious affiliation all factor in, economic inequality is the primary driver of exploitation in the era of neoliberal globalization.<sup>59</sup> Economic inequality enables a stratified global society where a few enjoy power, opportunity, and access to resources while many struggle to hang on.<sup>60</sup> In highly unequal societies, marginalized people and people groups find themselves choosing to do things they would rather not do in order to survive.<sup>61</sup> “Where once women and children were coerced into prostitution through force and other means,” Sorajjakool states, addressing this reality, “nowadays, the sex industry in Thailand is more economically driven, with sex workers themselves seeking out this employment for their subsistence.”<sup>62</sup>

Whether women or girls, men or boys, those who enter the commercial sex industry do so for a multitude of reasons, varying from force to filial piety to the desire to buy fine things. Nevertheless, for most who

enter into and remain in the sex trade the choice is heavily influenced, if not determined, by economics.

## THAI ECONOMICS

At a macroeconomic level, Thailand's development has been a success. GDP grew at impressive rates throughout the late 20th and early 21st centuries — 5.4% between 1951-1986, an impressive 9.2% between 1987-1996, and, rebounding from the Asian financial crisis of 1997 and the global recession of 2008, a 3.76% annual growth rate between 1999-2012.<sup>63</sup> The prosperity has not, however, been evenly shared. Thailand has a long history of corruption and a large level of inequality.<sup>64 65</sup>

As a major port city and the nation's capital, Bangkok's fast-paced and still on-going industrialization has created a subliminal rift in the nation, dividing the city from the rest of the country.<sup>66</sup> Within this division, there are the upper and middle classes of the Bangkok Metropolitan Area and the Eastern Seaboard (the upper classes reside in other Thai cities, such as the northern city of Chiang Mai, as well) and the poor of the rural countryside. (There is, of course, much poverty in Bangkok. However, this poverty is often attached to historical or present migration patterns from rural areas.<sup>67</sup>) Minority and impoverished populations occupy much of the rural North and Northeast of Thailand. The disparity between those living in these locations and those assimilated comfortably to modern city life is great.

This disparity is explained in part by the enormous shift Thailand's economy went through in the late 20th century. In 1965, agriculture, forestry, and fishery accounted for 34% of GDP. By 1990, their share of GDP had dropped by 21.6%, accounting for only 12.4%. During this same time span, manufacturing's contribution to GDP rose from 15.5% to 26.1%, and the service industry's contribution to GDP also increased from 12.5% to 19.7%, a combined increase of 17.8% of GDP. Likewise, from 1960 to 1990, agriculture dropped from being 84.4% of Thailand's exports to merely 34.4% (-50%), while manufacturing rose from 2.5% to account for 54.9% of Thailand's exports (+52%).<sup>68</sup> Thus, we see that manufacturing and the service industry took over production from forestry, fishing, and agriculture and that exports from manufacturing took over exports from agriculture during this time of economic modernization. Economist Paul Chambers summarizes these shifts: "foreign investment, cheap labour, a devalued baht, industrial exports, and international tourism promotion all became the hallmarks of development policy (during the 1980s)."<sup>69</sup>

Thailand's population boom throughout the middle of the 20th century contributed to this shift in the economy as well. Between 1960 and 1976, 400,000 people, on average, were added to the Thai workforce annually.<sup>70</sup> While the transition from an agricultural society to an industrial one allowed Thailand to absorb this growth through labor migration from the North to the South, it also created a two-tiered workforce: the primary and the secondary. The primary workforce held academic qualifications and specific skills, receiving better pay and benefits. The secondary workforce lacked such qualifications, receiving lower compensation, fewer services, and minimal labor protections.<sup>71</sup> "Indeed, despite improvements in growth and the reduction of absolute poverty," Chambers says, "relative poverty (the disparity between rich and poor) and uneven development accelerated from the 1980s into the 1990s."<sup>72</sup> During the nineties, absolute poverty grew from 14 to 22 percent, further entrenching the disenfranchised.<sup>73</sup> In response to the 1997 Asian Economic Crisis, the Thai government agreed to the harsh structural readjustment policies of the International Monetary Fund in exchange for billions of US dollars. These policies led to increased economic and social insecurity for the majority of the Thai people.<sup>74</sup>

The Thai government has tended to favor development in central Thailand (Bangkok) and the South over that of the North. Education rates offer a window into this reality. While the average number of years of educational attainment in Bangkok is 10.07, the average number of years of educational attainment in the North is 6.9. Lacking opportunities in the North, including the opportunity to complete an education, and



unequipped to join the primary workforce, large swaths of people from the less developed North have migrated south for low-paying manufacturing or service industry work.

This trend in “uneven development” continues to this day, as manufacturing and service jobs continue to expand.<sup>75</sup> The problem is that the regulation of these labor markets has failed to develop with them. As Sirajjakool says:

While there has been a drastic growth in the Thai economy over the past thirty five years, labor conditions have not improved. There are reports of more accidents in the workplace, longer working hours, more women and children in the labor force, and a decrease in financial compensation.

## **THE VULNERABLE**

Given the lack of regulation, all uneducated migrants from the North and Northeast face the possibility of exploitation. Women and girls are particularly vulnerable. Thailand is a communal and honor driven culture. As a part of this culture, women frequently provide for more people than just their immediate family.<sup>76</sup> It is not uncommon for daughters (especially the first born) to bear the burden of responsibility for financially supporting their parents and younger siblings. Consequently, with little chance of more than subsistent income from the agricultural sector of the North or Northeast, young women — both legal minors and adults — travel to Bangkok to work in factories or the service industry with the hope of earning a decent wage for themselves with enough left over to help those at home.<sup>77</sup> This migration is encouraged by advertisements and media that portray city life as glamorous while failing to mention the abuse and exploitation that many migrants face once there. It is not uncommon for factory work to provide insufficient means of survival, let alone remuneration for those in need in the home provinces. In light of this, women and girls look for ways to compensate for their low wages.<sup>78</sup>

“A society that keeps women economically marginalized through educational deprivation and job discrimination,” Vedneta Carter and Evelina Giobbe state, “ensures a ready pool of women who will be vulnerable to recruitment into, and entrapment in prostitution.”<sup>79</sup> As the scholar and historian of the Thai sex trade Lisa Ann Jeffrey says, this is exactly what has happened to those on the lower rungs of the socio-economic ladder in Thailand:

The tourism-centered sex industry provided one of the few better paid opportunities for peasant women whose other choice would be work in the poisonous and exploitative factories. While a 1974 police survey placed the number of women working in prostitution at approximately 400,000, by 1980 that number had reached somewhere between 500,000 and 700,000... reaching, by one estimate, more than two million in the early 1990s.<sup>80</sup>

This trend continues to this day.

## **INTERNATIONAL INEQUALITY’S ROLE**

While economic inequality within Thailand supplies the commercial sex industry with workers, international economic inequality is a large contributor when it comes to demand. In 2008, the World Bank estimated that “the average annual purchasing power of Thais was \$7,703 per person, compared to \$46,716 in the United States.”<sup>81</sup> Given this economic disparity, any relation between the average Thai and the average American (or French or German or Japanese, all of whom have an average annual purchasing power close to one another and well above that of Thais) contains a large power differential. This disparity is even greater for the impoverished women and children coming from Northern Thailand — those who are

most likely to enter into sex work.

The economic disparity between Thais who sell sex and those who buy it, whether other Thais or foreigners, helps explain the findings of an International Labor Organization (ILO) study conducted in the late 1990s. According to an ILO press release on the study, “In Thailand, close to US\$300 million was transferred annually to rural families by women working in the sex sector in urban areas, a sum that in many cases exceeds the budgets of government-funded development programmes (SIC).”<sup>82</sup> It goes on to state that between 1993-95 sex work “yielded an annual income (estimated) between US\$22.5 and 27 billion.” Most of the women who were surveyed in the study stated that they entered into the industry for financial reasons. Of those interviewed:

Almost one-half of the brothel workers and one-quarter of the massage parlour workers had previously worked in agriculture. A further 17 per cent (SIC) of the masseuses said they had previously worked in home or cottage industries and 11 per cent had been domestic servants.<sup>83</sup>

## **FURTHER REASONS PEOPLE SELL SEX**

After years of interaction with girls entering into, participating in, and exiting the sex industry in Bangkok, Thompson says this trend continues to this day: “the number of Thai women working in poverty-level jobs who have economic responsibilities for family members has meant that there is a large pool of women waiting to be recruited for sex work or migration.”<sup>84</sup>

Thompson highlights six key reasons that Thai women and girls choose the vocation of a sex worker: (1) extreme poverty, (2) an overwhelming sense of gender inequality, (3) childhood sexual abuse, (4) other domestic violence, (5) a history of rape, and (6) a lack of education. Researcher Kathy J. Steinman offers a somewhat different, though similar overall, schema: “The primary factors driving children into prostitution are poverty, materialism and consumerism, consumer demand, dysfunction and sexual abuse, gender discrimination, and the Internet.”<sup>85</sup> (For Steinman poverty includes a lack of education and illiteracy.) Survival sex, where individuals, often homeless children, sell sex to obtain food or shelter or both, must be included in the list.

## **CONSENT VERSUS COMPLIANCE**

While economic need and vulnerability are a factor for all who sell sex, the various reasons that people enter into the commercial sex industry in Thailand are as varied as each individual. When talking about reasons for entering, specifically for those who choose to enter, an important distinction should be made between consent and compliance. To consent means to agree or give permission. Compliance, on the other hand, implies conformity and compulsion. Compliance can happen for many reasons. One admittedly crass example would be that of a rape survivor who allowed the rapist to have his way to save her life. While we could say she was compliant, we could not say the sex was consensual. Consent requires the ability to say no free from coercion or force, which requires the freedom to go in another direction.

Admittedly, the girls and boys, women and men who enter into the Thai commercial sex industry may have other (though highly limited) options. However, if their options barely provide subsistence wages, let alone enough to fulfill internalized social and familial obligations, they are not really making a free choice when they choose to enter into sex work. Thus, even if they are of age (whether that be 18 or 25), it is not appropriate to characterize their decision as consensual. Rather, those who enter into sex-work, even without physical coercion or the threat of violence, have conformed to a highly stratified local culture and an inequitable global society, often choosing the only option that allows them to fulfill

familial or social obligations or both. The sex these individuals sell should not be seen as consensual. While it is often the most rational choice for them to make, it is not a free decision in any meaningful sense of the word. It is a decision based upon conformity to their plight. The only way it would be consensual is if those children, youths, and adults who are most likely to end up in the sex industry are given other genuine options. Having options requires having opportunities, and opportunities increase with education and skills that are marketable in the global economy.

## **THE FREEDOM STORY**

The Freedom Story's stated mission is to prevent child trafficking and exploitation through culturally relevant programs for vulnerable children and to share their stories to inspire creative, compassionate people to act.

Co-founded by Rachel Sparks, a documentary filmmaker at the time, The Freedom Story began with a short documentary film sharing the stories and experiences of child sex workers in Northern Thailand. As Rachel and her team interviewed sex worker after sex worker, they heard a common origin story: poverty and a lack of options. It was clear that education was the missing link. Rachel found partners in Rachel Goble and Tawee Donchai, and together they launched The Freedom Story's scholarship program in 2008, offering educational scholarships to vulnerable children and youth in the Chiang Rai region of Northern Thailand.

In 2011, The Freedom Story opened The Freedom Resource Center in Bong Prae, a small village outside of Chiang Rai City. With an average education level well below even the regional average, Bong Prae functioned as a de facto breeding ground for child sex workers. By providing mentorship, tutoring, career planning, English lessons, and a space for extracurricular activities, the Freedom Resource Center has served almost 200 scholarship students and countless other children and families. The Freedom Resource Center in Bong Prae is also host to The Freedom Story's bi-annual trafficking awareness programs and sustainability programs, both of which target the entire community of Bong Prae.

Since 2008, The Freedom Story has provided scholarships to 181 children, resulting in 78 secondary and post-secondary graduations, 14 Bachelors degrees, and 130 current scholarship students. While nearly half (43%) of the students in the Chiang Rai region drop out by middle school, 93% of The Freedom Story's scholarship students stay in school, and the vast majority of them go on to secondary education, college, and promising careers.

The Freedom Story's human rights and trafficking awareness program, 3-3-5, was developed by an American missionary, Michael David Fucella, and adapted to The Freedom Story's context by staff member Ketsara Thutsunti, who had trained and worked with Fucella for almost 4 years before joining The Freedom Story. She has conducted the program in 15 schools last year, reaching 779 children, and is on track to reach more this year, now that The Freedom Story is partnering with ECPAT and also training university students to extend the program. The Freedom Story also offers free legal counseling and education to the members of the communities they work with, reaching over 150 people with this program already this year.

Since 2013, The Freedom Story has invested in creating sustainability programs to decrease dependency in the communities they work with. These programs have included four workshops teaching sustainable practices and entrepreneurial opportunities to about 120 people in all, the financing and construction of 14 silk worm farms (now self-sustaining and profitable), their Organic Vegetable Project that teaches families about the organic cultivation of indigenous and healthy vegetables on their own land, a local

textile center that dyes fabrics and manages the design and pre-production of ecologically sustainable handbags and backpacks, and an Eco-Organic Learning Center, which once up and running by the end of 2016 will provide instruction on sustainable and profitable farming practices to hundreds, if not thousands, of farmers in the Chiang Rai region.

The Freedom Story organizes its programming around six strategies, which combine to increase educational attainment and prevent child exploitation and trafficking in the Chiang Rai region of Northern Thailand:

## **SCHOLARSHIPS**

An estimated 60,000 children are involved in the Thai sex trade each year. The majority of these children come from Northern Thailand where crippling poverty forces many to drop out of school at young ages.<sup>86</sup> Uneducated yet often expected to help provide for their families, these children are easily lured into the sex trade. Educational scholarships help reverse this trend.

## **RESOURCES**

The Freedom Resource Center and the Chiang Rai City Center offer daily after-school programs, activities, and resources such as a computer lab.

## **MENTORSHIP**

Studies show that at-risk children and youths with mentors are more likely to aspire to attend and graduate from college, participate in sports and other extracurricular activities, take leadership roles in school and extracurricular activities, and regularly volunteer in their communities.<sup>87</sup> All of The Freedom Story's students are mentored by the staff, with regular home visits and activities to help deepen and strengthen these relationships.

## **AWARENESS**

The Freedom Story offers bi-annual human trafficking awareness, human rights training, and family camps for the communities they work with. Through games, skits, and lessons, our innovative 3-3-5 program teaches children their human rights. The Freedom Story also runs legal rights workshops for children and families in the region.

## **SUSTAINABILITY**

The Freedom Story's Sustainability Project utilizes local resources to build upon the existing skills of the families they work with, preventing the flight of talent, raising the local standard of living, empowering local leaders, and reducing the lure of traffickers.

## **STORYTELLING**

The Freedom Story identifies stories of beauty and hope arising from adverse circumstances and tells these stories through photography and film for two reasons. First, to provide healing and dignity to the communities we work in. Second, to expand awareness of the power of prevention and invite others into this work.

The Freedom Story's five-prong model (six when Storytelling is included) has been developed over the last eight years. Together these services break down barriers to education and opportunity and help foster stronger relationships within families and communities, making them more resilient in the face of adversity.

This Social Impact Assessment (SIA) provides a baseline evaluation of The Freedom Story’s social (psychological, pedagogical, and practical) impacts since 2007. As such, it offers an example for measuring future impacts more consistently and scaling those impacts more effectively. This SIA was carried out in two phases. The first phase (Phase I) began in early 2015 when external researcher Dr. Mellissa Anderson-Hinn spent three weeks in Thailand conducting ethnographic research. In the second phase (Phase II), another independent researcher, Athalie Waugh, developed surveys in order to determine whether the findings of Phase I could be verified or corroborated. These surveys were developed in dialogue with the ethnographic findings of Phase I, literature on trafficking and prevention, and in accordance with the United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking Ethical Guidelines. In 2016, they were administered to The Freedom Story’s participants in Thailand.

The sections below Ethical Considerations, Phase I and Phase II, outline the methodology of each phase of research and in doing so establish the methodology for this SIA.

## **ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Both Phase I and Phase II, as well as all researchers and participating staff, followed the UNIAP Ethical Guidelines, which include the following:

1. Do no harm: be compassionate but neutral.
2. Prioritize personal safety and security: identify and minimize risks.
3. Get informed consent, with no coercion.
4. Ensure anonymity and confidentiality to the greatest extent possible.
5. Adequately select and prepare interpreters and field teams.
6. Prepare referral information, and be prepared for emergency intervention.
7. Do not hesitate to help others: put your information to good use.

Both phases of research also adhered to the “Ethical and Safety Recommendations for Research on the Perpetuation of Sexual Violence” as presented by the Sexual Violence Research Initiative (SVRI) out of South Africa in 2008. The recommendations within this document state that surveys must keep respondents’ identities anonymous, and that respondents have the right to not answer any question or to discontinue an interview at any time. These rights were made clear to all of those who participated in the surveys and interviews.

## **SAMPLING**

### **PHASE I**

#### **DATA SAMPLE**

All of The Freedom Story’s staff were interviewed in groups and as individuals by Dr. Melissa Anderson-Hinn. In all, Dr. Anderson-Hinn interviewed 68 of The Freedom Story’s students: 32 primary school students between the ages of eight and fourteen (with one grade eight student being sixteen-years-old) in smaller groups that ranged in size from four to seven students, two of the students were interviewed in-depth; 20 high school students between the ages of 15 and 18 in two groups of eight and twelve, three

students were interviewed in-depth; 8 vocational school students in two groups of four, one who was interviewed in-depth; and 7 university students and 1 university graduate, one of the students and the university graduate were both interviewed in-depth. In addition, Dr. Anderson-Hinn interviewed a “hand-full” of parents and guardians and two teachers in the village of Bong Prae.

## **RESEARCH INSTRUMENT**

During the first phase of research, qualitative data was collected through the following methods:

1. Ethnographic in-depth interviews.
2. Prompted Descriptions for descriptive study.<sup>88</sup>
3. Comprehensive observation (direct and participative).
1. Parallel streams of research design and strategic development (participatory action and grounded theory).

## **IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS**

One of the primary sources of evidence for Phase I was in-depth interviews with teachers, students, parents, and other pertinent community members. Interviews are one of the most significant sources of data collection and evidence for this type of inquiry.<sup>89</sup> Dr. Yin’s suggestion to researchers to consider interviews as “guided conversations rather than structured queries,” was followed.<sup>90</sup> Group, personal, and in-depth interviews were carried out as guided conversations. The purpose of this method is to gain the deepest level of insight into the actual facts, i.e. the lived experience of those interviewed and, ultimately, the meaning ascribed to their experience.

Questions and prompts varied from one interview to the next but included some or all of the following:

1. Describe your relationship with The Freedom Story staff?
2. Why do you work for The Freedom Story?
3. Describe a time when you were happy with the way you handled conflict or stress?
4. What is your favorite thing about being part of The Freedom Story?
5. What is your least favorite thing about being part of The Freedom Story?
6. Describe what your day is like in school?
7. What would you like to see The Freedom Story add to its Resource Center or programs that would help you (or your children) in achieving your education and/or career goals?
8. What are your education and career goals?
9. What is your biggest concern about your ability (or your child’s abilities) to achieve your (their) goals?

Dr. Anderson-Hinn reported her findings in a narrative form. Her key findings are included in the results section of this SIA, and her entire report, including a more in-depth methodology, is included as Appendix A.

## **PHASE II**

Employing a mixed methods approach reduces the risk of threats to the validity of the research by verifying the findings through more than one process. During Phase II, results of the ethnographic research were used as a preliminary guide for the direction of the remaining quantitative data collection, carried out through the administration of surveys and the analysis of results.

## DATA SAMPLE

The sample for Phase II was designed to include all of The Freedom Story’s constituents: a representative sample of The Freedom Story’s scholarship students: 76; a representative sample of the parents and guardians of The Freedom Story’s scholarship students: N/A; and almost all of The Freedom Story’s Thailand staff: 13. Unfortunately, at the time of writing, parent and guardian surveys have yet to be completed.

## RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

The research instrument for this section of the study was a detailed survey for each group of participants; individual surveys were created for the scholarship students, the parents or guardians of the scholarship students, and The Freedom Story’s Thailand staff. Each survey consisted of around 40 statements about The Freedom Story’s programs, their effectiveness, and the overall experience of the constituents. In order for participants to communicate both satisfaction and dissatisfaction with their experience, or effectiveness and ineffectiveness of programs, a five-point Likert scale was provided to respond to each statement. The surveys consisted of statements such as, “I am comfortable asking a The Freedom Story Staff member for help when I am overwhelmed by a problem,” or “I believe The Freedom Story has helped people stay out of the commercial sex industry,” and participants responded on the five-point scale that ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree. To ensure the scale was understood by scholarship students, visual cues, emojis, were included:

### 4. การศึกษาทำให้ชีวิตของเงินดีขึ้น

 ไม่เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง 1	 ไม่เห็นด้วย 2	 ไม่แน่ใจ 3	 เห็นด้วย 4	 เห็นด้วยอย่างยิ่ง 5
0	0	0	0	0

### 4. Education has made my life better.

 Strongly Agree 1	 Agree 2	 Not Sure 3	 Disagree 4	 Strongly Disagree 5
0	0	0	0	0

The only identification information that the participants were asked to provide was the following: the amount of time they have been involved with The Freedom Story, their gender, the students and parents or guardians were asked to provide their family size, and students were asked to provide their age. To ensure cultural relevance and sensitivity, Thai staff members reviewed each of the surveys and made suggestions for adjustments accordingly. The surveys were adjusted, translated into Thai, and administered to the participants.

## ADMINISTRATION OF THE SURVEYS

Dr. Jade Keller, a dual US & Thai citizen currently residing in Thailand, conducted the staff surveys and provided the staff responsible for the student surveys with a brief training and a script to use when administering the student surveys. This included a discussion of the importance of anonymity and confidentiality, the necessity of refraining from influencing student responses in any way, and some sample ways to respond to anticipated questions in order to preserve the integrity of student responses.

## **STAFF SURVEYS**

Staff Surveys were administered via an emailed link to a Google Form survey. Staff took the surveys individually and anonymously. The data from these surveys was coded and analyzed by Athalie Waugh in the US. The purpose of the Staff Survey was to allow the staff to rate how well they believe The Freedom Story is accomplishing its goals, the effectiveness of The Freedom Story programs, their experience as a The Freedom Story staff member, and their hope for the future of The Freedom Story.

## **STUDENT SURVEYS**

The Student Surveys were administered at both of The Freedom Story's resources centers in Bong Prae and Chiang Rai City. While The Freedom Story staff administered the surveys, they did so after a brief training and following best practices for the anonymous administration of surveys. (See B for the survey administration instructions.) Students who could not access the Resource Centers in person were emailed a link to a Google Form survey. Students who could not take the surveys on their own (due to limited literacy skills) were assisted by a The Freedom Story staff member, and these responses were tracked in order to keep them separate from the other data. The data from these surveys was subsequently coded and analyzed.

## **PARENT SURVEYS**

Due to limited literacy and a lack of technological capabilities, the Parent Surveys have yet to be administered. The Freedom Story's plan is to have staff administer them on an individual basis. The staff are trained to proctor and ensure participants that no subject identifiers will be collected. The purpose of the Parent/Guardian Survey is to understand how parents or guardians perceive the impact of The Freedom Story on their children, their families, and their community.

## **LIMITATIONS**

Limitations are the boundaries that limit the application or interpretation of the results, often impacting the generalizability of a study.

### **PHASE I LIMITATIONS**

The limitations of Phase I emerged from the research purpose – to evaluate the impact of a single organization within a specific context. For this particular study, the sourcing of data came only from The Freedom Story community of participation and impact, including its students, Thai staff, students' families, local teachers, and other localized community members available for interviews and observation within the Chiang Rai region of Northern Thailand. These findings apply only to this case study. .

### **PHASE II LIMITATIONS**

Given the nature of quantitative research, it must be noted that surveys, though often revealing, rarely capture the entirety of what is taking place. Though The Freedom Story worked diligently to design a research strategy that covered cross-cultural nuances, some obstacles still emerged. One specific challenge was that this was the first time many participants had ever done a survey or interview of this nature.



## **ISSUES IN TRANSLATION**

Researchers created the surveys in English, and then sent them to an outside Thai translator for translation. When The Freedom Story staff took the staff surveys, some translation issues became apparent. In order to ensure that the literal meanings of the questions were not lost in translation for the student surveys, certain staff members looked over the translations and made suggestions to help clarify them before the surveys were administered. However, some issues in translation remained. For instance, the student surveys contain a series of questions regarding their experience and relationship with their The Freedom Story staff mentor, but a clear translation for mentor in Thai does not exist. To rectify this issue, translators chose a term that could mean “mentor,” “counselor,” or “helper” for those questions. Another issue of translation became apparent when the findings of the student surveys were presented to the staff. In the demographics section, 42 students responded that they were in 1st through 3rd grade. Given that only four students who took the survey were within the common age range for primary education (up to 13), this seemed like an issue once data analysis began. Even if, as is sometimes the case, scholarship students were behind in school, this discrepancy seemed large. When staff looked at the findings they all agreed that the students interpreted these questions to be asking what year in university or vocational school they were in. Other issues or ambiguities are addressed further in the findings section.

## **SCHOLARSHIP STUDENT SURVEY PROCESS**

Students took the surveys at home or at the computer lab of the Freedom Resource Center, where the staff had instructions to monitor the process from the front of the room where the computer screens of the students were not visible. Some issues did emerge during the first round of student surveys. The first was that while some students could complete the surveys on computers at school or at home, others lacked access to computers other than at The Freedom Story’s Freedom Resource Center. Thus, while measures were taken (outlined below) to create anonymity within the Resource Center context, those students who took the survey at home or at school were in a position to feel more anonymous, even if they were not, and thus may have felt more freedom to be honest. The second issue arose from this being the first time that many of the students took online surveys. Because of this, some students needed help with the process, and because a portion of the questions on the survey were about the students’ experiences with the staff, their involvement in helping the students may have influenced the way the students responded to some questions. Given that some students received help in the first round, and that these students were not differentiated from those who did not receive help, the first round of surveys was removed from the data sample. The staff member who conducted the training reemphasized the importance of anonymity to the Thai staff, and instructed them not to help the students and to encourage the students to answer to the best of their ability if they were confused. In order to protect the data from being tainted by the presence of staff members, we erred on the side of having students not completely understand the questions or statements, rather than allow the staff to clarify or otherwise guide students’ responses.

## **SAMPLE SIZE AND SELECTION**

Ninety-one students took the survey. However, 15 of them either failed to press the final submit button or Google forms lost their response. All in all, The Freedom Story has data from 76 student surveys (a response rate of 83.5%). While 76 students took the survey, The Freedom Story failed to track which ones took it at the Resource Center versus in the privacy of their own home. The Freedom Story is thus unsure as to what bias, if any, the location of the survey taking introduced, but it is safe to assume it may have introduced some. It should also be noted that though quantitative data was obtained this is clearly a qualitative study. Whether nearby local villages, northern Thailand, or any other regional context, our students may not be a representative sample. Therefore generalizations to any wider context other than

The Freedom Story's constituents cannot be made, which highlights the importance of further research.

## **CONCLUDING THOUGHTS ON PHASE II LIMITATIONS**

A limitation of the surveys themselves is that, for each question or statement, the participant is restricted to choosing options one through five. While students or staff freely chose their responses, their reasons for responding the way they did cannot be fully known. Issues of translation, unclear instructions, the presence of people in the room, stress due to a new and unfamiliar experience, or hesitation to be honest for fear of perceived consequences all could have influenced the way the participants responded. While it is possible for these or other biases to have played a role, The Freedom Story has made every effort to reduce their impact given limited resources, and is confident these surveys provide vital and important information that can serve as a basis for and direction of future research. The organization is in the process of using the surveys' findings to create questions for follow up focus group discussions.

# **RESULTS: PHASE I**

## **DEMOGRAPHICS**

Dr. Anderson-Hinn interviewed 67 scholarship students between the ages of 8 and 23 and one graduate of The Freedom Story's programs who was 27 years of age. She interviewed The Freedom Story's Thailand staff. She also interviewed five parents of scholarship students, and one sister. All of the interviews were conducted in the Chiang Rai region of Northern Thailand in either Bong Prae or Chiang Rai City.

## **RESEARCH ANALYSIS**

### **STAFF**

Dr. Anderson-Hinn conducted in-depth interviews and open discussions with The Freedom Story's staff. She reports that each spoke with great passion, wisdom, hope, and ambition about the students they serve and the ways in which they already see sustainable change. They also spoke of the challenges of their work and how it affects them personally no matter how hard they try to avoid it. One of the areas of discussion that emerged in all staff interviews was that of the Sustainability Director Worn's recent illness, which was rooted in the stress of this work. On the one hand, they were still recovering from the stress of watching a dear friend fight for his life and they are fearful of burnout. On the other hand, they felt grateful to be aware of the severity of personal risks to their health and wellbeing and more committed to ensuring that it doesn't happen to anyone else.

They all had unique ideas for how to continue growing their impact in Bong Prae and throughout Northern Thailand. They all spoke of opening another Resource Center in Chiang Rai, increasing the quality of their library, transforming their existing space into one that is more inviting and accessible, and introducing more sophisticated programs for life-skills development. They all agreed that some of the most significant risk factors their (Northern Thai) students face is a lack of value in their own identities, a lack of direction in their lives, a lack of opportunity to learn and practice critical thinking skills, and a lack of hope that their lives can be different than what they have inherited. According to Dr. Anderson-Hinn, Worn also expressed a very sophisticated understanding of sustainability and cultivating a lifetime of

prevention rather than just preventing exploitation (or bad choices) while at-risk students are finishing school.

The final, notable, stream of data that emerged in all of the staff interviews with Dr. Anderson-Hinn was that all of them expressed a significant concern about organizational leadership, especially as it relates to key decision-making for the organization. They all expressed their need for “a boss”: someone that is clearly tasked with the responsibility to make the big decisions and ensure that every other staff member is well informed, possesses a clear job description, and feels equipped to do their jobs effectively.

## **STUDENTS**

### **PRIMARY SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Dr. Anderson-Hinn interviewed 32 primary school students between the ages of 8-14 (with one grade 8 student being 16) in small groups ranging in size from 4 to 7. Additionally, 2 primary school students were interviewed in depth (Mew and Tom). Dr. Anderson-Hinn also visited the homes of several students, including (brothers) Surachat and Surachai, Newt, and her neighbors. She also visited the home of Yoke to purchase dinner and speak with her parents on several occasions.

While some of the primary school students she interviewed had a few years of experience with The Freedom Story, others were fairly new to The Freedom Story’s programs. A few of them were connected to The Freedom Story but not scholarship recipients. No matter the length of their experience or whether they received a scholarship, 100% of them spoke of the Resource Center as feeling like a second or third home (some of them considered school to be their second home). About 70% of the primary school interviewees described The Freedom Story staff as “being like” a second family. About 60% reported feeling more connected to The Freedom Story staff and their friends at the Resource Center than their own families at home. Of the remaining 40%, most of them reported feeling “happy” at home but stronger and more hopeful around The Freedom Story staff.

Dr. Anderson-Hinn primarily talked to the primary school students about their family backgrounds, what they liked about being a part of The Freedom Story, what ideas they have for improving The Freedom Story, and their experiences in their schools, with their teachers, and with their peers. They also spoke about their future hopes and fears (i.e., what they expect will be their greatest obstacles).

The interviews focused on their experience within the contexts that are most relevant to The Freedom Story’s approach to prevention: their family narratives and home life, their lives and experiences in school, their relationships with friends and communities, and their relationships with The Freedom Story staff and the Resource Center.

In all the primary school interviews, at least one student brought up the need for a playground. All the other students agreed, and at least one student brought up the desire to take field trips, such as seeking out local spaces of historical-cultural learning and fun, as part of the The Freedom Story program. With the field trip idea, transportation also emerged as a hindrance unless The Freedom Story could buy its own van.

During the primary school interviews, Dr. Anderson-Hinn also spent a significant amount of time talking with students about their school experiences and their educational hopes for the future. About 42% of them reported that they enjoy school “totally” and hope to attend and finish high school and continue on to university. Another 25% reported that they enjoy school “mostly” and hoped to continue through

high school and university. About 30% of them reported that they enjoy school “mostly” but that they couldn’t really think about or anticipate what would be next (or imagine that finishing high school and university would be possible). For this 30%, the hope of finishing still outweighed the expectation that they wouldn’t. Only about 9% of them reported wanting to finish but not expecting to due so being unable to test well or convince their parents it was worth all of the sacrifices they would have to make.

In response to questions about school, most of the students reported that their favorite part of school was being with their friends and taking electives. They all reported that there is a lot of stress around the national tests they are required to take and that everything they learn is focused on these tests rather than on the importance of learning. Several of the primary school students reported being very nervous to ask questions (of a teacher) in class because they believed that teachers would embarrass or insult them in front of the class for not listening or not understanding or accuse them of being disrespectful for which they could receive corporal punishment.

It is notable that even the primary school students (in their own language) are aware that they are being taught strictly to the tests and that these tests cause a large amount of stress on their teachers and on their school experience, significantly hindering their learning abilities and interests. Even the physical education teachers are teaching theoretical knowledge for testing rather than designing PE classes that help students have fun and be more active, agile, and healthy. About 60% of the primary school students reported wanting better English language teaching. And, about 80% of the primary school interviewees reported wanting more instruction and experience using computers and technology. Every student who knows Kru Bon reported wanting more (or all) teachers like him. In expressing these desires, they were clearly more interested in an improved education experience rather than a nonexistent one. None of them reported believing that it makes more sense to just stop going to school and start working.

#### Primary Students Summary

- 32 primary students between the ages of 8-14
- Small group interviews ranging in size from 4-7 students
- 2 primary school students were interviewed in depth for descriptive phenomenological study
- Several homes were visited
- About 70% (22) of the primary school interviewees described The Freedom Story staff as being like a second family and all of them expressed strong ties to the Resource Center as a second home
- About 60% (19) of them reported feeling more connected to The Freedom Story staff and their friends at the Resource Center than their own families at home
- Of the remaining ~40% (13), most of them reported feeling happy at home but stronger and more hopeful around The Freedom Story staff
- Another 25% (8) reported that they enjoy school “mostly” and hoped to continue through high school and University.
- About 30% of them reported that they enjoy school “mostly” but that they couldn’t really think about or anticipate what would be next
- The hope of finishing still outweighed the expectation not to for this 30%
- Only about 9% (3) of them reported wanting to finish but not expecting to

#### **HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Dr. Anderson-Hinn interviewed 20 high school students between the ages of 15-18 in two groups of 12 and 8. Additionally, she interviewed 3 high school students more in depth (including Cat & Dream). All of the high school students that she interviewed have been a part of The Freedom Story for several years, many since its inception.

Several of the girls attempted to communicate in English at various times throughout the interviews. According to Dr. Anderson-Hinn, all of the high school interviewees spoke — with tears in their eyes — to the strength and value of their relationships with The Freedom Story staff and their connection to the The Freedom Story Resource Center. They view the The Freedom Story staff members as mentors, friends, parents, sources of strength, and super heroes. They also reported that the Resource Center gave them stability and a greater sense of home and belonging than many of them reported feeling at the home of their parents. At the time of the interviews, they hadn't heard that there was a plan to open a Resource Center in the city, but 100% of them suggested it because the existing one is too far removed from where they live or go to school or both.

With the high school students, Dr. Anderson-Hinn discussed their family backgrounds, what they liked about being a part of The Freedom Story, what ideas they have for improving The Freedom Story (for themselves and younger students). She also spent a significant portion of time discussing their experiences in school, their dreams for the future, and their fears in pursuing their dreams.

When asked their favorite thing about their experience with The Freedom Story, 100% of the high school students said the following: relationships with staff. When Dr. Anderson-Hinn asked them to unpack that statement further, they spoke about feeling safe approaching The Freedom Story staff members, valuable to them, and confident in implementing the advice they gave. They also spoke of how their connection to The Freedom Story translated directly to a consistent increase in their levels of hope for their futures.

When asked what they would like to add, the majority suggested the importance of enhancing the mentoring program to include university students as their mentors. Although when asked, less than half of them felt like they personally have anything to offer as mentors to primary school students. (This finding is dramatically different than the confidence and desire expressed by vocational students in regards to their ability to mentor younger students.)

The research indicates that the main reason high school students requested university mentors is fear of failing university entrance exams. Most of them reported their greatest fear (or obstacle) in finishing their education is failing to test well enough to get into a university. They also feared being unprepared to navigate the university system on the same level as their peers coming from more developed areas. They reported the belief that university students could help them prepare for testing and evaluations to get into schools as well as prepare themselves to enter and “survive” in university.

Not all of the high school interviewees participated in Khae's nature project, but 100% of those that did reported it as one of their favorite experiences as a part of The Freedom Story. One student said that she neither liked trees nor cared for them before the project, but now finds great value in being part of something that is bigger than herself. She took great pride in the work they are doing, as did all of the participating students.

Several of the high school interviewees suggested the desire for big group parties to gather all of the scholarship students, their parents, and any of their friends. They expressed a desire to eat together and have some sort of group learning experience along with some fun music and dancing. Dr. Anderson-Hinn noticed that a common motivation seemed to be that they wanted their parents and friends to understand what makes them so excited to keep working hard to finish school and live a future that they value and that allows them to add value to society. They also seemed to just want to have fun together and share a sense of community with people on similar paths, both younger and older.

A few of the high school students brought up the need for improved accessibility in the form of a better

entry road or The Freedom Story's own transportation van or both. This desire came up repeatedly in both staff and student interviews for a variety of reasons.

A little over half of them reported that they really enjoy school and feel confident in their studies and their future endeavors based on what they are learning in high school. The single, most remarkable piece of data that applies to all of the high school students that reported total contentment and confidence is their high regard for their teachers and positive relationships with their teachers in their major fields of study. On the other hand, a little less than half of them reported that they actually do like what they are studying but don't feel good about how their teachers respond to questions or requests for additional help. Thus, they don't feel nearly as content and confident in their "preparedness" for the next level. Two of them actually reported feeling a bit lost because they no longer liked their majors and weren't exactly sure how to switch their studies or prepare for the next level without experience in something they enjoy studying.

When Dr. Anderson-Hinn pressed further about the behavior of teachers that made students feel less content and confident, the answers were quite similar to those given by primary school students. In response to other questions about school, most of the students reported that their favorite part of school was being with their friends. They all reported that there is a lot of stress around all the tests and competition to get into a University or the field of study they want rather than on the importance of learning and developing a passion for learning. Several of the high school students also remember the level of stress on them (and their teachers) in primary school to perform well on national testing, especially the test that determines whether they can go on to high school. They reported that based on their understanding of younger siblings' or friends' experiences, it is even more stressful now that there is more testing.

#### High School Students Summary

- 20 high school students between the ages of 15-18
- 2 groups of 12 and 8
- 3 high school students interviewed in depth for descriptive phenomenological study
- 100% of them believed that The Freedom Story should open a Resource Center in the city
- 100% of the students participating in Khae's nature project reported it being one of their latest favorite experiences
- Several suggested the desire for bigger group parties to gather all scholarship students, parents, and friends and the others agreed
- A few suggested the need for improved accessibility (by road) and all others agreed
- About 20% (4) of the students reported ambivalence towards test taking
- About 20% (4) reported positive connection with test taking
- About 60% (12) reported negative connection with test taking
- 100% reported wanting more time for sports and games – especially communally-driven
- 80% (16) reported a desire for better English teaching in primary school so that their English would be much better by the time they reach high school

#### **VOCATIONAL SCHOOL STUDENTS**

Dr. Anderson-Hinn interviewed 8 vocational school students in two groups of 4 and conducted one in-depth interview (Bank). All of the students reported a positive experience in vocational school. They mostly reported feeling valued by their teachers and well-prepared to either enter the workforce or complete the additional couple years of university to complete a Bachelor's degree in their field. Several of them reported that their plan was actually to do both - enter the workforce AND complete their Bachelor's degree. Once a student has completed vocational school in Thailand, they not only receive a secondary

school diploma equivalent, they also graduate from their area-specific apprenticeship, fully prepared for the workforce to make income, and with a reduced amount of time required to finish a Bachelor's degree in their field while making some income.

The most notable piece of data collected during the vocational school interviews was that these students are interested and self-motivated to give back to younger students as mentors. They want to be part of The Freedom Story's impact on younger students by visiting the Resource Center to teach their trades, mentor, and generally engage in conversations about vocational school and their respective fields of expertise, which include mechanics, computer programming, interior designer, business management, machinist, electrician, and a chef (of Southeast Asian cuisine). Besides their areas of expertise, some of the vocational students possess skills in music and the arts that would also be valuable to share with younger students. The key is that they were all part of The Freedom Story during their last 2-3 years of primary school and believe wholeheartedly in what The Freedom Story is doing. They all reported feeling like the The Freedom Story staff are like a second family and the The Freedom Story Resource Center like a second home.

Dr. Anderson-Hinn found the maturity and confidence in the vocational school students (compared to the high school students or even the University students) to be unique and exceptionally notable. Vocational school students appeared to be more inspired to learn and grow in their knowledge and trade than other students their age.

Of the 8 vocational school students, 7 of them reported that the lack of support from their parents is their biggest challenge. They also reported that this challenge is a primary reason they selected vocational school rather than traditional high school because with the extra scholarship assistance and support from The Freedom Story, they can work and study simultaneously, not needing to rely on their parents for any additional resources beyond what the scholarship covers. Thus, they do not face the guilt of asking for financial assistance from their parents when their parents don't value the whole endeavor. Though their parents are not financially burdened by their education and the students didn't report feeling the pressure of guilt from their parents, they still reported feeling a high level of stress from taking full responsibility for their own motivation to finish. They spoke of it being "exhausting" at times and reported that having the The Freedom Story staff in their lives is the only reason they keep going.

One student who reported feeling over-stressed by the weight of responsibility on her because of the lack of any kind of parental support also reported that she hopes to employ her parents someday so that they will be less stressed to survive and retroactively supportive (and proud) of her commitment to complete her education and start and manage her own business. The one student that didn't report a lack of support from parents as his biggest stressor is Bank. While he hasn't lived with his parents since he was young, the stress of going blind is much greater for him than the lack of support he receives from parental figures. Bank also happens to be the student that expressed the strongest desires to be a mentor to younger students and share his many talents and skills with them.

Similar to all the other students interviewed, the vocational students really value their relationships with friends and the time they are able to spend hanging out with their friends. Given their busy schedules of work, including many weekends, and study, none of them have the ability to consistently visit the Resource Center in Bong Prae.

Of the students Dr. Anderson-Hinn interviewed, only the vocational students requested more money for their scholarships stating that they're responsible for covering more costs than traditional high school students because of vocational training and apprenticeship costs in addition to their tuition, books, and uniforms. However, they all agreed that the additional cost was worthwhile, especially given the money

they would save if they decided to finish their bachelor's degrees.

#### Vocational Student Summary

- 8 Vocational students interviewed in 2 groups of 4
- 1 vocational student interviewed in depth for descriptive phenomenological study
- 7 of the 8 students (about 88%) reported that the lack of support from their families is their biggest challenge, which was also reported as a primary reason for pursuing vocational school over traditional high school
- 1 of the 8 students (About 13%) reported feeling very over-stressed mostly by the weight of responsibility on her because of the lack of support from parents but yet she still hopes to employ her parents some day in a homegrown business venture
- 100% of them are seriously considering onward pursuit of a University degree while working full time, following completion of vocational school

#### **UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

Dr. Anderson-Hinn interviewed 7 university students and 1 university graduate (Win). She interviewed both Win and one current university student in-depth. The university student interviews were not conducted at the Resource Center, but in Chiang Rai city. The interviews were begun by opening up the space to talk about their journey to each student rather than ask specific questions. The stories were powerful to hear and re-emphasized the depth of vulnerability among so many children in the remote villages and hill tribes. According to Dr. Anderson-Hinn, the time spent with University students and one University graduate included sophisticated discussions about facing citizenship issues while trying to complete one's education, living life estranged from family of origin in order to finish school, pursuing entrance into a University and program, choosing a field of study, being solely responsible for one's own motivation to complete an education, and the guilt and pressure of being an adult child whom their parents believe should be helping. Several of the University students that were interviewed have battled high levels of adversity and vulnerability to get where they are. Several of them also showed sincere and open emotion during the interviews.

Dr. Anderson-Hinn found that of the university students, all of them had dreams of making life better for children and families that face the same challenges that they faced. The students all agreed that a mentor-based model is important and that they would not only like to offer mentoring to younger students but also would like to have more mentoring in their own lives. They all reported how important The Freedom Story staff and the The Freedom Story program has been (and continues to be) in their lives. Only one of the university students did not explicitly express a desire to be a mentor to younger students at The Freedom Story because she hoped to be going to China to continue her studies and work.

Dr. Anderson-Hinn found the stories of resilience in these students very powerful. All of them have faced seemingly insurmountable challenges to get where they are today and to keep working hard towards their goals. Most of them have been away from their families of origin since they were very young. They all know what it feels like to carry significant burdens, sometimes for years without sharing their emotions and fears and dreams with anyone.

All of the University students gave ideas for what could make The Freedom Story's programming better. Mostly, they talked about having mentors that come to campus and check up on them more often. They suggested the need for a second Resource Center in the city. They also suggested that The Freedom Story consider increasing the amount they give in their scholarships. One of the young female students offered a notable suggestion. Her suggestion was to create a mechanism for more sponsors to visit their students' homes and schools in Thailand and to engage directly with their lives. When she shared this



idea, it was very clearly an idea that she has considered for a long time. It was also clear that she didn't quite understand why it didn't happen more often. She asked Dr. Anderson-Hinn if she knew why more of their sponsors didn't visit or send more consistent correspondence.

When asked about their biggest challenges or obstacles in achieving their ultimate goals (or dreams), the majority reported feeling over-burdened by the amount of responsibility they had to endure. Most of them work and study and consistently face resistance from families of origin. Some of these students continue to grieve losses and recover from previous trauma. One of the students reported that her biggest challenge is her need to consistently work much harder than other students who had better access to learning resources and more opportunities. She said that most students that come from poorer villages and hill tribes are at a significant disadvantage when having to compete for entrance into schools and programs with students from places with more resources and opportunities. She emphasized that that is why The Freedom Story's influence is so crucial for students from backgrounds like hers.

### University Students Summary

- 8 University students interviewed
- 1 University graduate interviewed in depth
- 100% of them reported struggles with parental pressure and the weight of being solely responsible for his/her motivation and achievement
- 100% showed open and sincere emotion during interviews
- 89% reported dreams of making life better for children and families that face the same challenges that they faced
- 100% agreed that a mentor-based model is important – that they still need mentoring and advocacy in their own lives from those who have graduated or have been working and that they need to give back to younger students by becoming mentors
- 100% reported how important The Freedom Story staff and its program has been and continues to be in their lives
- One student did not explicitly express a desire to be a mentor to younger students because she hopes to be going to China to continue her studies and to work but she did report valuing the model and want mentoring in her own life

## **PARENTS OR GUARDIANS**

Given the fact that it is difficult and costly for parents to dedicate time away from work or their homes for interviews, most of the interviews Dr. Anderson-Hinn conducted with parents took place in the surrounding fields or villages rather than at the Resource Center. In most cases, Worn or Khae (The Freedom Story's staff) did the work of translating. In one in-depth interview at the Resource Center (with Cat's older sister), Anthony (not a The Freedom Story staff member) was the translator.

The parental figures Dr. Anderson-Hinn interviewed all understood the importance of education, were highly motivated to make sacrifices for their children to finish their education, and expressed high levels of gratitude for The Freedom Story and hope for their children's' futures (respectively). While this level of support is not the dominant experience expressed by the students, this could be due to many reasons, such as the fact that parents who feel the strongest about the value of the program (and the value of their child's education) were the ones most willing to speak with Dr. Anderson-Hinn.

What was not heard was a sense of hope that their children would finish their education and move back home to the village to make a better life there. As parents, they all wanted their kids to live close by, but they are mostly convinced that the "promise of a better life" means that their kids will have to finish their

education and move to the city — perhaps even as far away as Chiang Mai or Bangkok.

This piece of data conflicts with what Dr. Anderson-Hinn heard from The Freedom Story staff and the students' teachers. Most of the students said that their dream was to achieve their educational goals and return to their home villages (or even more vulnerable villages) to share their knowledge, passion, and vocational skills. A small percentage of the students who were interviewed did dream of traveling and living somewhere other than their home villages after achieving their educational goals. However, even those who expected to live away from home permanently, expressed the same desire to be part of changing the future for Thailand's most vulnerable villages. They all understood that the work of changing the future would be very challenging, but there was a sense of hope in all of them (albeit small in some).

However, Dr. Anderson-Hinn found that the parents (as well as grandparents and the one older sister) she interviewed did not share the same hope that the system could change. They were grateful for the opportunity to engage with The Freedom Story's programs (whether by scholarships for their children or vocational development through Worn's sustainability project), but they did not share a sense of hope that widespread, systemic change could happen for everyone, especially not for their own families.

Dr. Anderson-Hinn spoke with one mother working in the field next to the Resource Center whose eldest daughter had to go to live and work in Bangkok and slow down her own educational goals (after earning her high school diploma) because it was the only way she could make enough money to help support her younger sister through high school and University (which started the next year). Even though this mom and her husband worked multiple jobs (including one with Monsanto) to provide for their family, they still needed the extra help from their eldest daughter as well as government loans. Fortunately, they valued education and encouraged their daughters to keep going. This mom believed that her younger daughter would finish and begin working in her field of study before the older sister would be able to finish her University degree.

Unable to speak with the older sister, Dr. Anderson-Hinn could not confirm her mom's assurance that it was the oldest daughter's choice to help. Worn agreed that it is a fairly normal expectation of older siblings in this context, and thus it's possible that it may not even occur to the older sister to say no or think differently. Speaking of her experience, Dr. Anderson-Hinn says:

The most difficult part of this interview came towards the end when I asked her about her relationship with her daughters and what she expected it to look like once they were finished with their education. She tearfully spoke with pride and sadness about her expectation that both of her daughters would reside in Bangkok (or possibly Chiang Mai) rather than return to their home village or even Chiang Rai. She expressed very little hope of seeing her daughters' generation of students finish school and return to their villages to help build more sustainable futures.

#### Parent/Guardian Summary

- 5 parents officially interviewed
- 3 parents unofficially interviewed
- 1 older sister interviewed
- Blah was interviewed and was a helpful source of information about being a parent of school-age children in the villages

# PHASE I DISCUSSION

## RESOURCE CENTER

The Freedom Story Resource Center in Bong Prae served as the primary location for interviews, direct and participatory observation, and participatory action research throughout Phase I of this Social Impact Assessment. During interviews, all of the participants identified strongly with the Resource Center. Though during Phase I many students had less access to the Resource Center due to increasing distance and transportation issues or time constraints as they progressed in school, it was consistently referred to as “a second home” by nearly 100% of the students. There was a clear and direct correlation between students’ positive identification with the Resource Center and their positive relational connections to the The Freedom Story staff. Of the students interviewed, 100% reported feeling like they were at home with their family while visiting the Resource Center.

Even high school students who frequented the Resource Center as primary students but visit less consistently now, expressed a deep connection to the Resource Center and hope for it to continue to evolve as a place where they could find the support they needed to continue to do well in school and life. Vocational school students (many of whom did not have primary school scholarships through The Freedom Story) reported feeling a sense of duty to visit the Resource Center and mentor younger students that are interested in their particular fields of study or entry to vocational school. University students agreed that they could see themselves sharing advice with younger students but did not express this desire as strongly as the vocational school students. Many of the older high school students also anticipate a desire to give back to the younger students once they go on to study in University or vocational school.

It is evident that the desire to give back to younger students at the Resource Center is strongly correlated to older students’ lived experience at the Resource Center. Several high school students also made suggestions for improvements to the Resource Center based on their belief in the importance of the Resource Center as a place of refuge, learning, and connection with others. All of these conversations emerged when prompted to discuss the perceived value of the Resource Center.

About 90% of interviewees raised concerns about the access road to the Resource Center and suggested that The Freedom Story try to do something about paving the remaining dirt section before rainy season commences. (The road is now fully paved.)

Though all of the staff and teachers noted the need for a better, more comprehensive library and library science resources, very few of the student interviewees (less than 10%) spontaneously asked for a better library. However, when prompted, most of the student interviewees (about 70%) were excited to make suggestions for the kinds of reading materials and library resources they would like to see added to the library. By a wide margin, the most popular request was for more comics. Other requests were: short story collections, Asian history stories, books in English and Chinese, travel books, project idea books, popular (English) fiction books translated to Thai, books about music, nature books, more computers for research, learning games, educational project materials, and practical workbooks (particularly for foreign language learning). Though one student studied Japanese, the majority of language learning students focused on English or Chinese or both.

### Resource Center Summary

- 100% students consider the Resource Center to be a second home
- 90% of all interviewees raised concerns about the access road to the Resource Center

- Less than 10% of student interviewees spontaneously asked for a better library
- 70% of student interviewees were excited to make suggestions for the kinds of reading materials and library resources they would like to see added

## **TEST TAKING**

Not a single student (high school or primary school) reported “liking” test taking whether national tests or subject tests issued by their teachers. It is an enormous percentage of their grading in their classes as well and most students reported feeling overwhelmed at the amount of tests they had to take. About 20% of all students (primary and high school) reported ambivalence towards test taking — not especially positive but not especially negative either.

## **DESIRES AND PERCEIVED NEEDS**

Nearly 100% of the high school students reported wanting more time to play sports and games and participate in communal sports tournaments. About 80% of the primary school students reported wanting better English language teaching. Several students (in primary school and high school) talked about becoming English teachers for their own home villages after completing a University degree in Education and English. All of the high school students also reported a need for more learning opportunities in the area of computers and technology. Several of the high school students noted that they were less prepared in the area of computers and technology upon arrival to high school than most of the city kids. They also reported a limited number of computers at their disposal and requested that The Freedom Story find a way to get more computers and create more learning opportunities for using them to do research and projects. Several of them also reported a desire to just have fun and play games on computers sometimes.

## **THE HOPE FACTOR**

All of the students reported a consistent increase in their level of hope for the future based on their connection to The Freedom Story without any other variables being relevant. All of the students come from vulnerability and their levels are somewhat variable; though all within close range to severe so the minor variability does not negatively affect the data. Every single student interviewed reported increasing levels of hope in direct correlation with the amount of time spent as part of The Freedom Story (and family). They reported having little to no sense of a hope for their futures before becoming a part of The Freedom Story and reported that their level of hope increased as they spent more time connected to The Freedom Story. This was true even for the students who have faced significant obstacles while participating with The Freedom Story. Dr. Anderson-Hinn says that, “to increase hope in a child at-risk is a great achievement, but to do so in every child you impact, including those who face additional stressors and obstacles, is to achieve something phenomenal, something worth replicating anywhere possible.”

## **RESOURCES**

The Freedom Resource Center is clearly a powerful symbol of connection, happiness, resilience, and hope for both students and staff. All of the interviewees willingly expressed ideas and hopes for acquiring additional resources and growing their potential for reaching and serving students and families. For staff, the hopes are to offer a more comprehensive and sustainable prevention program while for the students, the most consistently expressed hope is to have a place that they can bring more of their friends even if they do not have scholarships through The Freedom Story. Some examples of ideas and hopes are: more computers and technology training; more workshops on friendship (how to be a good

friend), family relationships, and vocational options/opportunities; more resources for English-language learning; a playground geared toward the 5-14 age group; more sports equipment, sports instruction, and tournaments; more dancing, music instruction, and music performances; and large group gatherings where students can bring their friends and families.

The single most important suggestion (regarding the Resource Center) that emerged repeatedly among staff and (particularly) older students was the need for an additional Resource Center in, or much closer to, Chiang Rai City. Though the existing Resource Center is an important component of The Freedom Story's impact both in the present and for the foreseeable future, it is not enough to meet the needs of their students as they continue their education beyond primary school or relocate to boarding homes closer to the city (from more remote villages) in order to continue in school beyond what is available in their village. In some cases, the students that relocate may be as young as 5 or 6 years old. The next important growth step The Freedom Story needs to take is to acquire space to open a Resource Center in the city of Chiang Rai as the majority of their existing students would benefit from this placement. (This step was taken in December of 2015, when The Freedom Story's Chiang Rai City Center officially opened.)

# RESULTS: PHASE II

## STAFF SURVEY FINDINGS

The staff survey findings suggest that staff believe in the beneficial role of education in our students lives, that students involved in our scholarship and other programs are receiving a good education, and that education reduces the risk of trafficking. They believe they have strong relationships with students, enjoy and feel energized working at The Freedom Story, believe they are making a difference in students' lives, and are hopeful about the future. The results also suggest some areas that could use improvement: The Freedom Story's integration with the community, trafficking awareness events, relationships with parents and guardians, and the mentorship program.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

In all, 13 of The Freedom Story's staff completed surveys. Four self reported as male, and nine as female. In order to maintain anonymity, gender was the only information collected from staff members during administration.

### STRENGTHS

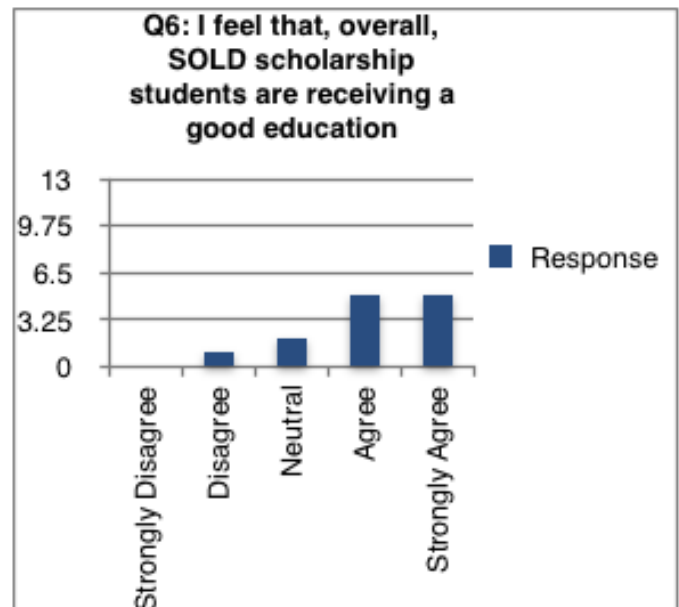
Any time more than half of the staff reported that they strongly agreed or agreed with a positive statement, the organizational characteristic entailed in the statement was marked as a strength. Some key strengths include the quality and accessibility of educational opportunities, The Freedom Story's role in promoting trafficking awareness, and The Freedom Story's staff relationships with students and with each other.

### EDUCATION

Most of the staff members reported that they believe the scholarship students are receiving a good education, and all of them agree that education is making a difference in the lives of the students. They believe education is providing more opportunities for scholarship students and that providing education helps to reduce the risk of human trafficking.

### TRAFFICKING AWARENESS

Most agreed that The Freedom Story has done a good job of raising awareness about human trafficking, and that The Freedom Story has even increased their personal knowledge of human trafficking. Raising awareness about human trafficking is a key component of our prevention program. Not only do most of our staff believe that we've done a good job of raising awareness, but they even report believing that The Freedom Story has increased their own personal knowledge. This could have a profound effect on employee morale: it helps them recognize the larger importance of the work they do and feel comfort



and confidence in their roles as experts in the field.

**RELATIONSHIPS WITH BENEFICIARIES**

The staff reported that they have strong relationships with the students.

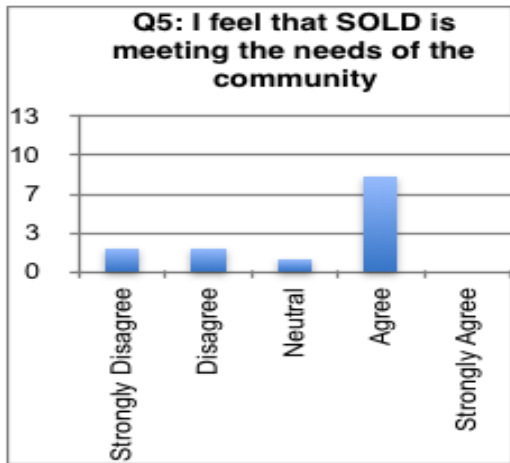
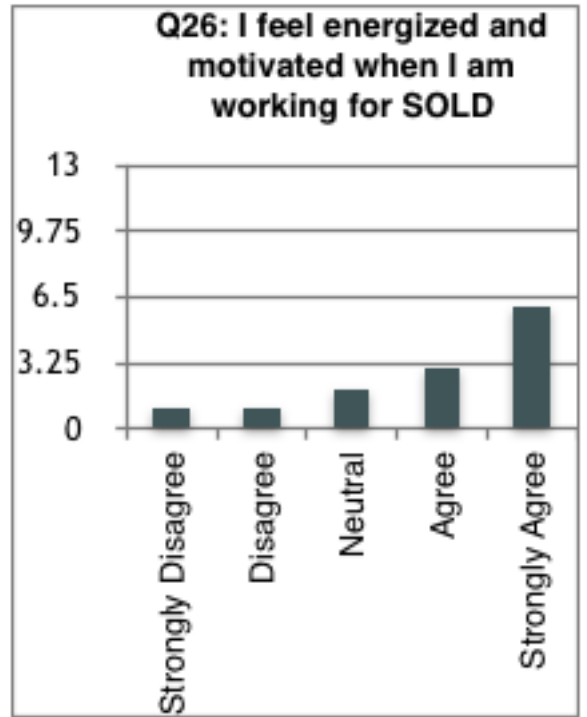
**IMPACT**

The majority of the staff reported that they believe they are making a difference in the lives of the scholarship students, and that they are hopeful about the future.

**WORK ENVIRONMENT**

All but one reported that they enjoy working for The Freedom Story, most reported that they feel safe in their work environment, and almost all of the staff reported that they believe the The Freedom Story staff works well together.

The majority of the staff reported feeling energized and motivated when working for The Freedom Story, that they feel comfortable sharing their thoughts and ideas, and that they generally have a good experience at work.



**RESEARCH**

Of additional interest, is the observation that our staff is willing to learn and improve. Overall, they believe research and reporting is important, and they expect that these surveys will reveal valuable information.

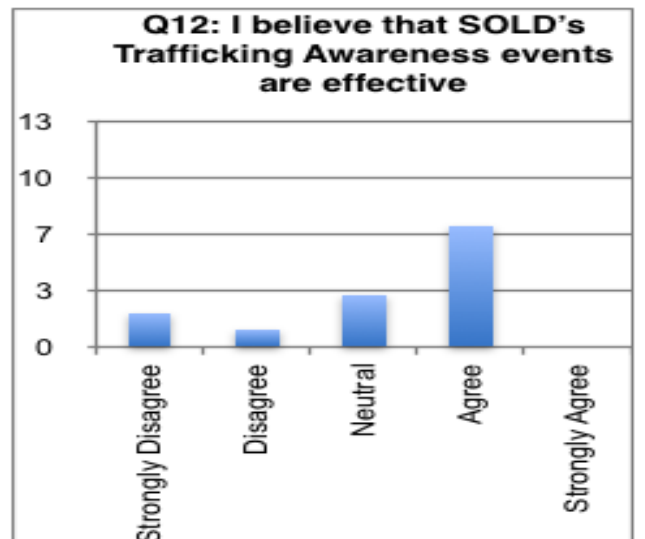
**GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES**

Any time three or fewer people reported they “strongly agree” to a positive statement, the organizational characteristic characteristic

entailed in the statement was marked as an opportunity for growth.

**COMMUNITY**

While the majority of the staff agree that we are meeting the needs of the community, there is still work to do to make sure that we continue to evolve and grow in this area, especially since no staff strongly agreed that we are meeting the needs of the community.



## DECREASING VULNERABILITIES

While a fair number of staff members agreed that The Freedom Story is succeeding in decreasing the risk of human trafficking, five were neutral or disagreed. This is a point to consider in light of The Freedom Story's mission.

Only three strongly agreed that The Freedom Story has succeeded in decreasing the scholarship students' vulnerability to human trafficking. Five agreed, while five were either neutral or disagreed.

## TRAFFICKING AWARENESS

None of the staff strongly agreed that The Freedom Story's trafficking awareness events are effective. Even though seven agreed they were, the neutral and negative answers suggest room for growth.

## RELATIONSHIPS

The response to whether or not the staff members have strong relationships with the parents or guardians showed that about half of the staff were either neutral or did not feel they had strong relationships.

## MENTORSHIP

Only three staff members strongly agreed that the mentorship program is effective and that the scholarship students benefit from it.

Three staff members also strongly agreed that the The Freedom Story mentors visit the homes of the students enough.

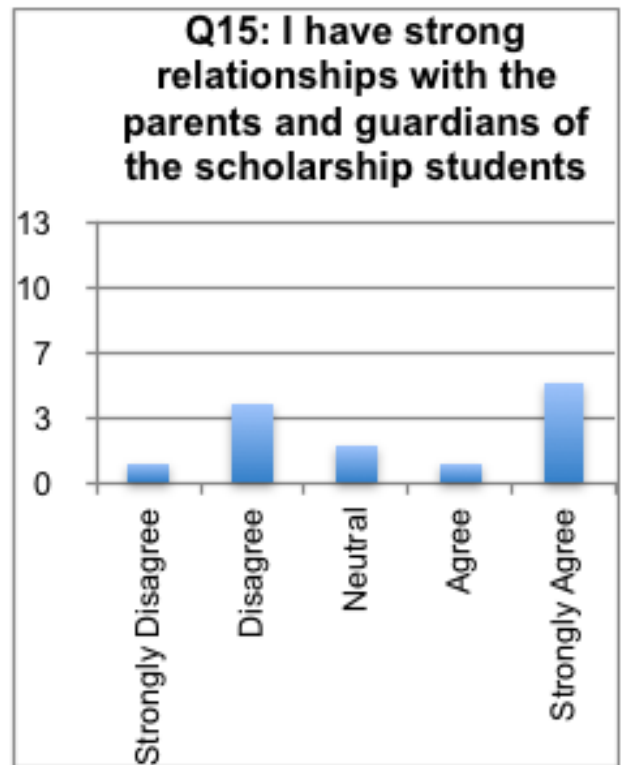
To both of the above statements, six agreed, and four were neutral or disagreed.

Six strongly agreed that The Freedom Story staff mentors should be more involved in the lives of the students, and only one strongly agreed that The Freedom Story mentors do a good job of responding to the needs of students when they are having problems.

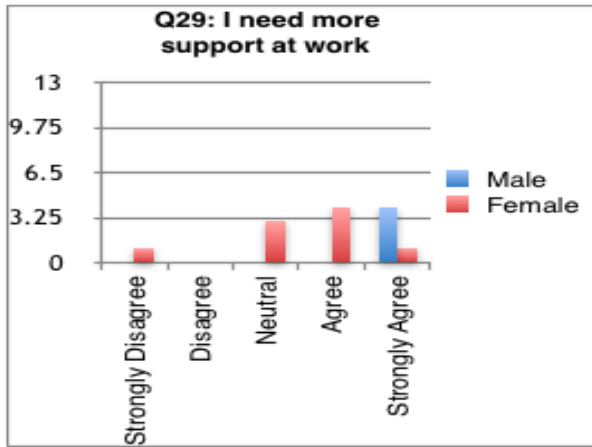
Two strongly agreed that The Freedom Story staff mentors are well prepared to respond when a scholarship students shares that they are in a difficult situation or in danger. Six agreed and three were either neutral or disagreed.

## THE FREEDOM STORY WORK ENVIRONMENT

Five strongly disagreed that they often feel tired and overworked, two disagreed, four were neutral, two agreed, and two strongly agreed. This response is somewhat neutral and would be worth revisiting in light of nine reporting that they need more support at work. When the surveys were administered, several of the staff were fairly new to The Freedom Story. It's possible that those who need more support were new and overwhelmed by the new work environment. However, having not obtained this information, it's







impossible to know for sure.

Only two strongly agreed that communication between Thai and Foreign staff members is effective and that they understand each other. Four agreed, four were neutral, one disagreed and two strongly disagreed.

### EXPANSION

Only three strongly agreed that The Freedom Story should expand. Four agreed, three were neutral, two disagreed and one strongly disagreed.

### MALE V. FEMALE RESPONSE TRENDS

While this sample may be too small for any of these to be considered “trends,” the following are the questions in which there appeared to be consistency in answers among male staff members in particular.

All of the male staff members strongly agreed that they have strong relationships with the scholarship students, and three out of four of them strongly agreed that they have strong relationships with the parents and guardians as well. Among female staff members, while three strongly agreed and one agreed, there were three out of the nine female staff members that were neutral in their response to having strong relationships with the scholarship students, and two who disagreed. As far as relationships with the parents of guardians, two female staff members strongly agreed to having strong relationships, one agreed, two were neutral, two disagreed and one strongly disagreed.

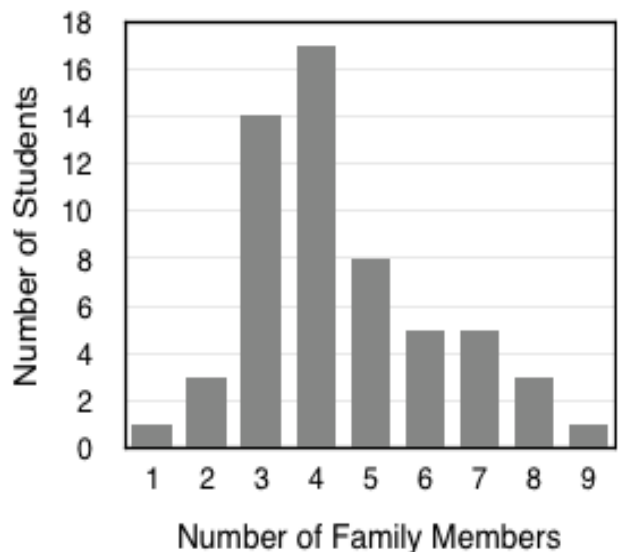
All four male staff members strongly agreed that they need more support at work. One female staff member strongly agreed, four agreed, three were neutral and one strongly disagreed.

### THINGS TO CONSIDER

Given staff responses, it would be best for The Freedom Story to conduct interviews or focus groups or both to inquire further into the perceived incongruities outlined below.

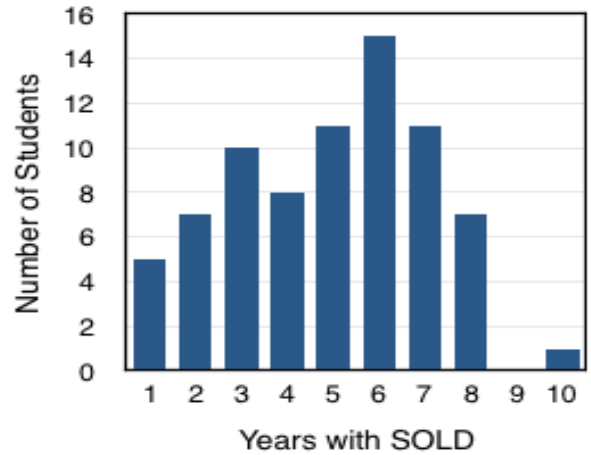
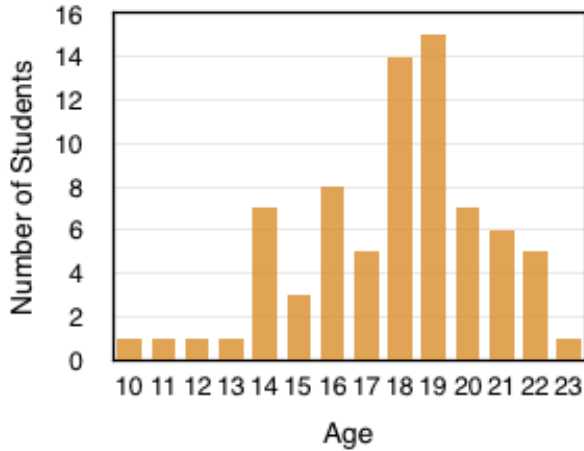
In light of the fact that most staff agree that education helps reduce the risk of children entering the sex industry (Q11), why don't most agree that The Freedom Story is decreasing the risk of human trafficking (Q10 and Q13)? It's possible that there is a general belief that The Freedom Story is helping individual students and families, but some skepticism that we can really stem the tide of the larger phenomenon of human trafficking.

Almost all staff members reported that they believe other communities can benefit from The Freedom Story (Q35), but the response to whether or not The Freedom Story should expand was less confident (Q34). It's possible that staff do not feel confident in their ability to expand, while still recognizing the need for expansion.



## SCHOLARSHIP STUDENT SURVEY FINDINGS

The student survey findings reveal that the majority of The Freedom Story’s scholars are happy to be in school, believe education is important, desire to finish their education, and are confident that they will do so. Their scholarships have made them realize they have more options and have increased their hope for their future. It’s also

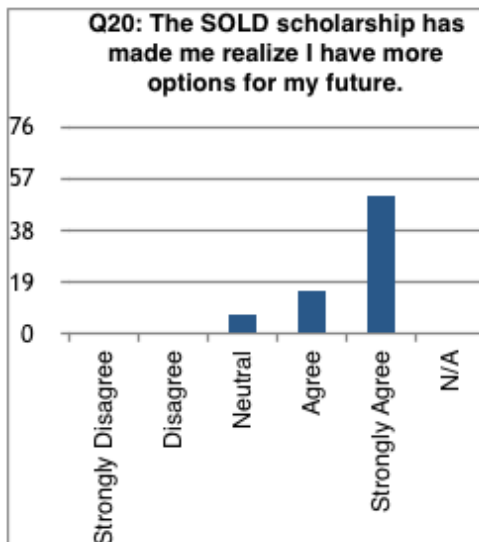
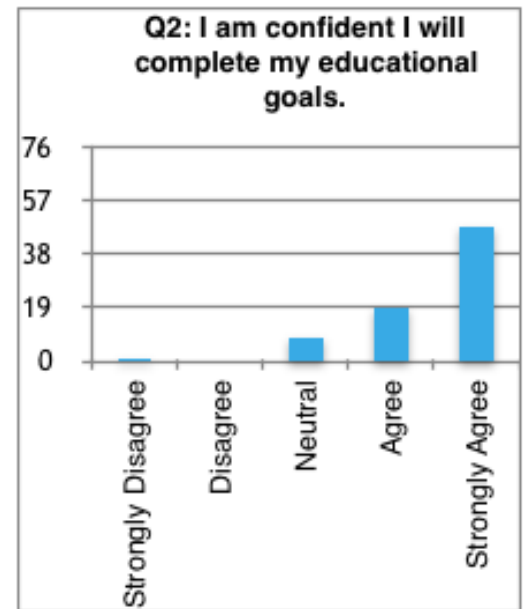


encouraging to see that our scholars feel safe visiting our resource centers and are confident that they will never be trafficked, even though most also believe that if they were not a The Freedom Story scholarship recipient they would need to work. While the above findings are encouraging, some of the findings suggest a need for improvement in certain areas: students are not happy with their grades, nor do they feel comfortable asking questions in school; many students have a hard time completing their homework, and

many feel they need more resources to be successful in school; their responses to questions about The Freedom Story’s mentorship program, while mostly positive, do suggest a need to clarify what a mentor is and possibly improve the program as a whole.

## DEMOGRAPHICS

In all, 76 students took the survey. Forty-nine students self-identified as female. Twenty-five self-identified as male, and 2 did not disclose their gender for unknown reasons but possibly because they do not believe they fit into the gender binary.

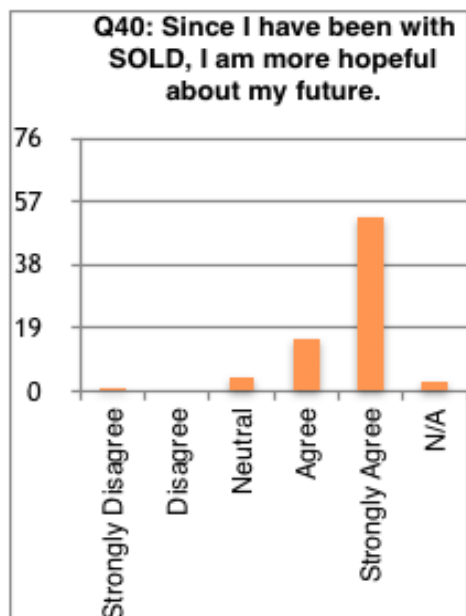


The number of family members that the students lived with varied, with the most students living with 3-4 family members, and the fewest (1 of each) living alone or with eight other family members.

Many of the students who took the surveys had been with The Freedom Story for several years.

The age range varied from 10 (1 student) to 23 (1 student), with the majority of the students between ages 14 and 22.

Grade ranges also varied. While it looks like the number of students was skewed towards completing primary education regardless of the fact that many of them were beyond the normal primary level age (12-13), after revealing the findings to The Freedom Story staff, we decided that this was not the case since we know the number of our students in primary education is less. The students appeared to misunderstand the question, likely thinking it was asking what year of high school, university, or vocational school they were in.



### STRENGTHS

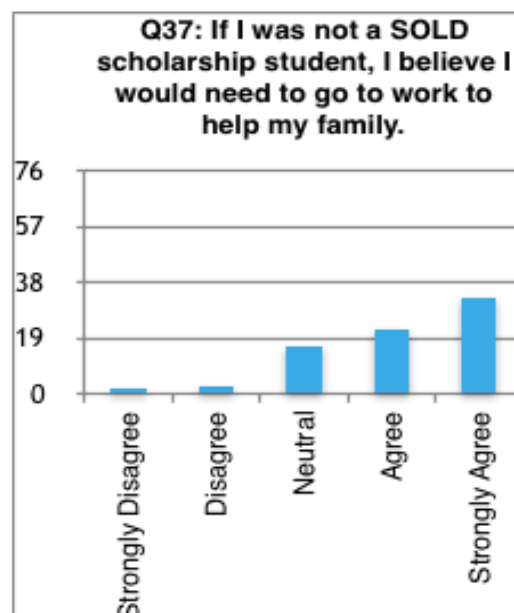
Any time more than half of the sample reported they “strongly agree” to a positive statement, the organizational characteristic entailed in the statement was marked as an organizational strength. Similarly, any time more than half of the staff “strongly disagreed” or “disagreed” with a negative statement, the organizational characteristic entailed in the statement was marked as an organizational strength.

### EDUCATION

One hundred percent of the beneficiaries in the data sample reported that they are currently

attending school.

Eighty-eight percent of the students reported that they are confident that they will complete their educational goals, and all but three expressed a desire to finish their education.



About 95 percent reported that they believe education has made their lives better. Eighty percent of the participants reported that they are happy to be in school. Most of the students reported not having issues in class, or with their classmates, and almost all reported that they believe education is important.

### OVERALL EXPERIENCE

Almost all of the students reported that the The Freedom Story scholarship has made them realize they have more options for the future.

They also reported that they have been more hopeful about the future since they have been with The Freedom Story, and that The Freedom Story has made their life better.

## RESOURCE CENTER

Most of the students stated that they feel safe visiting the Resource Center (49 strongly agree, 11 agree, 14 neutral).

## HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Most of the students strongly agreed or agreed that they will never be trafficked, and that The Freedom Story has prevented human trafficking.

Fifty-five students reported that they strongly agreed or agreed that if they were not a The Freedom Story scholarship student, they believe they would have to go to work to help their family.

Most of the students reported that they have friends or know people in their community who have had to get a job some place other than home, such as Bangkok, Chiang Mai, or Chiang Rai.

The students reported that the following situations would be considered trafficking:

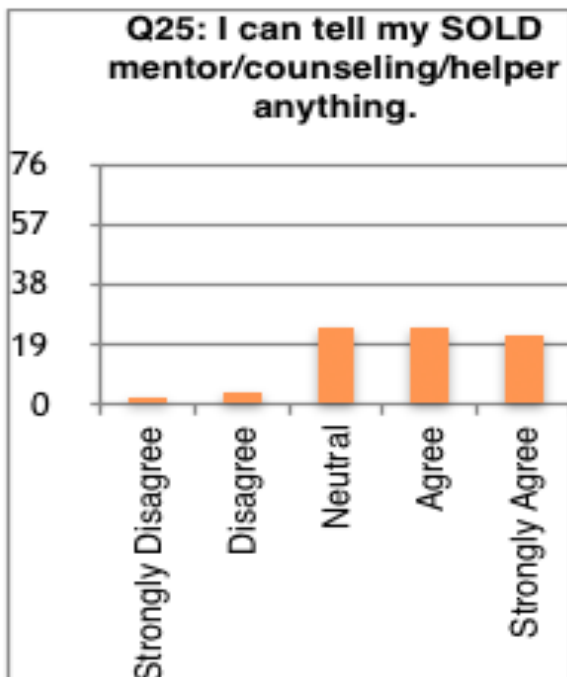
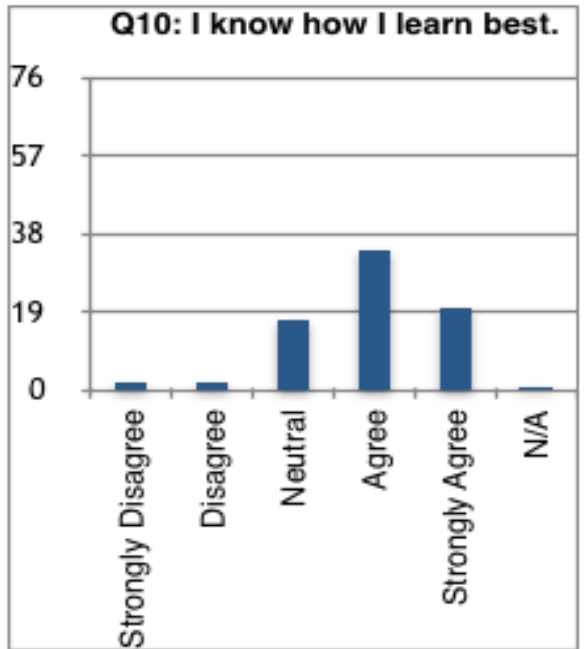
53 said [5]: both 1) a 20-year-old man was told there would be a job for him on a boat, but when he got on the boat the bosses took away his identification and refused to pay him for work AND 4) a 14-year-old girl going to work at a bar in Bangkok to bring money home for her family.

3 said [4]: a 14-year-old girl going to work at a bar in Bangkok to bring money home for her family.

1 said [3]: a Burmese family coming to Thailand illegally to look for work

1 said [2]: a Thai student going to work legally in Japan

17 said [1]: a 20-year-old man was told there would be a job for him on a boat, but when he got on the boat the bosses took away his identification and refused to pay him for work.



## GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

Any time less than half of the sample reported they “strongly agree” to a positive statement, the organizational characteristic entailed in the statement was marked as an opportunity for growth. Similarly, any time less than half of the students “strongly disagreed” with a negative statement, the organizational characteristic entailed in the statement was marked as an opportunity for growth.

## EDUCATION

Less than half of the students strongly agreed that there is someone at school that they can ask questions, or that they are comfortable asking their teachers questions. Only

16 students strongly agreed that they are happy with their grades.

Twenty of the students strongly agreed that they know their learning style, and 16 reported that they are positively challenged by their schoolwork.

Less than half strongly agreed that they have all the resources they need to do well in school. Thirty-seven students were either neutral or agreed that they have a hard time completing their homework assignments.

Twenty students gave a neutral response when asked if the The Freedom Story staff helps them do well in school.

Fifteen of the students strongly agreed that they had attended career counseling, while 27 agreed, 24 were neutral, and the rest disagreed. (Because this question was framed as more of a “yes” or “no” question, it might be worth revisiting.) Of the 42 students who agreed or strongly agreed that they have been to career counseling, assuming that they are the same students that responded to the follow up question, 29 agreed that they feel career counseling helped them.

While students seemed relatively confident that their experience in school had improved since receiving their scholarship, less responded with as much confidence that their performance had improved since receiving the scholarship.

## STAFF AND MENTORSHIP

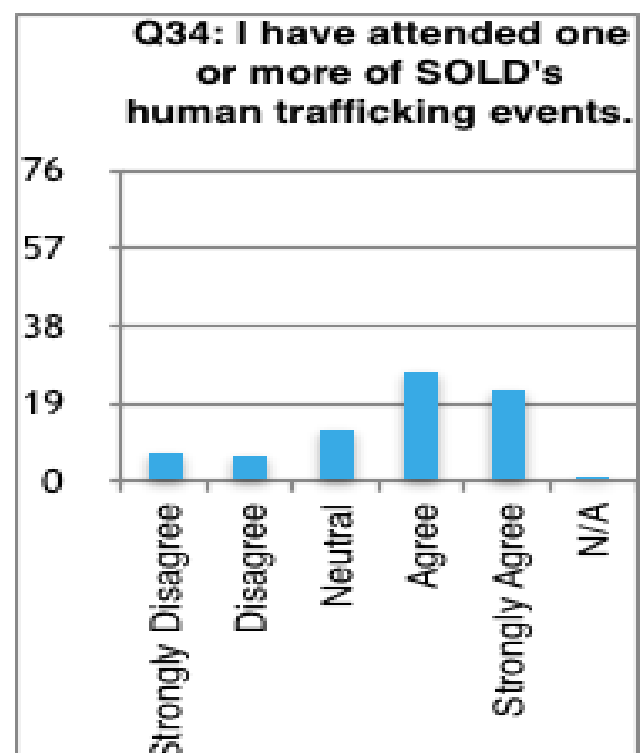
Less than half of the students strongly agreed that they are comfortable asking someone at The Freedom Story for help when they are overwhelmed by a problem.

Less than half of the students strongly agreed that the The Freedom Story staff helps them to do well in school.

While most of the students agreed or strongly agreed that they had a The Freedom Story staff member as a mentor/counselor/helper, there were 15 students that were neutral.

22 students strongly agreed and 24 agreed that the role of their The Freedom Story staff mentor is important in their life. 21 students gave a neutral response.

The responses were similar for the questions regarding whether or not the students liked their The Freedom Story mentor, whether they felt safe with their The Freedom Story mentor, whether or not they felt they could tell their The Freedom Story mentor anything, if they feel their The Freedom Story mentor helps them, and if they wished they could see their The Freedom Story mentor more.



## **RESOURCE CENTER**

While most of the students reported feeling safe visiting the Resource Center, fewer reported that they use the resources in the Resource Center.

## **HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

The majority of the students agreed that they have attended one or more of The Freedom Story's human trafficking events.

Twenty-five students strongly agreed that they are aware of human trafficking, and 28 strongly agreed that they understand what human trafficking is.

## **PERCEIVED RELATIONSHIPS**

The survey questions were reviewed to see if there were any perceived relationships between how the students responded, and any of the identification information they provided (gender, age, number of years in the program, and number of people in their household).

We discovered that maturity and the length of time students spent engaged with The Freedom Story programs have positive effects on key educational and awareness factors. Students who had been in the program for 4 or more years or are 16+ years old (or both) had a stronger positive response when asked if they felt comfortable asking someone at The Freedom Story for help when they were overwhelmed with a problem (Q7). Students who had been with The Freedom Story for longer were also more likely to know their learning styles (Q10), which shows a positive degree of self-awareness. They were also more likely to have attended our Career Counseling (Q30), English classes (Q32), and trafficking awareness programs (Q34), and were more likely to say they were aware of trafficking (Q35) and feel confident about understanding what trafficking is (Q36).

We also found that students with fewer people in their household were more confident that they have the resources and tools they need to do well in school (Q12), and that students who reported having a harder time completing their assignments were living in households of about 3 or more people, with an average of 5.8 people per household (Q15). It's possible that these trends are due to the fact that households with fewer people have more resources for each person. It's also possible that there are less distractions, a quiet space to do homework right by being considered a resource.

There appeared to be a relationship with gender as well: out of all of the answers to Q15, only one male agreed that he had a hard time completing his assignments, while the rest of the males were either neutral or disagreed. Overall, males were less inclined, proportionally, to agree that they could tell their The Freedom Story mentor anything (Q25).

There was no perceived relationship with age. However, it seems the older students (ages 21 and 22), and the youngest ones (ages 10-14) are less inclined to feel comfortable with telling their The Freedom Story mentor anything. Proportionally, more males have attended Career Counseling than females. When The Freedom Story staff was informed of this finding, they found it odd since in their experience many more girls had attended Career Counseling than boys. It's possible that the students misunderstood the question.

## **THINGS TO CONSIDER**

It's recommended that The Freedom Story conduct focus groups or follow-up interviews or both with beneficiaries to gain a more in-depth understanding of these findings and the experiences of the students. Achieving more clarity on the above findings will be valuable for The Freedom Story's ongoing assessment of our impact.

## **PARENTS/GUARDIANS SURVEY FINDINGS**

Due to logistical issues, the surveys have yet to be administered to the parents/guardians of The Freedom Story's constituents. When and if they are, the SIA will be updated to reflect these results.

## ***PHASE II DISCUSSION***

### **STAFF SURVEYS**

Based on the findings of the staff surveys, The Freedom Story has succeeded in providing a healthy and energizing work environment for its staff. The staff believes in the mission of The Freedom Story, in education, and that their work makes a difference in students and families lives. The staff appears to recognize the importance of research and reporting. As a whole, they enjoy working for The Freedom Story.

### **STUDENT SURVEYS**

Based on the findings of the surveys among The Freedom Story students, The Freedom Story has succeeded in ensuring that 100 percent of their students are in school, and the students believe that education is improving their lives. The students reported that they are more hopeful about their futures (which confirms the Hope Factor findings of Phase I), that they have more options since becoming scholarship students, and that they believe The Freedom Story is succeeding in preventing human trafficking. Fifty-five of the seventy-six participants (~72%) stated that they believe that if they were not a The Freedom Story scholarship student, they would have to go to work to help their family. Given the precarious, and often exploitative, nature of the type of work available to uneducated minors and young adults in Thailand, this is a strong indicator that The Freedom Story is succeeding in preventing human trafficking.

# CONCLUDING DISCUSSION

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### GENERAL

Areas in which The Freedom Story may be able to improve are in providing students with the help necessary to complete their assignments and improve in their school performance – especially among students that come from households with larger numbers of people in them. Making career counseling and learning style assessments more accessible, as well as clarifying what these types of trainings are, and encouraging utilization of the Resource Center could be some ways to accomplish this. While staff suggests this is not the case, if it is true that more males are attending career counseling than females, then it is essential that The Freedom Story investigate the reason why and address this disparity. The student responses to the questions about their mentorship relationships with The Freedom Story staff members presented another area for growth. Some students seemed uncertain as to whether or not they had a mentor, and as to what the impact of that relationship has been on their life. This finding is also interesting given The Freedom Story staff's somewhat ambiguous answers to the questions regarding mentorship. Given both student and staff responses, we need to investigate further the issues with our mentorship program and come up with ways to to better it. As has been noted, it is possible that answers to this question were influenced by misunderstanding or confusion about what a mentor is exactly, since there is no direct translation for this term and concept within the Thai language. The Freedom Story Thai staff should decide on key identifying language and use it consistently when referring to mentorship with each other and with students. This could help both clarify the role of mentors and student understanding. Based on the responses, there is also a need to increase student attendance at The Freedom Story human trafficking awareness events, and to strengthen the younger and newer students' understanding and awareness of what trafficking is.

### STAFF

- **Group Therapy:** It would be incredibly beneficial for The Freedom Story's staff to practice group therapy on a regular basis. Pick a consistent day and time where everyone (or as many as possible) can be involved – bi-monthly, once a month, once a quarter, etc. The less often staff meets, the longer the meetings may need to be. Dr. Anderson-Hinn has offered to provide a paper that outlines the philosophy of group therapy and offers a structure for practicing it and maintaining good progress notes. The best scenario would be finding a psychologist who understands both the context and system and can offer periodic supervision from a distance. A psychological professional is not necessary, however, because the purpose is for our staff to hold each other accountable to express emotion, ask for and accept extra support when needed, and address any transference or counter transference that is happening inadvertently. Tawee Donchai is currently in the process of looking for therapists to fill this role.

- **Integrate the team:** Make sure each member knows who does what and why and how so that they fully understand how their work fits together as a whole and how each of their roles affects the others. They don't have to be experts on each other's roles or know everything about the visioning process, but they should understand enough to be able to clearly communicate the work of the whole. (The Freedom Story's President Rachel Goble has already made attempts to address this need through staff assessments and group meetings.)



- Cultivate Institutional Relationships: Our Thai staff should work to build stronger relationships with the schools that scholarship students attend and begin brainstorming ways to implement training and professional development for teachers. This will require us to seek out and build relationships with key leaders and influential people, particularly within the Ministry of Education as well as in villages and with colleges and universities.

## **ORGANIZATION**

- Formalize curriculum: Now that The Freedom Story is several years old, there needs to be a formalized curriculum for on-site programs that measures impact and solidifies our presence as a Thai organization. The Freedom Story has a broad enough scope of experience and expertise to define each program's plan as well as measurable objectives. We may wish to consider devising variegated tracks, according to attainment, aspiration, and abilities, and provide individual plans for each student. With their own binders with space for milestone work, achievement awards, and progress notes, each student would be encouraged with a tangible reminder of their progress. This could also help The Freedom Story be more organized and effective as we help guide scholarship students in their commitment to education. Just as adults are more committed when they have to pay for something, children and adolescents are more committed when they can visualize the achievement and validation. Scholarship students have an existing system for application, acceptance, and renewal of scholarships, but The Freedom Story could do more to start tracking the experience of all students. This could prove to be a huge asset if we ever decide to create an alternative school.

- Human rights: There is a need for more deliberate discussion and language surrounding human rights education. As of now, The Freedom Story's human rights training is included within its awareness plank. While this has made sense, it obscures the human rights training that The Freedom Story does. While also clarifying the idea for students, deliberate language around our human rights work could also help The Freedom Story secure grants.

- Formalize the renewal system: Each year when a scholarship student graduates a grade level and prepares for the next (no matter where in the system they are), have them renew their commitment to The Freedom Story and The Freedom Story renew its commitment to them. Students can write (or staff can dictate) a short reflection of their experience as part of The Freedom Story that year and why they want to continue for another year. It is important to prompt a very specific response and have them write or tell a story rather than a big open-ended question. Something like: Describe a time when you felt very happy this year? Describe a time when you felt discouraged this year? There are no length or quality requirements per se. The purpose is simply to track their growth and experience. Even the non-scholarship track can have a system of renewal like this.

- Life-skills development: A greater focus on life skills development, incorporating more opportunities for learning and experience that fill in the gaps of the school-based curriculum and approach, could be essential for students' future success. The goal is to inspire learning and passion among students, as the key to empowering and sustaining the leaders of a better future.

- Transportation: Start brainstorming around options for acquiring and maintaining The Freedom Story's own transportation.

- Field Trips: Everyone asked for field trips and adventurous outings as a group.

- Technology: Students and teachers are begging for more training and resources in this area. Students get to high school and are expected to have quite a robust (for the context) knowledge of technology

and how to use it as well as be able to access and use it for their schoolwork. The students that The Freedom Story supports are often at a significant disadvantage compared to their peers from the city. Resources are scarce at the schools and in the communities that The Freedom Story serves. There are also issues with gaming addictions, but this only highlights the need to get creative about how to integrate (and protect) technology in rural schools and communities and how to foster healthy relationships with technology.

- Sports and recreation: All of the kids and youth love sports and recreation as well as dancing. The Freedom Story needs to build on this enthusiasm because sports, recreation, play, and physical activity are crucial to childhood development. These activities increase confidence and self-esteem, lift moods, and create opportunities to talk about and understand how to compete, work together as a team, set goals and work towards them.
- Children without parents: The Freedom Story needs a safe house or to develop a good relationship with one that we can trust and work with.
- Social Impact Entrepreneurship (Sustainability Project): It is incredibly important to cultivate opportunities for social impact entrepreneurship locally. This is already happening with the Sustainability Project and co-op development, but it is only the beginning. At the heart of everyone's responses in the interviews is the hope that The Freedom Story is not helping to educate children out of the villages and into the city for better jobs. Rather, they hope to see children complete the education they dream of and return to their villages to take on leadership for improving the lives of all within the community. This is the essence of social impact and true sustainability. Obviously not every student will want to return and that is okay but most students probably would want to return if they had the opportunity to thrive and to improve the way of life in their home villages. We need to continue to invest in our Sustainability Project to increase our social impact entrepreneurship through a co-operative development model.
- Tertiary education opportunities: This should start with sponsorship students. We should help those that want to access opportunities outside of Thailand and scale this approach to eventually bringing in new professional opportunities inside Thailand. The new business alliance of Southeast Asian nations is a great place to start finding ways to connect.
- Last but certainly not least, invest more in teachers and parents: The level of influence they have on students is significant enough to make it worth the challenge.

## **LONGITUDINAL STUDY**

The Freedom Story should consider beginning a longitudinal study on our efforts. This will not only provide a better understanding and assessment of our work, but much needed data for others committed to fighting human trafficking in general and those working in prevention in particular.

Each one of The Freedom Story's programs should be run through a Logic Model in order to clarify goals, how impact will be measured, and how each goal contributed to the larger goal of preventing child trafficking and exploitation. While we are already in the beginning phases of this, it is important that we continue to develop outcomes based assessments for our programs.

Next, The Freedom Story should begin tracking student progress through programs in comparison to national data that reflects non-scholarship students from the same regions. We should track such data as (a) scores on testing, (b) resiliency throughout the program and its relationship to risk factors, (c) graduation rates from each level of education, (d) failure to comply or complete education with a

scholarship and its relationship to risk factors, etc.

One way to do this is through the annual replication of the application process for continuing students. New and continuing students should also take a simple survey each year. The survey can be similar to that used for this SIA. This data will be especially helpful for understanding common experiences among students that thrive in the program and common experiences among students who struggle even with a scholarship. It will also help us assess where students are each year, help us more clearly articulate our impact to investors, and give students opportunities to further enhance their abilities to think critically and express themselves. The survey can be expansive and cover the various programs that we would like to collect data on. One example would be asking a certain number of questions about human rights to track student awareness through the programs. While annual surveys would be sufficient, it would be best to move to bi-annual or even quarterly surveys as this would allow us to fine tune each survey to gather the data we need.

Tracking student integration with society after their highest education level achieved while a scholarship student, whether it is vocational school, university, or graduate school, is also necessary. We should track the number of graduates and correlate that with their time in the program, the risk factors they overcame, whether they successfully remain free of exploitation and sustainably thrive as members of society, and whether they participate in sharing their experience with others (younger than them) in the same position that they started from. This could be done through surveys, but it would be best to conduct annual interviews for up to five years.

It is also very important that we begin to track the Sustainability Project's programs – understanding what works, what doesn't, how to make the programs more effective, sustainable, and replicable for other communities. This will help us assess other entrepreneurial endeavors as well. It will be particularly important for us to look at the relationship between our Sustainability Project's programs and our graduating students that want to return to their home villages without sacrificing any of what they have worked so hard for but rather leading the community towards sustainable change.

# BIBLIOGRAPHIC RESOURCES

1. Agustín, Laura. "Sex and the Limits of Enlightenment: The Irrationality of Legal Regimes to Control Prostitution." *Sexuality Research & Social Policy* 5, no. 4 (2008). [http://www2.law.columbia.edu/faculty\\_franke/FTW2009/Agustin%20Sex%20and%20the%20Limits%20of%20Enlightenment.pdf](http://www2.law.columbia.edu/faculty_franke/FTW2009/Agustin%20Sex%20and%20the%20Limits%20of%20Enlightenment.pdf) (accessed December 15, 2015).
2. Bales, Kevin. *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004.
3. Bernstein, Elizabeth. "What's Wrong with Prostitution? What's Right with Sex Work? Comparing Markets in Female Sexual Labor," *10 Hastings Women's L. R.* 91 (1999).
4. Blake, Chris, and Suttinee Yuvejwattana. "Thai's Junta Prayuth Says Reforms Must Come Before Democracy," *Bloomberg Business*, December 22, 2015.
5. Carter, Vednita., and Evelina Giobbe, "Duet: Prostitution, Racism and Feminist Discourse." *San Francisco: Hastings Women's L. R.* 37 (1999). <http://repository.uchastings.edu/hwlj/vol10/iss1/4> (accessed March 2, 2016).
6. Chambers, Paul. "Economic Guidance and Contestation: An Analysis of Thailand's Evolving Trajectory of Development" *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 32, no. 1 (2013): 81–109, <http://journals.sub.uni-hamburg.de/giga/jsaa/article/view/641/639> (accessed February 20, 2016).
7. Cho, Sea-Young., Axel Dreher, and Eric Neumayer, "Does Legalized Prostitution Increase Human Trafficking," *World Development* 41 (2013): 67 - 82.
8. Chuang, Janie A. "The Challenges and Perils of Reframing Trafficking as 'Modern-Day Slavery.'" *Anti-Trafficking Review* 5 (2015), <http://www.antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atrjournal/article/view/138>. (accessed January 22, 2016).
9. Davidson, Julia O. and Jacqueline S. Taylor. "Child Prostitution and Sex Tourism: Thailand." Leicester: ECPAT, 1994, [http://www.childtrafficking.com/Docs/o\\_connell\\_1996\\_child\\_prost6.pdf](http://www.childtrafficking.com/Docs/o_connell_1996_child_prost6.pdf) (accessed December 15, 2015).
10. David, Fiona. "When it Comes to Modern Slavery, do Definitions Matter?" *Anti-Trafficking Review* 5 (2015), <http://www.antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atrjournal/article/view/139/150> (accessed February 14, 2016).
11. Davis, Jarret., Elliot Glotfelty, and Glen Miles. "Boys for Baht? A Baseline Study on the Vulnerability of Male Entertainment Workers in Chiang Mai, Thailand." Phnom Penh: Love 146, 2013.
12. Doezema, Jo. "Now You See Her, Now You Don't: Sex Workers at the UN Trafficking Protocol Negotiation." *Social and Legal Studies* 14, no. 1 (2005): 62 - 89.
13. Dworkin, Andrea, "Prostitution and Male Supremacy." In *Life and Death*. New York: Free Press, 1997.
14. ECPAT Report. "Protection of children against sexual exploitation in tourism." ECPAT, 2013.
15. Farley, Melissa, Ann Cotton, Jacqueline Lynne, Sybille Zumbeck, Frida Spiwak, Maria E. Reyes, Dinorah Alvarez, and Ufuk Sezgin. "Prostitution and Trafficking in 9 Countries: Update on Violence and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder." *Journal of Trauma Practice* 2, 3/4 (2003): 33-74.
16. Feingold, David A. "Human Trafficking: Think Again." *Foreign Policy*, October 20, 2009 <http://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/20/think-again-human-trafficking/> (accessed March 24, 2016).
17. Goldman, Emma. "The Traffic in Women." in *Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings*, edited by Miriam Schneir. New York: Vintage Books, 1997.
18. Hart Research Associates and Civic Enterprises, "The Mentoring Effect: Young People's Perspectives on the Outcomes and Availability of Mentoring." (accessed January 15, 2014).
19. Harvey, James., Priscilla Schafer, and Joshua Beer, "Listening to the Demand: A Study of Men who Buy Sex from Male Prostitutes in Cambodia." Phnom Penh: Love 146, 2015.

20. Herman, Judith, "Introduction: Hidden in Plain Sight: Clinical Observations on Prostitution." In *Prostitution, Trafficking, and Traumatic Stress*. Edited by Melissa Farley. New York: Routledge, 2003.
21. Herrera, Carla., Jean B. Grossman, Tina J. Kauh, Amy F. Feldman, and Jennifer McMaken with Linda Z. Jucovy. "Making a Difference in Schools: The Big Brothers Big Sisters School-Based Mentoring Impact Study." Philadelphia: Public/Private Ventures, 2007. <https://www.bigsister.org/bigsister/file/Making%20a%20Difference%20in%20Schools.pdf> (accessed August 25, 2015).
22. Jones, Loring., David Engstrom, Patricia Hilliard, and Decha Sungakawan. «Human trafficking between Thailand and Japan: lessons in recruitment, transit and control.» *International Journal Of Social Welfare* 20, no. 2 (2011): 203-211.
23. Jeffery, Leslie Ann. *Sex and Borders: Gender, National Identity, and Prostitution Policy in Thailand*. Chiang Rai: Silkworm Books, 2003.
24. Kelly, Annie. "US human trafficking report under fire as Cuba and Malaysia are upgraded." *The Guardian*, July 27, 2015, Global section (January 5, 2016), <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/jul/27/us-human-trafficking-in-persons-report-under-fire-cuba-malaysia-upgraded>.
25. Kislenko, Arne. "A Not So Silent Partner: Thailand's Role in Covert Operations, Counter-Insurgency, and the Wars in Indochina." *Journal of Conflict Studies* 24.1 (accessed February 29, 2016), <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/jcs/article/view/292/465#a3>.
26. Larry Bartels, "Economic Inequality and Political Representation." Princeton: Department of Politics and Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs, Princeton University (2005), <https://www.princeton.edu/~bartels/economic.pdf> (accessed March 21, 2016).
27. Lee, Maggy. *Human Trafficking*. London: Willan Publishing, 2007.
28. Leheny, David. "The Political Economy of Asian Sex Tourism." *Annals of Tourism Research* 22, no. 2 (1995): 367 -384, [http://www.climateaudit.info/data/mask/TREN/tourism%20cd/Annals\\_Tour\\_Res\\_1995\\_367.pdf](http://www.climateaudit.info/data/mask/TREN/tourism%20cd/Annals_Tour_Res_1995_367.pdf) (accessed March 11, 2016).
29. Lim, Lin L. ed. *The Sex Sector: The economic and social bases of prostitution in Southeast Asia*. Geneva: International Labour Office, 1998.
30. Meltzer, Milton. *Slavery: A World History. Update Edition*. New York: De Capa Press, 1993.
31. McDowell, Robin, and Margie Mason. "AP investigation prompts emergency rescue of 300 plus slaves," Associated Press, April 3, 2015, The Big Story section, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/197048ef871f4b56b4a129d0e3c0f129/fishermen-rush-be-6d5854/ap-investigation-slavery-taints-global-supply-seafood> (accessed March 11, 2015).
32. Mounier, Alain and Phasina Tangchuang eds. *Education and Knowledge in Thailand: The Quality Controversy*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Press, 2010.
33. Weitzer, Ronald. "New Directions in Research on Human Trafficking," *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 653, no. 1 (2014).
34. McDowell, Robin., Margie Mason, and Martha Mendoza. "AP Investigation: Slavery taints global supply of seafood." Associated Press, March 25, 2015, The Big Story section, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/98053222a73e4b5dab9fb81a116d5854/ap-investigation-slavery-taints-global-supply-seafood> (accessed March, 20 2016).
35. McMahan, Robert L. "What Difference Did it Make? Assessing the Vietnam War's Impact on Southeast Asia." In *International Perspectives on Vietnam*, edited by Lloyd C. Gardner and Ted Gittinger. College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000.
36. Michael Pirsch, "More Dishonesty About Thailand's Upheaval From the International New York Times" *Truthout Op-Ed*, Sunday, 15 December 2013. <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/20601-more-dishonesty-about-thailands-upheaval-from-the-international-new-york-times> (accessed March 1, 2016).
37. Moottatarn, Manassinee. "Book Review." Review of *Human Trafficking in Thailand: Current Issues, Trends and the Role of the Thai Government*, by Siroj Sorajjakool. *Journal Of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 33, no. 2 (2014): 139-144, [journals.sub](http://journals.sub).

[uni-hamburg.de/giga/jsaa/article/view/779/777](http://uni-hamburg.de/giga/jsaa/article/view/779/777) (accessed March 4, 2016).

38. Moran, Rachel. "Buying Sex Should not be Legal." *The New York Times*, The Opinion Pages, August 28th, 2015.
39. National Human Trafficking Resource Center, "Human Trafficking and Runaway and Homeless Youth" (February, 2012), [www.traffickingresourcecenter.org/resources/human-trafficking-and-runaway-and-homeless-youth](http://www.traffickingresourcecenter.org/resources/human-trafficking-and-runaway-and-homeless-youth) (accessed August 26, 2015).
40. National Human Trafficking Resource Center, "The Victims." National Human Trafficking Resource Center, [www.traffickingresourcecenter.org/what-human-trafficking/human-trafficking/victims](http://www.traffickingresourcecenter.org/what-human-trafficking/human-trafficking/victims) (accessed August 26, 2015).
41. Pieper, Nicola., Marie Segrave, and Rebecca N. Moore. "Editorial: Whats in a Name? Distinguishing forced labour, trafficking and slavery." *Anti-Trafficking Review* 5, (2015): 1–9. <http://www.antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atjournal/article/view/133/125> (accessed March 2, 2016).
42. Solt, Frederick. "Economic Inequality and Democratic Political Engagement." *American Journal of Political Science* 52, is. 1 (2008): 48–60, [http://www.kean.edu/~jkeil/Welcome\\_files/Inequality\\_and\\_Political\\_Engagement.pdf](http://www.kean.edu/~jkeil/Welcome_files/Inequality_and_Political_Engagement.pdf) (accessed March 16, 2016).
43. Sorajjakool, Siroj. *Human Trafficking in Thailand: Current Issues, Trends, and the Roll of the Thai Government*. Chiang Rai: Silkworm Books, 2013.
44. Spectro, Jessica. *Prostitution and Pornography: Philosophical Debate about the Sex Industry* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006).
45. Steinman, Kathy J. "Sex Tourism and the Child: Latin America's and the United States' Failure to Prosecute Sex Tourists," *13 Hastings Women's L. R.* 53 (2002). <http://repository.uchastings.edu/hwlj/vol13/iss1/6> (Accessed March 29, 2016).
46. Suntiku, Wattanee. "Thai Tourism and the Legacy of the Vietnam War." In *Tourism and War*, edited by Richard Butler and Wattanee Suntiku. New York: Routledge Press, 2013.
47. Thailand Department of Tourism. "International Tourist Arrivals to Thailand in 2014." <http://www.tourism.go.th/home/details/11/221/24331> (accessed December 14, 2015).
48. The International Labor Organization. "The Global Slavery Index 2013." [http://www.ungift.org/doc/knowledgehub/resource-centre/2013/GlobalSlaveryIndex\\_2013\\_Download\\_WEB1.pdf](http://www.ungift.org/doc/knowledgehub/resource-centre/2013/GlobalSlaveryIndex_2013_Download_WEB1.pdf) (accessed March 8, 2016).
49. The Center for Economic and Social Justice, "The 'Panama Papers': When Tax Abuse is Human Rights Abuse," accessed on April 10, 2016 at <http://www.cesr.org/article.php?id=1834> (Accessed April 10, 2016).
50. The World Travel and Tourism Counsel. "Travel and Tourism Economic Impact 2015: Thailand."
51. Thompson, Bonita. "Sexual Exploitation in Thailand." Lecture, The Freedom Story Activist Vision Trip, Bangkok, January 8, 2015.
52. Thorrbecke, Eric., and Chutatong Charumilindi. "Economic Inequality and Its Socioeconomic Impact," *World Development* 30, no. 9 (2002): 1477–1495.
53. United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime. "United Nations Convention Against Transnational Crime and the Protocols Thereto." New York: United Nations (2004): 41–52, <http://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNTOC/Publications/TOC%20Convention/TOCebook-e.pdf> (accessed December 2, 2015).
54. United Nations. "United Nations Data Poll." <http://data.un.org/DocumentData.aspx?id=372> (accessed December 14, 2015).
55. U.S. State Department. "Trafficking in Persons Report 2015." U.S. State Department. <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/243562.pdf> (accessed December 1, 2015).

# CONTACT INFORMATION

## **OUTSIDE RESEARCHERS**

Dr. Anderson-Hinn (PhD)  
mamamia415@gmail.com

Athalie Waugh (MA)  
Athaliewaugh@gmail.com

## **THE FREEDOM STORY RESEARCH TEAM**

Dr. Jade Keller (PhD)  
Chiang Mai, Thailand  
jade.keller@thesoldproject.com

Dan Olson (MA, MA)  
Oakland, California  
Dan.olson@thesoldproject.com

## **THE FREEDOM STORY**

337 17th Street, Suite 102  
Oakland, Ca. 94612  
925.452.7653  
www.thesoldproject.com

# ENDNOTES

- 1** R. K. Yin, *Case study research: Design and methods*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, 2009), 106.
- 2** Siroj Sorajjakool, *Human Trafficking in Thailand: Current Issues, Trends, and the Roll of the Thai Government* (Silkworm Books: Chiang Mai, 2013), 5.
- 3** In a 1910 essay, “Traffic in Women,” the anarchist-feminist Emma Goldman not only highlights the white-slave trafficking epidemic, revealing that trafficking, understood as prostitution, has been around for some time, but highlights the hypocrisy inherent in its alarm. Linking the exploitation of prostituted women with the exploitation of women in general, Goldman offered a radical critique of patriarchal society. See Emma Goldman, “The Traffic in Women,” in *Feminism: The Essential Historical Writings*, edited by Miriam Schneir (New York: Vintage Books), 310.
- 4** Janie A. Chuang, “The Challenges and Perils of Reframing Trafficking as “Modern-Day Slavery””, *Anti-Trafficking Review*, issue 5, 2015, pp. 146–149, accessed on 2 March 2015 at <http://www.antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atrjournal/article/view/138>.
- 5** *Ibid.*
- 6** Maggy Lee, *Human Trafficking* (London: Willan Publishing: 2007).
- 7** Perhaps the most radical critic of the movement to end human trafficking is Dr. Laura Agustín, author of *Sex at the Margins: Migration, Labour Markets and the Rescue Industry*. While Dr. Agustín’s critiques appear extreme at times — and are dependent upon problematic, and possibly even incoherent, notions of the self, volition, autonomy, and freedom — her work offers a valuable corrective to a movement often quick to rush to do good, while slow to take the time to listen to what those they are trying to help are saying, let alone realign their strategies in light of these voices. In addition, her methodological intentions are in the right place. “My interest,” she writes, “in this field began in 1994 with questions about just this disarray. I wanted to know, from a stand-point in Latin America, why there was no social betterment for women who The Freedom Story sex and why there was such conflict about them and their migrations to work in the First World. For me, it seemed rational to look for solutions by listening to what these subjects said they wanted and needed. Why were their own ideas excluded from debates? Eventually, I understood that the governmental impulse is to blame.” See, Laura Agustín, “Sex and the Limits of Enlightenment: The Irrationality of Legal Regimes to Control Prostitution,” in *Sexuality Research & Social Policy* 5, no. 4 (2008), at [http://www2.law.columbia.edu/faculty\\_franke/FTW2009/Agustin%20Sex%20and%20the%20Limits%20of%20Enlightenment.pdf](http://www2.law.columbia.edu/faculty_franke/FTW2009/Agustin%20Sex%20and%20the%20Limits%20of%20Enlightenment.pdf). See also, Dr. Agustín’s blog, *The Naked Anthropologist*, at <http://www.lauraagustin.com>.
- 8** Fiona David, “When it Comes to Modern Slavery, do Definitions Matter?”, *Anti-Trafficking Review* 5 (2015): 150–152, <http://www.antitraffickingreview.org/index.php/atrjournal/article/view/139/150>
- 9** Robin McDowell and Margie Mason, “AP investigation prompts emergency rescue of 300 plus slaves,” accessed on 11 March 2015 at <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/197048ef871f4b56b4a129d0e3c0f129/fishermen-rush-be->.
- 10** *Ibid.*, 151.
- 11** The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, “United Nations Convention Against Transnational Crim and the Protocols Thereto,” New York: United Nations (2004): 42, <http://www.unodc.org/documents/treaties/UNTOC/Publications/TOC%20Convention/TOCebook-e.pdf>.
- 12** *Ibid.*, 43.
- 13** Political scientist and human-trafficking expert Ronald Weitzer points out some of the problems with the protocol’s definition: “The 2000 UN convention, known as the Palermo protocol, is both broader and more opaque: trafficking includes ‘the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability, or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another



person, for the purpose of exploitation.’ It defines ‘exploitation’ tautologically as ‘exploitation’ and fails to define ‘abuse of power,’ ‘vulnerability,’ and ‘control.’ Empirical studies show just how difficult it is to apply the Palermo definition in practice and document cases where the distinction between smuggling and trafficking is blurred—e.g., where smuggling involves vulnerability and exploitation but not deception or coercion.” See, Ronald Weitzer, “New Directions in Research on Human Trafficking,” *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 653, no. 1 (2014): 8.

**14** In her critical appraisal of the Palermo Protocol, Jo Doezema states that the “myth” of trafficking, which includes the protocol signed onto at Palermo, is powerful, “because it can, and does, accommodate and provide a powerful vehicle for the advancement of varied and even opposing ideologies, including opposing feminist ideologies.” See, Jo Doezema, “Now You See Her, Now You Don’t: Sex Workers at the UN Trafficking Protocol Negotiation,” *Social and Legal Studies* 14, no. 1 (2005): 66.

**15** US Department of State, 2013

**16** An apparent ambiguity remains around pornography. Considering the TVPRA’s definition, it seems that anyone making use of someone under the age of 25 in pornographic photos or videos that include some sort of sex act should be able to be prosecuted.

**17** In 2015, both Cuba and Malaysia were upgraded from tier 3 to tier 2WL. While a tier 3 status calls for restrictions on trade, including possible sanctions and restrictions of access to the World Bank and US aid, a tier 2WL status does not. Critics point out that Cuba’s 12 years in coming upgrade comes with the opening of a US embassy in Havana and the reinstatement of diplomatic relations between the two nations, suggesting political expediency. Likewise, Malaysia’s upgrade, even less justifiable, comes at a time when US President Barack Obama was desperately trying to fast-track the Trans-Pacific-Partnership, an international trade deal in which Malaysia is crucial. A tier 3 rating would exclude Malaysia from participating in the trade deal, while a tier 2WL will not. See, Annie Kelly, “US human trafficking report under fire as Cuba and Malaysia are upgraded,” *The Guardian*, July 27, 2015, Global section, (January 5, 2016), <http://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/jul/27/us-human-trafficking-in-persons-report-under-fire-cuba-malaysia-upgraded>.

**18** “International humanitarian agencies see the threat of U.S. sanctions against foreign governments as largely counterproductive.” David A. Feingold says. “Practically speaking, sanctions will likely be applied only against countries already subject to sanctions, such as Burma or North Korea. Threatening moderately unresponsive countries — such as China, Nigeria, or Saudi Arabia — would likely backfire, causing these countries to become less open to dialogue and limiting the flow of information necessary for effective cooperation. Although some countries certainly lack candor and create false fronts of activity, others actively seek Uncle Sam’s seal of approval (and the resources that often follow) with genuine efforts to combat trafficking. Bangladesh, for example, received higher marks from the State Department this year by taking significant steps against trafficking, despite the country’s poverty and limited resources. Incentives, instead of sanctions, might encourage others to do the same.” See, David A. Feingold, “Human Trafficking: Think Again,” *Foreign Policy*, October 20, 2009 (March 24, 2016), <http://foreignpolicy.com/2009/10/20/think-again-human-trafficking/>.

**19** Siroj Sorajjakool, *Human Trafficking in Thailand*, .

**20** The Associated Press broke a story last March highlighting massive trafficking and corruption in Thailand. See, Robin McDowell, Margie Mason and Martha Mendoza, “AP Investigation: Slavery taints global supply of seafood.” *Associated Press*, March 24, 2015, Big Story section, <http://bigstory.ap.org/article/98053222a73e4b5dab9fb81a116d5854/ap-investigation-slavery-taints-global-supply-seafood>

**21** “Media sources in 2013 reported that corrupt Thai civilian and military officials profited from selling Rohingya asylum seekers from Burma and Bangladesh into forced labor on fishing vessels. Some Thai police removed Rohingya men from detention facilities in Thailand and The Freedom Story them to brokers that transported them to southern Thailand; some were forced to work as cooks and guards in camps or The Freedom Story into forced labor on farms or in shipping companies. Credible reports indicate some corrupt officials protect brothels and other commercial sex venues from raids and inspections; collude with traffickers; use information from victim interviews to weaken cases; and engage

in commercial sex acts with child trafficking victims.” See, The Department of State’s 2015 TIP Report, accessed on 1 December 2015 at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/243562.pdf>

**22** See, “Revealed, Thailand’s most senior human trafficking investigator to seek political asylum in Australia,” *The Guardian*, 9 December 2015. Accessed on 5 January 2016 at [http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/10/thailands-most-senior-human-trafficking-investigator-to-seek-political-asylum-in-australia?CMP=share\\_btn\\_fb](http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/dec/10/thailands-most-senior-human-trafficking-investigator-to-seek-political-asylum-in-australia?CMP=share_btn_fb).

**23** See, Chris Blake and Suttinee Yuvejwattana, “Thai’s Junta Prayuth Says Reforms Must Come Before Democracy,” *Bloomberg Business*, 22 December 2015. Accessed on 5 January 2015 at <http://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2015-12-23/thai-junta-s-prayuth-says-reforms-must-come-before-democracy?cmpid=yhoo.headline>.

**24** As in almost every society that has ever existed, unfortunately, a complex social hierarchy exists in Thailand. Within this hierarchy, migrant workers, the undocumented, and hill tribe peoples are seen as having less worth than middle and upper class Thais. As Manassinee Moottatarn says, “Many middle- and upper-class Thais look down on migrant workers and workers in the informal sector of all types, despite benefitting from their labour and services.” See, Manassinee Moottatarn, “Book Review,” review of *Human Trafficking in Thailand: Current Issues, Trends and the Role of the Thai Government*, by Siroj Sorajjakool, *Journal Of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 33, no. 2 (2014): 141, [journals.sub.uni-hamburg.de/giga/jsaa/article/view/779/777](http://journals.sub.uni-hamburg.de/giga/jsaa/article/view/779/777). In addition, as alluded to above and connected to these biases, certain Thai government policies — such as binding foreign employees’ immigration status to their Thai employers — contribute to higher levels of vulnerability for these undocumented peoples. Corrupt and poorly regulated labor agencies also capitalize on these vulnerabilities, often charging workers exorbitant fees for work and work permits, leading to massive debt. While 900 hill tribe members received their citizenship in 2015, many hill tribe members still lack this. Lacking citizenship and proper documentation and thus having ambiguous or illegal immigration status, these people groups are more vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation.

**25** There is an ideological divide between researchers, academics, and activists when it comes to prostitution and sex work. While the divide is nuanced, it can be meaningfully, even if reductively, understood as between those who think sex work can be a legitimate form of labor and those who think it is inherently degrading and a violation of sex workers’ human rights. From those who enter into the conversation from an egalitarian, feminist perspective (i.e. those who agree that women are and should be treated as intellectual and social equals to men) that seeks to empower marginalized sex workers, there are compelling arguments on both sides. For a representative overview of feminist perspectives on sex work and prostitution, see Elizabeth Bernstein, “What’s Wrong with Prostitution? What’s Right with Sex Work? Comparing Markets in Female Sexual Labor,” *10 Hastings Women’s L. R.* 91 (1999). While one way to note this ideological divide is between those who use the term sex work and those who use the term prostitution, the choice of the term sex work within this literature review is not meant to stake out a position on this terrain. Rather, sex work was chosen for different, though specific, reasons. First, it is both broader and clearer than prostitution. It is broader in the sense that it encompasses acts that do not entail traditional intercourse, anal, or oral sex, traditionally thought of as the prostitutes’ services. Sex work is clearer insofar as it suggests the varied forms the commercial sex trade takes, rather than reifying these as prostitution. While prostitution is spoken of as the oldest profession, it is still unclear what this profession is. That is, the type of work, remuneration, safety standards, social standing, agency, and social meaning of a temple priestess in ancient Mesopotamia whose religious service included sex with worshippers, a college educated and well paid call girl on the upper East Side of Manhattan, a transgendered male prostitute in San Francisco, a fifteen-year-old, female heroin addict in DC, and a heterosexual, fourteen-year-old boy servicing male tourists at a karaoke bar in Chiang Mai to pay for his younger siblings’ education are so varied that using the word prostitute to cover each obscures rather than clarifies. Second, prostitution implies that someone is willingly trading sex for money, which, when it comes to commercially sexually exploited children or others stuck in sexual slavery of one form or another, is not the case. Third, sex work is often the word chosen by those who work in this industry.

While sex work is used, for the most part, throughout this literature review, this is not meant to suggest that selling sexual services is as benign as selling other forms of physical labor. The voices of those like Rachel Moran are kept at the forefront of our attention, “I cringe when I hear the words ‘sex work.’ Selling my body wasn’t a livelihood. There was no resemblance to ordinary employment in the ritual degradation of strangers’ using my body to satiate their urges. I was doubly exploited — by those who pimped me and those who bought me.” (See Rachel Moran, “Buying Sex Should not be Legal,” *The New York Times*, The Opinion Pages, August 28th, 2015.) As the previous examples should make clear, refusing to refer to all sex work as prostitution does not negate the violence and exploitation that many, if not all, sex workers experience.

**26** “The majority of young Thai girls currently found in traditional prostitution (in bars, massage parlours, brothels et cetera) originate from Northern Thailand and are pushed to provide sex services by the need to help their family survive.” See, ECPAT Report, “Protection of children against sexual exploitation in tourism,” A project funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, (2013). Accessed on September 9th, 2015 at <http://www.defenceforchildren.nl/images/13/2817.pdf>

**27** Kevin Bales, *Disposable People: New Slavery in the Global Economy* (University of California Press; Berkeley, Ca. 2004), 97.

**28** David Leheny, “The Political Economy of Asian Sex Tourism,” *Annals of Tourism Research* (Vol. 22, No. 2, 367 -384, 1995), 373.

**29** Lin Lean Lim, ed., *The Sex Sector: The economic and social bases of prostitution in Southeast Asia* (Geneva, International Labor Office), 8.

**30** Kevin Bales, *Disposable People*, 43.

**31** ECPAT Report, “Protection of children against sexual exploitation in tourism,” A project funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, (2013). Accessed on September 9th, 2015 at <http://www.defenceforchildren.nl/images/13/2817.pdf>

**32** Kevin Bales, *Disposable People*, 43.

**33** Siroji Sorajjakool, *Human Trafficking in Thailand: Current Issues, Trends, and the Role of the Thai Government* (Silkworm Books: Chiang Mai, 2013) pg. 3

**34** Margeret Maurer-Fazio, Ngan Dinh, Conor Hughes, and James Hughes, “Human Trafficking in Southeast Asia: Results from a Pilot Project in Vietnam,” *The Institute for the Study of Labor Discussion Paper No. 8686* (Bonn, Germany, 2014), 6.

**35** Sorajjakool, Siroj. *Human Trafficking in Thailand*, 93.

**36** *Ibid.*

**37** Jeffery, Leslie Ann, *Sex and Borders: Gender, National Identity, and Prostitution Policy in Thailand*, 18.

**38** Sorajjakool, Siroj. *Human Trafficking in Thailand: Current Issues, Trends, and the Role of the Thai Government*. University of Washington Press, 2014. 93.

**39** *Ibid.*

**40** Jeffery, *Sex and Borders*, 11.

**41** Jeffery, *Sex and Borders*, 18.

**42** *Ibid.*, 20.

**43** *Ibid.*, 26.

**44** *Ibid.*, 23.

**45** *Boys for Baht? An Exploratory...*

**46** Jeffery, *Sex and Borders*, 45.

**47** Kislenco, Arne, “A Not So Silent Partner: Thailand’s Role in Covert Operations, Counter-Insurgency, and the Wars in Indochina,” *Journal of Conflict Studies* 24.1, (2004), <https://journals.lib.unb.ca/index.php/jcs/article/view/292/465#a3>. See also, Robert J. McMahon, “What Difference Did it Make?: Assessing the Vietnam War’s Impact on Southeast Asia,” in *International Perspectives on Vietnam*, ed. Lloyd C. Gardner and Ted Gittinger (College Station: Texas A&M University Press, 2000), 102.

**48** Jeffery, *Sex and Borders*, 38-39.

- 49** Wantanee Suntiku, "Thai Tourism and the Legacy of the Vietnam War," in *Tourism and War*, ed. Richard Butler and Wantanee Suntiku (New York: Routledge, 2013), 97.
- 50** Jeffrey, *Sex and Borders*, 38.
- 51** Jeffery, *Sex and Borders*, 39.
- 52** Leslie Jeffrey, *Sex and Borders*, 78.
- 53** *Ibid.*, 40.
- 54** Thailand Department of Tourism, "International Tourist Arrivals to Thailand in 2014," <http://www.tourism.go.th/home/details/11/221/24331>. See also, United Nations, "UN Data Poll," <http://data.un.org/DocumentData.aspx?id=372>.
- 55** Direct contribution of travel and tourism to GDP reflects the total spending within a country by residents and non-residents as well as government spending on travel and tourism services directly linked to visitors. Total contribution includes the indirect and induced impact on the economy as a whole. See, The World Travel and Tourism Counsel, "Travel and Tourism Economic Impact 2015: Thailand," 2.
- 56** The only outside source that confirms this statement that could be found by this researcher was an ECPAT paper. The source the paper itself cited (Thailand Immigration Bureau, Police Department) could not be verified. Lacking confirmation of the source and no clear explanation of the methodology used to arrive at these percentages, there is no good reason to trust them. See, Davidson and Taylor, "Sex Tourism in Thailand," University of Leicester, U.K., published by ECPAT, 1994, p. 1 ([http://www.childtrafficking.com/Docs/o\\_connell\\_1996\\_\\_child\\_prost6.pdf](http://www.childtrafficking.com/Docs/o_connell_1996__child_prost6.pdf)). A 1992 paper claims that, "male travelers represent roughly 70% of Thailand's arrivals..." See, David Leheny, "The Political Economy of Asian Sex Tourism," *Annals of Tourism Research* Vol. 22, No. 2, 367 -384, (1995): 372, [http://www.climateaudit.info/data/mask/TREN/tourism%20cd/Annals\\_Tour\\_Res\\_1995\\_367.pdf](http://www.climateaudit.info/data/mask/TREN/tourism%20cd/Annals_Tour_Res_1995_367.pdf).
- 57** <http://data.un.org/DocumentData.aspx?id=372>
- 58** Kathy J. Steinman, "Sex Tourism and the Child: Latin America's and the United States' Failure to Prosecute Sex Tourists," 13 *Hastings Women's L. R.* 53 (2002), 56. <http://repository.uchastings.edu/hwlj/vol13/iss1/6>
- 59** As has been noted, many factors besides economic inequality drive exploitation. However, economic inequality, if not driving all of these factors, at the very least has a positive statistical relationship with them. Take the case of corruption. While corruption is needed in order for exploitation to take place, inequality is the underlying mechanism. Not only does inequality create the vulnerabilities that allow people to be exploited, it also creates the conditions that allow corruption to persist. Government and private sector accountability require transparency and the rule of law. However, even in societies that claim democratic accountability, when inequality is rampant, elected officials only respond to those with economic leverage and power. See, Frederick Solt, "Economic Inequality and Democratic Political Engagement," *American Journal of Political Science* 52, 1 (2008), [http://www.kean.edu/~jkeil/Welcome\\_files/Inequality\\_and\\_Political\\_Engagement.pdf](http://www.kean.edu/~jkeil/Welcome_files/Inequality_and_Political_Engagement.pdf). Such is the case even in the US. See, Larry Bartells, "Economic Inequality and Political Representation," accessed on March 21 at <https://www.princeton.edu/~bartells/economic.pdf>. Empirical evidence also suggests a high correlation between income inequality and educational inequality. There is also a wealth of evidence that poverty leads to poor health, which leads to more desperation and vulnerability, as well as evidence suggesting that higher levels of economic inequality lead to worse health for society as a whole through the reduction of public goods, access to resources, and increases in stress. In addition, there is empirical evidence that higher levels of income inequality increase crime, especially violent crime. See, Erik Thorbecke and Chutatong Charumilindi, "Economic Inequality and Its Socioeconomic Impact," *World Development* (Vol. 30, No. 9, 2002) 1487, 1489, and 1491, respectively, <https://thorbecke.economics.cornell.edu/docs/SEImpact.pdf> (March 16, 2016). Some conservative economists argue that economic inequality creates a more fair society, where individuals are rewarded for hard work, and that it drives growth. While redistributive policies can create dependency and even encourage laziness, this is incredibly rare though blown out of proportion at times for political expediency. In addition, redistribution, whether through direct cash

transfers (such as Brazil's incredibly successful Basa Familia program) or public education, develops human capital, creates opportunity, and increases the willingness to take risks. While there are many examples of a correlation between inequality and growth at a macroeconomic level, no causal link has been found. Even if a low level of inequality can lead to economic growth, when the level of inequality increases to the point where demand is deflated, the economy as a whole suffers, growth being driven solely by unsustainable bubbles of speculation and debt.

**60** In March 2016, many stories about what has come to be known as the Panama Papers — leaked documents highlighting the tax evasion made possible by Panama's Mossack Fonseca law firm — broke. These papers reveal another layer of structural inequality that economic inequality helped make possible — namely, those who can afford not to need not pay their fair share, if any share at all, towards supporting the world's governments, who, whether through private property laws or the enforcement of contracts, make their work possible. As the Center for Economic and Social Right's press release, "The 'Panama Papers': When Tax Abuse is Human's Rights Abuse" says, "The scandal also highlights how today's extreme and unprecedented levels of economic inequality are far from an accident or byproduct of the market, but a trend driven by the state-sanctioned practices brought to light in the Panama Papers. By subverting an international tax system whose rules they themselves help set, unaccountable politicians, multinational corporations and rich elites are able to consolidate wealth and political power, while the most disadvantaged people see their wages stagnate and the services they rely upon cut through painful austerity measures. Women are among those most negatively affected, and it is no coincidence that they are also under-represented in the list of figures named as benefiting from the Panama scheme." See, The Center for Economic and Social Justice, "The 'Panama Papers': When Tax Abuse is Human Rights Abuse," accessed on April 10, 2016 at <http://www.cesr.org/article.php?id=1834>.

**61** The ILO's 2013 Global Slavery Index finds a strong correlation between development and slavery; namely, the less developed a nation or region, the more vulnerable its citizens or residents will be to slavery. "The level of a country's human development reflects its economic wellbeing, which in turn affect the poverty levels and deprivation a citizen might face. On the other hand, higher levels of educational attainment, elevated health care, and the chance of effective citizenship, all tend to allow people to protect themselves from vulnerability to modern slavery. This finding is statistically significant ( $p > .01$ ) and the correlation score ( $R^2 = .74$ ) points to a strong relationship between modern slavery and development." See, The International Labor Organization, "The Global Slavery Index 2013," 105, [http://www.ungift.org/doc/knowledgehub/resource-centre/2013/GlobalSlaveryIndex\\_2013\\_Download\\_WEB1.pdf](http://www.ungift.org/doc/knowledgehub/resource-centre/2013/GlobalSlaveryIndex_2013_Download_WEB1.pdf).

**62** Siroj Sorajjakool, *Human Trafficking in Thailand*, 136.

**63** Paul Chambers, "Economic Guidance and Contestation: An Analysis of Thailand's Evolving Trajectory of Development" *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* [Online], 32, no. 1 (2013): 82, <http://journals.sub.uni-hamburg.de/giga/jsaa/article/view/641/639>.

**64** Thaksin's crony-capitalism offers but one recent example of corruption at the highest level of government. See, Michael Pirsch, "More Dishonesty About Thailand's Upheaval From the International New York Times" *Truthout*, Op-Ed section, Sunday, 15 December 2013, <http://www.truth-out.org/opinion/item/20601-more-dishonesty-about-thailands-upheaval-from-the-international-new-york-times>.

**65** Thailand's Gini index was 39.9 in 2012 (the most recent year data is available). While this suggests a relatively high level of inequality in and of itself, it fails to capture the factors that cause certain groups of people — those in the North and the Northeast, the stateless, women and girls, etc. — to face greater levels of relative poverty, including lack of education, health care, social services, and other resources.

**66** Thompson, Bonita. "Sexual Exploitation in Thailand." Speech, Vision Trip from The Freedom Story, Bangkok, Thailand, January 8, 2015.

**67** During the Asian Fiscal Crisis of 1997, many rural poor migrated to the urban hubs of Bangkok and Chiang Mai in search of work. This migration, coupled with the International Monetary Fund's austerity programs, created a large pool of vulnerable laborers, easily exploited in factories and brothels. See Deena Guzner, "The Economics of Commercial Sexual Exploitation," *The Pulitzer Center* (25 August 2009).

- 68** Siroj Sorajakool, *Human Trafficking in Thailand*, 31.
- 69** Paul Chambers, "Economic Guidance and Contestation: An Analysis of Thailand's Evolving Trajectory of Development" *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* [Online], 32 2013: 85. Accessed on 20 February 2016, at <http://journals.sub.uni-hamburg.de/giga/jsaa/article/view/641/639>.
- 70** Siroj Sorajakool, *Human Trafficking in Thailand*, 30.
- 71** *Ibid.*, 31.
- 72** Paul Chambers, "Economic Guidance and Contestation," 85.
- 73** *Ibid.*, 86.
- 74** *Ibid.*
- 75** *Ibid.*, 85.
- 76** Bonita Thompson, "Sexual Exploitation in Thailand." Speech, Vision Trip from The Freedom Story, Bangkok, Thailand, January 8, 2015.
- 77** "Across the country, women were viewed as wage earners and were expected to contribute a major part of the family income in order to show gratitude to their parents. Peasant women, according to many anthropological studies, were economic partners in the household... Most important, prostitute women themselves, particularly those from the North (the largest regional group), consistently interpret themselves as family wage-earners." See, Jeffrey, *Sex and Borders*, 31.
- 78** Thompson, "Sexual Exploitation in Thailand."
- 79** Vednita Carter and Evelina Giobbe, "Duet: Prostitution, Racism and Feminist Discourse," *Hastings Women's Law Journal* 10, Issue 1 Symposium Issue: Economic Justice for Sex Workers. <http://repository.uchastings.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1077&context=hwlj>
- 80** Jefferey, *Sex and Borders*, 78. A Thailand police estimate in 1992 put the number of prostitutes at 800,000, with 10% being male. See, David Leheny, "The Political Economy of Asian Sex Tourism," *Annals of Tourism Research* (Vol. 22, No. 2, 367 -384) 1995, 373. Accessed on 11 March 2016 at [http://www.climateaudit.info/data/mask/TREN/tourism%20cd/Annals\\_Tour\\_Res\\_1995\\_367.pdf](http://www.climateaudit.info/data/mask/TREN/tourism%20cd/Annals_Tour_Res_1995_367.pdf)
- 81** Deena Gunzer, *The Economics of Commercial Sexual Exploitation*, The Pulitzer Center (25 August 2009). Accessed on 14 March 2016 at <http://pulitzercenter.org/blog/untold-stories/economics-commercial-sexual-exploitation>.
- 82** Lin Lean Lim, ed., *The Sex Sector*, 10.
- 83** See, "Sex industry assuming massive proportions in Southeast Asia," International Labor Organization Press Release 19 August 1998 accessed on 1 March 2016 at [http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS\\_007994/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_007994/lang--en/index.htm). See also, Lin Lean Lim, ed., *The Sex Sector*.
- 84** Loring Jones, David Engstrom, Patricia Hilliard, and Decha Sungakawan, "Human trafficking between Thailand and Japan: lessons in recruitment, transit and control," *International Journal Of Social Welfare* 20, no. 2 (2011): 203.
- 85** Kathy J. Steinman "Sex Tourism and the Child: Latin America's and the United States' Failure to Prosecute Sex Tourists," 13 *Hastings Women's L. R.* 53 (2002), 56. <http://repository.uchastings.edu/hwlj/vol13/iss1/6>
- 86** ECPAT Report, "Protection of children against sexual exploitation in tourism," A project funded by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands, pg. 13. Accessed on September 9th, 2015 at <http://www.defenceforchildren.nl/images/13/2817.pdf>
- 87** Hart Research Associates and Civic Enterprises, "The Mentoring Effect: Young People's Perspectives on the Outcomes and Availability of Mentoring" Accessed on 25 August 2015 at [http://issuu.com/menternational/docs/report\\_thementoringeffect/?e=10444859/6302494](http://issuu.com/menternational/docs/report_thementoringeffect/?e=10444859/6302494) . See also, Carla Herrera, Jean Baldwin Grossman, Tina J. Kauh, Amy F. Feldman and Jennifer McMaken with Linda Z. Jucovy, "Making a Difference in Schools: The Big Brothers Big Sisters School-Based Mentoring Impact Study" (Public/Private Ventures: Philadelphia, Pa. June, 2007) Accessed on 25 August 2015 at <https://www.bigsister.org/bigsister/file/Making%20a%20Difference%20in%20Schools.pdf>

**88** The conceptual basis and distinct process for using descriptive phenomenology in the SIA is taken from the work of Amedeo Giorgi who is considered to be the foremost expert in this method. Dr. Anderson-Hinn received her training directly from him. His work is based on a thorough study and interpretation of the phenomenological philosophy of Edmund Husserl. Giorgi essentially integrates an approach to psychological inquiry that is qualitative in nature with a method that is philosophically phenomenological in order to expand the knowledge of true human experience as it is lived. As developed, this method stands on its own as a research methodology, but in the SIA, it was used as a component of the whole analysis.

First, the expert understands the attitude of phenomenological reduction. This consists of dealing appropriately with past knowledge or experience or both within the content of exploration and focusing on presence rather than existence. In understanding phenomena in a pure sense, within the context in which they are lived and experienced, and providing psychological analysis based on that understanding, it is important not to impose certain beliefs, expectations, or experiences onto the data. Further, it is important to recognize that the purpose is not to objectify a particular experience or concept but rather to engage with the experience of “the other.” In other words, to use this method, the data needs to be able to speak for itself.

Second, the expert understands how to seek an essence through a method of (free) imaginative variation, considering both the facts and all the possibilities. According to Giorgi, the imagination is very important, and seeking the essence of a particular phenomenon is achieved through “essential intuition.” When using a purely philosophical approach, the process ends with describing the essence that is sought, identifying that which one has become present to (firsthand), and describing how it appears. However, in conducting psychological analysis, the process focuses on the lived experience of others, asking others to describe an essence and proceeding to extract from that experience a structure that represents a deeper awareness for human experience and the particular phenomenon being explored.

**89** Yin, 2009

**90** Yin, 2009, 106.

THE  
*freedom*  
STORY