



IOM • OIM

International Organization for Migration

the migration agency

NEWSLETTER

# COMBATING CHILD TRAFFICKING IN GHANA

Issue 5

January 2008

**Saving the Fishing Children of Ghana, West Africa:  
January 2008 Rescue Mission**



IOM Accra, 2008

*First group of 24 children arrive at rehabilitation center in Accra*

The Counter Trafficking Unit of IOM's Mission in Ghana this month rescued a group of 36 children from fishing villages in Kete-Krachi in the Lake Volta Region of Ghana, bringing the total of trafficked children rescued by IOM to 648.

IOM's partner NGO, Partners in Community Development Programs conducted research in Kete-Krachi and its island communities in preparation for the rescue mission and registered the children and the fishermen.

Throughout 2007, IOM identified and registered 424 trafficked children working for 800 fishermen on five islands around Kete-Krachi. Although all of these children are available for rescue, IOM's resources only allowed for 36 to be rescued at this time. IOM usually conducts rescue missions on an annual basis, but has the capacity to rescue at least 50 children every six months if the necessary funds are made available.

The children who have yet to be rescued will be under constant monitoring, and the fishermen will continue to receive information to deter the use of child labor.

"We can only hope that this increased awareness will translate into better working conditions for the children waiting to be rescued," explains Eric Peasah, IOM's Counter Trafficking Project Manager. "These children need our help as soon as possible, so we are continuing our appeal for funding to rescue all of them."

This latest IOM rescue mission was carried out from 19 to 22 January with financial support from the U.S. Department of State, Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and more than 1,000 private donors.

## With Help from Our Friends



The girls of One is Greater Than None raised enough funds to rescue eight children. They presented a check to IOM's Regional Representative for North America and the Caribbean, Richard Scott, on NBC's Today Show on Saturday 26 January 2008.

The girls reported an overwhelming response from viewers. "In the first 36 hours after the segment aired, we had received more than US\$5,000 in website donations! One more child saved!"



Tyler, Kids Helping Kids With Nothing

IOM's Counter Trafficking Team planned to rescue 25 children with funds from PRM, but a group of teenage girls from the US State of New York came together and formed 'ONE IS GREATER THAN NONE' and raised enough funds to support the rescue of eight additional children. Their desire to help the fishing children of Ghana gains momentum everyday and they have pledged to continue their work to help many other children.

The fifth and sixth graders of the Deer Path Middle School and Global Connections Club members at Lake Forest High School in Illinois are also providing support to this program. The students raised enough money to rescue three children with the support of private donors Lori and John Dillon. To show the students' commitment, Lori and her daughter Claire travelled to Ghana to accompany the IOM team on the rescue mission in Kete-Krachi.

IOM has also received repeated significant contributions from a California-based youth group called "Kids Helping Kids with Nothing".

Rosanne and Mark Rosen, founders of the US-based Global Grand-Parenting Initiative, are benefactors of this Ghana Project and were also present during this month's rescue.

## Rescue, Rehabilitation and Reintegration

The children were rescued in two groups and sent to the Department of Social Welfare's rehabilitation centre in Accra. The first group of 24 children arrived at the center on 23 January, the second group of 12 arrived at the end of January, as they were rescued from different locations.

At the rehabilitation center, the children will be medically screened and treated as needed, and will undergo a comprehensive rehabilitation program with support from health professionals, social workers, psychologists and educators. They will also have access to psychosocial counseling to enable them to heal from the trauma of being trafficked. The rescued children will receive rehabilitation assistance until 15 May when they will be reunited with their families to start their reintegration process.

## Lake Volta and its Fishing Communities



Created by the construction of the Akosombo dam in the early 1960s, Lake Volta is one of the world's largest artificial lakes. A number of fishermen who have depended on the bounties of the lake for many years report that fish stocks are decreasing, making it difficult to survive on fishing alone. Other work is scarce in a country where unemployment is widespread and approximately 40 percent of the population lives below the poverty line.

The depletion of stocks is the first reason why children are needed as workers in the fishing industry. Children represent cheap labor, and their small, nimble fingers are useful in releasing the fish from the ever smaller nets.



### The Fishing Children: Spotlight on Kwadzo

Among the trafficked children rescued this time is 12 year old Kwadzo who hails from Dogo, a small community near Apam in the Central Region. Kwadzo had been working in the fishing industry for five years. When he was seven years old, Kwadzo's father took him to Abidjan in Cote D'Ivoire, where he was given to a fisherman to work for a period of two years. According to Kwadzo, during his stay in Abidjan he went fishing for long hours, ate only once a day, and was often mistreated. After more than two years, his father brought him back to Dogo. Kwadzo's grandmother pleaded with the father to send the boy to school but instead he took him to Kete-Krachi where he was handed over to a fisherman on Lake Volta.



Kwadzo

Kwadzo told IOM that his life in Kete-Krachi was even more difficult than in Abidjan because he often had to dive to the bottom of the lake to disentangle nets that were caught on tree stumps, a dangerous chore that he was not required to do in Abidjan.

Kwadzo, was not on the list of children to be rescued this year, but on 20 January, while on the lake around 5:30am, IOM staff saw a fisherman working with a boy. The boy was diving in and out of the water and shivering from the cold. The IOM staff approached the fisherman and attempted to negotiate Kwadzo's release, but the fisherman refused. IOM reported the incident to the Chief of the village, who has received awareness training and is an advocate of the IOM project. The father and the fisherman begrudgingly released him the next day.

Kwadzo will be sent to live with his mother and will have the opportunity to go to school. He says he is very happy IOM came to his rescue; and he wants to go to school so he can become either a driver or a football player.

### Major Activities in 2007

- Twenty-five children rescued in January 2007
- All 25 newly-rescued children were rehabilitated, reintegrated into their communities, placed in school and received counseling
- Parents of all rescued children were assessed for micro-credit assistance and received the first tranche of their assistance
- A total of 300 rescued and reintegrated children have been registered under the National Health Insurance Scheme
- On-going monitoring of children and parents to assess their social and welfare needs
- More trafficked children were identified and registered on fishing islands in the Kete-Krachi District for rescue in early 2008.
- Awareness raising sessions carried out in sending and receiving communities on the adverse effects of human trafficking, children's rights and the Ghana Human Trafficking Act.

# FIGHT CHILD TRAFFICKING IN GHANA



## MAKE A DONATION

This US\$ Amount	Will pay for
\$5	Food, lodging, and other vital expenses for 1 child for 1 day while in initial rehabilitation (approx. 2.5 months)
\$20 a month	Minimum amount to support a child
\$40	Uniform and school supplies for 1 child
\$230	1 fishing net so that the fishermen do not use children
\$250	Micro-credit assistance to parents so that they can set up a small-scale business
\$400 to \$600	Salary of 1 child counsellor for 1 month
\$2,100	1 fish pond for a group of 4 fishermen to farm fish so that they will not need to rely on child labour
\$4,256	Rescue, rehabilitation, reunification and reintegration of 1 child for 2.5 years

## How You Can Help

For a minimum of \$20 per month for at least one year, a sponsor can support a specific child. This sponsorship enables IOM and its partners to provide assistance to the selected child throughout the year, protecting the child from the risk of being re-trafficked.

The key objectives of the Sponsor a Trafficked Child Project are:

- \* To provide long-term support to trafficked children in their communities of origin
- \* To provide continuous rehabilitation and reintegration assistance to the children
- \* To provide follow-up assistance based on each sponsored child's individual needs
- \* To ensure that the results and achievements obtained through the Trafficked Children Project are made sustainable
- \* To reduce the children's vulnerability to being re-trafficked following the period of IOM sponsorship.

Concrete Benefits:

- \* Prevention of re-trafficking: Ongoing monitoring, mentoring, and tutoring protect sponsored children from the risk of being re-trafficked.
- \* Improved health care: Each sponsored child receives extra medical attention.
- \* Improved academic performance: Each sponsored child works closely with a tutor to catch up and move forward in school.
- \* Smooth transition: Social activities with peers help to make the child feel comfortable in the community.

Please visit the IOM website to find additional information about the issue of human trafficking and the program in Ghana <http://www.iom.int>

In the U.S. tax deductible donations may be made by check or money order payable to: U.S. Association for International Migration (USAIM); the 501(c)(3) partner of IOM in the United States.

To donate to USAIM online: [www.usaim.org](http://www.usaim.org)

*IOM is an international intergovernmental organization created in 1951 to support humane and orderly migration. Human trafficking is rooted in poverty, lack of opportunities, gender discrimination, social and political violence and demand for services. In many cases, the trafficker is a known and trusted person - a neighbor, an employer, even a relative. Human trafficking often begins with a false promise of an opportunity. Victims are promised good jobs, and then are forced into dangerous, illegal or abusive work. IOM has been working with governments and communities for over a decade to address this challenge. Since January 2000, IOM offices around the globe have provided direct assistance to more than 12,000 victims of trafficking.*

International Organization for Migration  
1752 N Street NW, Suite 700  
Washington DC 20036

Tel: 202-862-1826 \* Fax: 202-862-1879

Email: [mrfwashington@iom.int](mailto:mrfwashington@iom.int) \* [www.iom.int/unitedstates](http://www.iom.int/unitedstates)



International Organization for Migration  
P.O. Box 5222

Accra North, Ghana

Tel: +233.21 508 696

Email: [iomaccra@iom.int](mailto:iomaccra@iom.int) \* [www.iom.int](http://www.iom.int)