

An Exposure to Anti-Human Trafficking Efforts

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Human trafficking is a global issue that affects our country. As part of my learning, I had the opportunity to participate in the anti-human trafficking and national campaign in Thailand. Caritas Asia, in collaboration with Caritas Thailand, Good Shepherd Thailand, and other NGOs sponsored the event that took place on December 29-30, 2018. The government of Undontani Province welcomed us and discussed their strategies to prevent human trafficking on the local and national levels. The National Catholic Commission on Migration presented their initiatives to protect and help migrants respond to the challenges and problems they face, including human trafficking. After the program, we had an opportunity to visit the government shelter and to stay in Nongkhai.

Through the exposure, I learned the importance of collaboration in combating human trafficking. The presentations emphasized the importance of networking among government, non-government, and private sectors. Efforts against human trafficking will be more effective if all the stakeholders work together. It was great to experience the collaboration that brought about the successful anti-violence campaign rally in Nongkhai. The campaign involved many institutions and their cooperation resulted in a greater impact.

The government provides a web-based data system to manage and support the sharing of information related to trafficking cases. Increasing the punishment for trafficking crimes is another strategy used by the government to combat human trafficking. Recognizing the transnational nature of human trafficking, the government has broadened its partnerships with foreign governments, and with its neighboring countries, in particular. The different presentations highlighted the government's serious commitment to the prevention of human trafficking and the protection of vulnerable individuals and groups.

The "witness preparation" program is an effective means of preparing victims to give testimony. Providing shelter addresses the many challenges and needs of survivors of trafficking. I was happy to learn many other aspects of anti-human trafficking efforts in Thailand, including witness protection, mentoring, and collaboration with airlines. The government has collaborated with airlines and tourism sectors to combat human trafficking by training hotel and airline staffs and showing videos to raise awareness of the signs of human trafficking.

As I assumed responsibility for the shelter for women and children, I was inspired to include the witness preparation activity. I recognize the importance of strong networking connections with the government and other NGOs and the need for creativity in our advocacy efforts. I am grateful for the learning opportunity and I hope our efforts will make a significant difference in the lives of survivors of human trafficking.

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