

Mbagala Girls Home and Kwetu Centre

Supporting trafficked girls in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania



Mbagala Girls Home, March 2012

In Tanzania girls from rural areas are trafficked to urban centres, such as Dar es Salaam and Arusha and the island of Zanzibar for domestic servitude. Some domestic workers fleeing abusive employers fall prey to forced prostitution. Tourist hotels reportedly coerce some girls employed as cleaning staff into prostitution and some girls are trafficked from their homes in the country directly in to commercial sex work.

Poverty and lack of education contribute to the trafficking of girls in Tanzania. Children in low-income families are at significant risk of being trafficked and girls more so since they are seen as an economic burden on their families. Girls who completed primary education but dropped out from high school are particularly at risk.

Most girls come from rural Tanzania from impoverished families, who often participated in selling/sending a girl away in hope for better future in the city. Many girls assisted by Mbagala Home are orphans or half-orphans who have parents unable to provide for them due to poverty or sickness. On average, girls who come to Mbagala and Kwetu have had no education or have only completed a few years of primary school and while enrolled in schools many girls under perform and require additional tuition classes. Due to past traumatic experiences and lack of stable family life, they also require emotional and psychological support, counselling and life skills training and mentoring.

How we help

At Mbagala and Kwetu we provide girls and young women who have been trafficked or who are at risk of being trafficked with primary and secondary education and vocational training. This increases their access to job opportunities for the future and helps prevent them against being re-trafficked. Girls are given psycho-social support when they stay with us as well as in their communities after they have been reunited with families and guardians.

Our community mobilisation process aims to reintegrate them into their communities by encouraging and enabling families and communities to take responsibility for their girls' care and wellbeing.

Results

In the last year, 60 girls were recovered and housed at Mbagala girls home and for Kwetu counselling centre 20 girls were counselled. All the girls were enrolled in primary or secondary education although some started at nursery level since they had received no formal education prior to being recovered.

How you can help

Support for the girls to go to school is a vital way of improving their chances in life. For one girl to go to school for one year it costs:

Primary school	£105	Secondary school	£598
Uniform	£41	Uniform	£51
Extra tuition (to make up for time out of school)	£29	Extra tuition (to make up for time out of school)	£64
Exercise books	£13	Exercise books	£32
Desk fees	£16	School fees (including desk fees)	£365
Pens, pencils, maths sets etc.	£ 6	Transport	£25
		Text books	£51
		Pens, pencils, maths sets etc.	£10

Case study for Blessed (16 years old)

Blessed was trafficked from her home in Mtwara, in the rural south of Tanzania to Dar-es-salaam to work as a house helper in 2010. She dropped out from school because her parents are very old and they were not able to pay for her school fees.

A woman approached her mother and asked if Blessed could go with her to Dar-es-salaam where she could go to school. The woman promised to support her family, paying hospital bills and medicines for her mother who is paralysed from a stroke. They trusted her and Blessed went with the woman to Dar-es-Salaam.

When they reached the city. Blessed didn't go to school as promised. Instead she was made to be a house helper without payment. It took a year for Blessed to communicate with her family in Mtwara. The woman was a trafficker and sex worker and brought men home so that Blessed could be sold to them. Eventually Blessed ran away and was referred to The Salvation Army. She was enrolled on the Kwetu Counselling Programme where she met other girls of her age. Together they learned about HIV/AIDS and sexual health, gained spiritual counselling and developed their life skills.

Blessed took to tailoring and was enrolled on a Tailoring Certificate course of one year. She also learned embroidery and now makes and sells her own products. Blessed has ambitions to be a fashion designer.

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