



SHATTERED DREAMS

Real life stories of migrant women who
fell victim to human trafficking

Written by Nee, Auam and Yuun
Edited by Siriporn Skrobanek



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Thai version (2009):

The booklet produced by Foundation For Women (FFW)

with the support of ILO

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FOREWORD

Trafficking in Persons (TIP) is a grave violation of basic human rights and dignity. The issue is highly complex for Thailand as the origin, destination and transit country, which receives and sends many trafficked persons. Given this situation, the Thai Government has been implementing various policies and measures to combat with human trafficking. The Department of Social Development and Welfare (DSDW) under the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security of Thailand has been designated as the focal agency to combat human trafficking and to assist trafficked persons.

On 17 March 2009, the Government of Thailand and the Government of Japan jointly launched a five-year bilateral cooperation project on anti-trafficking in persons, *'Project on Strengthening of Multi-Disciplinary Teams (MDTs) for Protection of Trafficked Persons in Thailand'*. Implementing agencies of the Project are Bureau of Anti-Trafficking in Women and Children (BATWC) under

the DSDW and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA). The Project aims to strengthen the functions of MDTs placing the trafficked persons at the center. The MDT approach has been introduced by the Thai Government as one of measures for combating human trafficking to provide more effective and efficient services to trafficked persons.

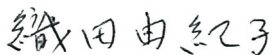
This booklet, 'Shattered Dreams' is the stories of three trafficked women who have come out to tell their experiences of how they were deceived and abused. These women however are very brave, refusing to remain as silent victims by fighting back by educating themselves not to be revictimised after returning to Thailand. Their stories will surely inspire and remind us that trafficked persons should not to suffer alone. In fact, the three empowered women are now assisting other trafficked persons.

This booklet was originally written in Thai language and published by the Foundation For Women in 2009 with the assistance of International Labour Organisation. The Project has supported its translation and publication

into English for wider audience viewing. It is hoped that this booklet contributes not only to prevent people from being trafficked, but also to remind us the potentials of trafficked persons to be a driving force in fighting against trafficking.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "S. Khomepatr." in a cursive style.

Saowanee Khomepatr,
Director of Bureau of Anti-Trafficking in
Women and Children

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "織田由紀子" (Yukiko Oda) in Japanese characters.

Yukiko Oda,
Project Chief Advisor, JICA Expert

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INTRODUCTION

For the 1st Edition

“Shattered Dreams” is the collection of real life stories of three Thai women who went through suffering and terrible moments while working in foreign countries. Before they left Thailand, they were all full of hopes and dreams of a better life for themselves and their families. As it turned out, they became victims themselves committed by persons close to them who exploited them for their own greed.

These three women are typical of most women in Thailand. They have less opportunity for education. They get married while they are too young and become the head of a family. Even though there are many kinds of projects arranged in order to improve the economic status of such underprivileged women especially in rural areas of the country, they cannot generate enough income. As a result, migration to work in foreign countries has become the only choice for many women.

The stories from these three women encourage us to find out the answers and to manage seriously the factors that make migrant women become victims of international human trafficking. In addition to vigorously enforcing the law and creating opportunities for victims to access the justice process, relevant authorities must also focus on managing the economic and social structures that allow living conditions between urban and rural areas differ substantially. As well as modifying the power balance of gender, opportunities and access to resources for women who are driven to become the head of family alone must also be addressed.

Foundation For Women (FFW) very much hopes that “Shattered Dreams”, taken from real-life stories of women who joined the Foundation For Women’s healing process as one part of activities in the projects which was supported by International Labour Organization (ILO). They finally decided to write their own stories and help remind other women to be aware of dangers that may arise from migration. We hope it will encourage all sections of relevant authorities to continue to collaborate and to

create justice for women who fall victim to migration and to be able to start their new life again.

Foundation For Women

INTRODUCTION

For the 2nd Edition

After the Foundation For Women has published the book “Shattered Dreams: the real-life stories of migrant women who fell victim to human trafficking”, with the cooperation from media, especially the television program called “Women To Women,” the awareness spread, particularly among a large number of women. Therefore, we decided to publish the second edition.

The reason why this book, “Shattered Dreams” is interest to the public is because it passes on the real experiences of victims. They hope their stories of working overseas would be a warning to large number of Thai women who are striving to seek better lives as migrant workers and make them be aware of the danger of labor and sexual exploitation. Like others, these three women also started with beautiful dreams of working as migrants and never expected that they would end up being victims of exploitation by close relatives or neighbours. All of

these stories reflect that the network between traffickers and exploited persons are connected in all levels of society from the local level to the international level. Therefore it is necessary for the community to see through this perspective and to provide support and protection to people in your community. It is also important not to look down on these women. They have already suffered both physically and emotionally.

We would like to say thank you for Yuun, Nee, Auam and the members of the Live Our Lives Group, who told their stories and made us realize the resolute courage of human trafficking victims, who seemed to be lost in the game of life but never stopped fighting for social justice. They hope that one day they will find justice without any discrimination against poor women in society.

Foundation For Women (FFW) appreciates all readers who are interested in this book which has become an important encouragement to these three struggling women. We hope it will be an inspiration to other struggling women to be strong for starting their new life and to participate in preventing other women from falling victim

to human trafficking like them. Foundation For Women (FFW) would like to say thank you very much to International Labour Organization (ILO) for all of the support throughout 2nd edition publication of “Shattered Dreams”.

Foundation For Women

Shattered Dreams

The Story of Aeuy

1. Memory of Youth

I was born in the Northern part of Thailand. I have never known my real parents because I was adopted when I was a baby. My step parents have no children but my stepfather has four children with his ex-wife. My childhood was not so different from my other friends. My stepparents supported me to study until I finished the lower secondary education level (Mathayom 3). Then, I found a man who became my husband when I was only 15 years old.

After I got married, my husband moved to stay in my house. He told my stepparents that he had been married before, but his ex-wife had left him a long time ago. My stepparents gave me 10 Rai of their farmlands. I had to work alone because my husband worked as an employee at a power plant. He was working there from morning until evening everyday. After he finished his

daily work, he would go to his friends' houses to drink or play snooker. He never helped me work on my farm. Moreover, when he was drunk he sometimes hit me. I decided to bear this in silence so I did not tell my stepparents anything about this.

When I was 17 years old, I looked for a job and I was employed by a hospital as a housekeeper. About 3 months later, I found that I was pregnant. Therefore I had to quit my job and stayed at home. At that time, my husband and I moved from my stepparents' house to stay near my husband's parent house.

While I was pregnant, my husband and I often argued because he was jealous. Sometimes when he was drunk he swore at me that I was pregnant with another man and that baby was not his child even though I did not have such a relationship with anyone but my husband. I told myself to be patient because of my baby.

I gave birth to a son. My husband was very happy because he wanted a baby boy. However we still always argued all the time. Until my son was about 9 months old, I asked my mother in law to look after my son because

I got a job at a department store in the city. I earned 3,900 Baht per month. I now had an income so I had to pay for the water supply and electricity bills including child support because my husband would not give me money anymore. I had to pay for half of all of the expenses too. After my three month contract had finished, I had to start finding a new job. Fortunately, I got a job at an electric wire factory. I worked really hard because I hoped to get hired as a permanent employee and to get good welfare to support my son.

Even though I had an income to support our family, my husband never stopped yelling and hitting me. Sometimes he hit me until I was unconscious but I never told anyone. Until one day, I had been assigned to become a permanent employee. I decided to move out and bring my son back to stay with my parents and told them all the suffering I have been going through for 3 years. Fortunately, my mother understood and was willing to take care of my son for me. My husband wanted to get back together with me but I had suffered for a long time and I was strong enough not to get back and live with fear of being hit by him.

My husband wanted to stay near my son and asked me to take him back to live with him but I refused. Thus, he no longer pays for child support anymore.

I was a single mom who had to take care of my son alone and on a low income. At the age which my son was about to start primary school, my husband's sister who sympathised with me and loves my son so much asked to bring him up. She promised me she would support my son to study to the highest education level. She and her husband are both teachers and do not have children of their own. After giving it much thought, to give a better future for my son, I decided to let him go and live with his aunt and uncle in another province. Although my parents and I really missed him, for his future, it was much better than living with me.

2. Catch the Dream

When my son went to live with his aunt, I still worked in the electric wire factory but there was not much work and no overtime work to do. One day, I heard that my female supervisor who had worked there for over

11 years with high income was going to quit her job. I asked her why and she told me that she was going to work overseas. She said her friend who worked in South Africa would come to Thailand to look for someone to work in restaurants and spa massage houses with Thai owners. The worker who wants this job had to pay 30,000 Baht per person for agency fees. My female supervisor had studied massage and spa treatments and had received a certificate for them. She said she could earn the equivalent of working in the factory for 11 years in just a few years of working abroad.

I was thinking about the future for my son and myself. So, I asked my female supervisor if I could go and work overseas even if I did not have 30,000 Baht. She said she would ask her friend for me. A few days later, she told me that I could go to work without any agency fees if I have a passport. She said that those agency fees shall be deducted from my salary in South Africa later. I would receive about 300-400 Baht per hour which 1 Rand is 6 Baht. For this reason, I became interested in working overseas with my supervisor and I also

persuaded a lot of friends to go with me but some of them were worried about being deceived. However I never thought I would be deceived because my supervisor who got a high salary was quitting her job to work overseas to get a better income.

I decided to quit my job and applied for a passport with my cousin who was 35 years old. I took her with me to see my supervisor together. Then my supervisor told me that her friend would come to see her parents and come to meet us later. My supervisor complained that my cousin was too old and could not write English. On that day, I had a chance to talk to my supervisor's friend called Joy and to make an appointment to meet her in Bangkok again. My supervisor told me that she would ask her friend to take my big suitcase to Bangkok.

I told my parents that I was going to work overseas but I did not tell them that I quit my job. My parents disagreed because they worried that I might be deceived. However I had made the decision and prepared for travel already. Then, I went to Bangkok and stayed with my relatives.

I went to meet Joy after contacting her by the telephone number that my supervisor gave to me. After that we took a taxi together. I only had a small suitcase which contained personal stuff because my big suitcase had been sent to Joy already. Joy brought me to her aunt's house which was located at Huaykwang district where my big suitcase was sent to. Then, Joy brought me to go shopping to buy a lot of stuff. After that, she brought me to stay at a hotel for one night. The next day, we went shopping again and to do some business. After that she told me she would see me at Don Muang Airport at around 2.00 pm.

At Don Muang airport, I met many of Joy's friends. One of them called Mac was gay. Mac came along with two women called Aoy and So and another one who showed up later was called Oui. I asked Joy how many people were in our group. Joy told me that there were 5 people including her. While we were waiting for the flight at the airport, a woman came to talk to us. She said she came back to Thailand for a few weeks for breast implant surgery and would leave Thailand again after the

surgery.

My cousin came to send me off at the airport. She gave me a watch as a valentine present. She was with me until we got to the gate. The other women and I did not have to do anything because Joy took care of all papers for us. I sat next to Aoy, a 17 years old girl. The airplane had transited at Hong Kong and flew straight to South Africa.

3. Cruel Destination

When we reached our destination, we got off the airplane and our passports were checked by the immigration officer but I was not permitted to enter the country. Therefore, Joy's husband who came with a nine month years old baby had to write a support letter for me. Finally, I could enter the country.

After that Joy told me to get in her husband's car while Joy asked for a taxi to send the other women to the casino. Joy told me that African policemen in the country believed that Thai women came here to work as prostitutes. Thus we had to separate into two groups.

After we arrived to Joy's house, Joy's husband went to pick up the other women from the casino to stay at her house together.

On the second night, I met two Thai women. One of them was pregnant. They told me that I had to be strong because I had to work as a prostitute. They said they had already known about this job before. However they had to be patient because they could not runaway from this premise. They did not even know where they lived.

A sudden fear came over me, because I had never thought that I would become a prostitute. While four of us were waiting for vendors to buy us in Joy's house, I heard Joy speak on the phone. She told them that I was a big and tall person and what kind of job would be suitable for me and where the most suitable place is for the other women. At that time, we did not know how to handle the situation or where we should runaway to. Since we were debt bonded from the huge debt, this held us back from running away. Our mobile phones which we used in Thailand were seized. Joy gave us new telephone cards which contained a small amount

of money. We exchanged our new phone numbers secretly. Joy and her husband did not know about this.

On the third day after we arrived in South Africa, Aoy and I were bought by Chan who we met at Joy's house for 15,000 Rand (about 90,000 Baht) and the other two women were sold to work in other places.

When we arrived to the new premise, I found two Thai women who had been working there. One of them came from the same province as me and another one came from Udonthani province. Not long after that, Aoy was sold again because she was too young (lower than 18 years old) and Chan was afraid that it would become a problem later.

Two Thai women and I stayed in a premise like a townhouse. All the glass doors were always locked securely and firmly. However we could see the lawn at the front of the house where there were two big guard dogs. The electricity system had been installed at the gate door and it was controlled by a remote control. I felt extremely anxious about this job. Chan told the two Thai women to teach me what I had to do.

I started working from 8.00 am. Chan's husband sent me to a house which provided massage services for European clients who bought the services through the internet. At that time, I did only massage. I did not go out to the front where clients picked and chose who they wanted because I could not speak English at all. Since I refused to work as a prostitute, Chan decided to send me to work at the bar.

At this premise, I found two Thai women who came from the same province as me. They had worked there for 8-9 months. They spoke English very well. They were willing to work as a prostitute as it was a quick way to make really good money. Since we came from the same province and I placed great trust in them, I told them that I did not want to work as a prostitute. They consoled me and told me that I should be patient because we had a huge debt to pay off including debt in Thailand. If we ran away, we did not know where to go. They said they were also being patient for the sake of their children and families in Thailand.

In this bar, I started to work as a prostitute. Two older

Thai women taught me everything I had to know and warned me about Chan with a hot temper when she used drugs. She forced women there to take drugs because they would be easily controlled when they became an addict. I earned about 4,000 Baht per hour but room rental and food were deducted from my income. So, I got around 2,700 Baht per hour but I did not receive any money at all. Chan wrote all details in her notebook. Sometimes I had to work for another bar because Chan needed more money.

Chan and her husband always argued about money earned from the prostitution business. We were forced to work from 8.00 am to 2.00 am and had a holiday only on Sunday. If customers called, we had to work outside under Chan's watch. Chan always told us that if we tried to escape, we would be killed. She said her husband knew many people, even some people in the airport. Moreover, if we would try to runaway, our families in Thailand would be forced to pay all the debt.

I secretly kept tips which I received from my clients. I bought telephone cards and called other women who

came from Thailand together with me. I wanted to know whether they could find the telephone number of the Thai Embassy. These other women had worked nearby Thai workers' work site. Fortunately, one Thai chef gave a telephone number of the Thai Embassy to them. I wrote it down and kept it and tried to make a phone call when I had a chance, but was never successful. Meanwhile, I had to do this job patiently and tried to avoid it as much as possible. I was waiting for someone who could help me.

Chan became harsh with me and forced me to work at the massage parlour again. I consulted with an older woman who came from Udonthani province. She had nearly completed paying off her debt. She also had a lover here. She understood that I did not want to work as a prostitute so she gave me the telephone number of Thai Embassy again.

One day in the afternoon, I finally managed to contact the Thai Embassy. I had told them about my stories and asked for help. Around 8.00 pm on the same day, the Thai Embassy's officer came with three white policemen to the bar. In that bar, there were about ten

Thai women who were willing to work there, so the policemen did not interfere with them. The policemen led me to Chan's house to pick up my clothes, air ticket and passport. When we reached Chan's house, we found only the empty room. It was like nobody had ever lived there before. I found that someone in the bar had called Chan so that she could runaway. I did not get any of my stuff except the clothes I wore.

The policemen asked me where the other friend of mine who was forced to prostitute was. I could only remember the name of the bar where I used to work. Then the policemen brought me to that bar and helped her out. Her air ticket and passport also had been seized. However she got her suitcase back.

The policemen led us to a house where there were women of many nationalities staying in the house. They provided a clean house and food for us. Next morning, an officer came to interview us and took us for a physical check-up. We stayed and waited there for ten days before returning to Thailand.

4. Fight for Life Again

I reached Thailand around early April. I had been forced to prostitute against my will for about two months. I had only some small amount of money with me and decided to stay with my sister in her house near Bangkok. I was so scared to return home which is in the Northern part of Thailand or contact anyone because I was ashamed to contact my friends and neighbours. I was afraid that they would know what I had done abroad. My friend, the woman who came back with me, stayed with me a night before returning to her hometown in Nakornsawan province.

I had taken some rest for about a week to overcome the psychological problems I experienced in South Africa, before starting to find a job. I applied for a job in few places but there were low paid jobs. Finally, I got a job at a furniture factory and I was able to foot the bill on debts for my car about 17,000 Baht which I had mortgaged as a travelling expense to work in South Africa. While I was going about with my life, my family called me that my father was seriously sick. Then I had to earn more

money to send to my elder brother to take care of my father.

Later, I attended a meeting for women working abroad under the project of Foundation For Women (FFW). Thus I had chances to talk and share my experiences and problems when I was working abroad. Moreover I was also informed of many organizations providing assistances for the people like us and I received some occupational support money. Unfortunately, I have not started to do anything yet, as I had to spend that money to help my father who became paralysed and my mother who became blind. There was no one else to take care of them. I wanted to return home and look after my parents who brought me up and loved me as their own child. But I had to work hard to earn money in order to be able to buy food and medicine. Fortunately my son had been raised by his aunt, so I did not have to worry much about him.

I struggle every single day in trying to pay back my debts. Had I been able to turn the clock back, I would never left my hometown to work abroad. I now have to restart my life from the beginning with very painful memories.

Questions

1. Which part of Thailand does Aeuy come from?
2. Why did Aeuy divorce from her husband?
3. Why did Aeuy want to work overseas?
4. Who else are involved in the process of Aeuy's working in overseas?
5. In which country did Aeuy go to work? How much do we know about this country?
6. What kind of job did Aeuy do? How much did she earn from her job?
7. How did Aeuy free herself from the forced situation?
8. How is Aeuy's life now?
9. How can we protect women from falling victims like Aeuy?

The Pursuit of Justice

The Struggle of Naa

1. Before Leaving

I was 30 years old when I made the decision to go work in Japan. I had two daughters. The first one was 7 years old and the second one was 1. My husband was a drug addict and never took care of us. Our neighbours called me and my children as “junkie’s wife” and “junkie’s children”. At that time, it seemed like my life was a living hell. One day, my neighbour who I have known since I was young persuaded me to work at his restaurants which has many branches in Japan. I would get paid 40,000 Baht per month. It was enough to take care of my children and to provide a comfortable life for them.

I discussed with my mother and she agreed with me because she said if I still stayed with my addicted husband, I would starve to death. My mother and I had placed great trust in our neighbour and we thought only about the bright futures of my children. My mother and

I had to borrow money from our neighbours about 40,000 Baht for passport fees, visa fees and ticket fees. I had to pay 5% interest each month.

When we had paid them the money, we also had to make another loan agreement which specified that we had borrowed 160,000 Baht from the neighbour's father. My neighbour told me that it was necessary for them to make a guarantee that I would not change my mind or runaway after the visa application process had finished. Actually, they did not lend us the money and we did not borrow the money. The agreement we made was used as a guarantee. If I changed my mind, I still had to pay this amount back to them plus interest.

Around the middle of February that year, when I went to Bangkok, I was injured in a bus accident. My legs were broken and I needed to get medical treatment. As a result I missed the appointment with the person who was waiting to pick me up at Mo Chit bus station. Later, I contacted the agency to ask them to send someone to pick me up again. After that, they brought me to the four storey apartment where I had to stay with other

women. We waited for around two weeks before travelling and they gave us 100 Baht per day for food allowance. Women who stayed in different floors were not allowed to talk to each other. We could only talk to our room mates. I heard from my room mates that they would go to work in a restaurant in Japan as well and they had paid 40,000 Baht fee to the agent.

During that time, they made us learn Japanese in order to answer questions from immigration officers and to be able to communicate with customers in the restaurants. Before our departure to Japan, we bought some clothes and suitcases.

I left from Thailand on 2nd of March. There were two women and one man who came with me. When we arrived in Japan, the man who came with us could not pass through the immigration check counter. At that time, I saw that the name specified in my passport was not my name. However, I never saw the passport again after it was stamped for entry to Japan. After that, I was sent to a small room where there were three women. We were under the control of a Thai woman from Phayao province

and her Indonesian husband. Here I met Bua who came from the same district but a different village. She arrived here about two weeks ago. She asked me whether I knew that we had already put one leg into hell when we arrived in Japan. I did not understand what she meant at that time.

The Thai woman who was in charge of the premises asked me “Do you know what you are going to do here?” I told her “I came to work at the restaurant”. She laughed at me and said “Really don’t you know what you have to do here? There are no restaurants here, you are sent to work as a prostitute in the brothel”. She kept repeating “Do you know how much you have to pay for your debts?” I told her that “I do not have any debts to pay because I borrowed money from my neighbours to pay for everything before I came here”. But she told me that “every woman who comes here must pay 1,280,000 Baht for their debts”

I was frightened and cried loudly because the debt was so huge, over a million. How could I repay the debt? I finally knew that the only way to pay off that debt would be to work as a prostitute. If I did not work, they would beat me or starve me. I had no choice. We were victims

who felt abandoned.

2. Escape

The other women and I were forced to work as prostitutes. Even though we earned a lot, they never gave us any money. I missed my children and cried everyday. As for my mother, she heard only good things from the agency. When my mother called me, I had to talk about the good things because there was always someone keeping an eye on me. They made Bua and I wear nice clothes to take pictures and send back to our families to show that we were happy and promised our families that we would send money back when our debts were paid off. We never got a day off even when we had our period. We had to put a small sponge inside us to stop the blood. If clients saw the blood, we would be fined for 5,000 Baht each. Thus, our debts kept increasing. In addition, we had to pay for room rental, electricity bill and the telephone bill.

We were permitted to go to buy Thai food once a week at a Thai food shop. This shop had only one exit

and there was a guard in front of the store. One day after I had worked there for about 3 months, I walked past a man in front of the toilet of the shop. He asked me how much I had to pay for my debt. I wondered why he knew about the debt. He told me that all Thai women who came here had to be sold and forced to work for pay their debts.

He told me “Be patient, when I receive the salary I would come help you”. He asked for my telephone number to contact me later. I gave to him but I did not expect that he would help me. Since I arrived in Japan, I dare not trust other people. My only hope was to survive to see my children again.

After having worked for five months, I nearly completed paying off my debts. However, I heard the woman in charge of the premise talking on a phone to another business that she would sell me to another place again because I had almost paid off the debt. I felt very upset and angry because I would have to face the very bad situation again. I talked with Bua about why we had been treated like this and why we had to pay for the debts we

never borrowed.

We promised that if anyone could run away from this premise, we would take legal action against these people so that they would be punished. The woman in charge started to suspect us because of our chat. After that, we were separated to work in different places. I was very angry so I decided to contact the man who had promised to help me.

He is called Nop. Nop was very kind to us. He explained his plan to help me and Bua. He asked his friend to come and help Bua first and then he would come to help me. We made an appointment to meet at Nop's place after we could escape. Nop pretended to buy me for prostitution and took me to stay at a motel for a night in order to make the woman in charge go back without waiting for me. After midnight, Nop and I had left the hotel and went to Nop's place and the next day in the evening, Nop's friend and Bua came to see us at Nop's place.

We made a decision to surrender ourselves to the police to send us back to Thailand. However we needed

money to buy air tickets first. Nop told me that next day, he would take us to work at a fish factory where many Thai workers worked. The next day when we woke up in the morning, we saw from a news in television that a Thai woman was killed and the name in the news was the name of Thai woman who kept surveillance on Bua. Then I asked Bua to tell me what had happened during their escape.

Bua told me that the woman who was killed found out that Bua was fleeing. Then she beat Bua to find out the truth about who would come to help her escape. When Nop's friend heard the fighting, he broke the door to come and help Bua and told Bua to run for her life. After that he followed Bua and told her that he accidentally killed that woman because she would not let them runaway easily. She tried to call her Indonesian husband that I and Bua had run away and asked her husband to send the Yakuza to hunt us down. Then Nop's friend decided to hurt that woman to keep us safe from those Yakuza but unfortunately she died.

The husband of that woman told the police that

Bua was the murderer who killed his wife. Then Bua and I were pursued and arrested. We were investigated. After that Nop and I were discharged because we were not involved in the case. Finally, Nop and I went back to Thailand in September that year.

The Japanese court sentenced Bua for 7 years and Nop's friend for 10 years. While she was serving her sentence, it was discovered that Bua suffered from ovary cancer (the last stage). She was permitted to go back to Thailand before finishing the sentence. She had the chance to stay with her family during the end of her life. She passed away about 3 years later. Unfortunately, the kind man who helped her has been confined in Japan until finishing the sentence.

3. The Pursuit of Justice

I returned to my hometown empty-handed but I was glad to be released from the hell in Japan. I told my mother and Bua's family about our stories. We sympathised with Bua because she could not come back to Thailand due to the sentence at that time. Bua's family and my family

agreed to call for justice. We reported to the police to prosecute those families who had deceived me and Bua to the living hell in Japan.

After I reported my situation to the police, my family and I were threatened. Stones were thrown at the house at night and drugs were hidden in our backyard. Then we were reported to the police as drug dealers or users. Fortunately, the evidence was insufficient to be arrested. Moreover, when my children rode bicycles to school and passed the agency's house, they were always threatened that one day they would be kidnapped. They told my mother that I was a bad person who destroyed their daughter's business. They said if they knew in advance, they would have never sent me to Japan. Then my mother told them that if she knew that they were sending me to be a prostitute, she would have never let me go.

They threatened my family that we would lose our house one day and we will not able to win the case because they had a lot of money to bribe the court judges. I had to move home many times for the sake of my children's safety. My daughters asked me when I would

stop moving them to new schools. My children's school grades were dropping sharply from the first rank to the eighth.

I was never scared of those threats because my experiences in Japan were far worse. The justice was the only thing I needed. The police who recorded my statement told me that the case record had been sent to the prosecuting attorney already and I could ask the public prosecutor in charge about the case. I called the prosecuting attorney almost every week to find out what progress had been made. After 87 days, only 3 days were left before the expiration of this case but the prosecuting attorney told me that the case record had not been concluded yet.

The inspector who processed my case advised me to go to Bangkok to make a request to see the Attorney General. In the Attorney's office I met the secretary of the Attorney-General who was supposed to handle my case. After I passed all my evidences to him, about a wait of an hour later, he came back and told me not to worry because the case would definitely be brought to the court. I came back to my province on that day and

stayed over night in the city because I wanted to ask the prosecuting attorney about the progress of my case. The prosecuting attorney told me that yesterday afternoon he had processed the case to be brought to the Court. I told him “Thank you very much” for his support. Later I heard that this prosecuting attorney got an order to move to another place. It seemed to me that if I did not go to the Attorney General’s office, my case would have never been sent to judicial proceedings.

After I came back to my village, my mother told me that the agent had been arrested by the police yesterday. But two days later, she was bailed out. After that her mother rode a motorcycle and passed by my house and shouted “how dare you present a petition to the Attorney General. You made me lose 350,000 Baht for nothing”.

Then I realised why the prosecuting attorney processed my case slowly. Since my case was brought to trial, my family and I were threatened even more. Therefore, I made a decision to bring my children to stay with Nop at his hometown in the North East of Thailand. However my mother insisted in staying because they

were so old and nobody would harm them anyway. They were only concerned about our safety.

My case had been in the court process for almost three years. At that time, I did not know about any foundations or organizations which provided assistance for the women who faced the problems like mine. Somehow I had to earn money to pay for the travel expense and other expenses during judicial process. The defendants i.e. the agent, her father, her mother always tried to drag on or delay the appointments made by the court. Finally, the Court sentenced them for 13 years. However only the daughter had been sentenced and her parents filed an appeal for her.

One year after the sentence, Bua came back to Thailand with a very serious illness. At that time the doctor said she would live for only two months. Bua's return to Thailand allowed the cooperation between Thailand and Japan for the prosecution process. Bua gave the testimony in the court as the defendant. She told them she was deceived and forced to work as a prostitute in Japan. I was becoming reluctant to call for justice because of

the huge expenses caused by running the case such as travelling fees or rental fees. Nevertheless, the Japanese lawyers advised me to claim damages under civil laws from the human trafficker's group. Next, a lawyer from a Thai lawyer's office approached me to give me advise, consultation and process our case in order to claim for the civil damages.

Presently, even with Bua passing away, the civil proceeding has not been completed. I feel that I have walked and fought for too long. Sometimes I am so tired. However I do realise that if I did not call for justice, nobody would protect and call for my human rights. If I stay silent, my story would become just another unlucky story of a woman in the exploitative society. Thus, I have been fighting and waiting for justice.

4. Starting with a New Partner Life

Now I am staying with my children and Nop who rescued me from the hell in a foreign country. He became my partner. We have a son. The more I stay and learn about him, the more I realise his kindness. Even though

initially I was not accepted by his family, we passed the hard moment together by with sincerity and patience.

Since the first day we have been partners, Nop has never reminded me about my terrifying experience. We do the best for our children's future. We hope to give our children the highest education so that they will not face the very bad experience like me.

Amongst striving for better lives for our family, Nop made the decision to work overseas again even if it is laborious. Nop will be patient and work hard for our better lives.

I will wait for the day we can stay together as a family. I feel that I was born to be together with him. Whenever I am in trouble, he always stands by me with moral support. Now I realise that even though we walk in a dark tunnel, we still have a chance to see some light leading us at the end of the road.

Questions

1. Who persuaded Naa to work in Japan?
2. How much did Naa pay for the travel? How did she enter Japan?
3. How were the working conditions and debts?
4. Who helped Bua and Naa escape from the woman in charge and what happened?
5. What are the difficulties in the case proceeding?
6. If you were Naa, would you prosecute the agency?
And Why?
7. What did you learn from Naa's story?

Create a Bright Future

The Story of Parn

1. Day of the Nightmares

I was born and lived in a village located in Srisaket province. My childhood was similar to my friends' who did not have a chance to study at high school because we had to help our parents to work. I got married when I was still young and stayed near my parents' house. After I gave birth to my child, I tried to work really hard because I wanted my child to have a good future.

There are only a few ways for women like me with low education to earn a living. When my neighbour came back from working overseas, she persuaded the women in my village to work with her at a restaurant in Italy. She told me that the job there was not so hard but it earned good money. Thus I consulted my mother about working overseas. She agreed and promised to raise my child instead of me. My mother and I borrowed money to pay for agency fees and traveling fees.

I hoped to earn as much money as possible to build a new house and to buy clothes for my children. Unfortunately, my dream was shattered when I arrived in Italy. The other women who had joined the trip together were sent to a house and realized that there was not work in a restaurant. We had to work as prostitutes. We did not even know what part of the country we were in.

The world became so dark for us in the unfamiliar country with unfamiliar people. We could not call for any assistance from anyone. The days seemed so long in Italy. I just kept thinking about when I would be able to see my mother and my child again. Fortunately, one day the police raided the house that we stayed together. After that we were assisted by the organizations in Italy until we could return to Thailand.

When I arrived at the airport in Thailand, there were staff from a Thai organization waiting to ask us what had happened. My friend and I wanted to prosecute the agency who deceived and forced us to be prostitutes. It was a job that we never dreamed of doing in our life. So, the staff took us to the police so we could report the

crime and they helped us during the judicial proceeding.

2. Changed Time

When I returned to my home and saw my mother and my child again, I had both happy and sad feelings at the same time because I could not make my dream that I promised to my mother and my child come true. We had to stay alone. Our neighbours did not believe the situation I had faced in Italy at all. They believed that because I didn't earn any money in Italy, I wanted to take revenge on them. I felt that people in the village believed or trusted only the rich. The relationship between myself and the people in the village had changed.

One day in the morning, I prepared food for the monks. I thought that through merit making, it might help me not to face any more bad experiences. However, the agency's father who is the monk in the village, walked passed my house but did not receive my food. He was annoyed with me because I prosecuted his daughter.

I was suffering. These feelings were killing me and nobody would help me out. My mother took me to a

mental hospital because she suspected I might have gone insane. I took all medicines given by the hospital to stop thinking about the bad things that happened to me. I sometimes wanted to commit suicide. Fortunately, I could not do that when I saw my mother and my child.

Until the day that Foundation For Women invited me to talk to other women who went through the bad experiences in foreign countries like me. Everyone opened their minds and helped each other to find out the solutions for new lives. I could see new light for my life. I now had moral support to maintain my life. I become strong and was able to have eye contact with others. I was also brave enough to tell my story to other women.

I had to travel to Bangkok to follow my case. It seemed to me that the agency had a lot of money to find a good lawyer for herself and the case was proceeding slowly. Finally, the agent was bailed out and went to Italy because she claimed that she had to receive medical treatment. My friend and I were so surprised as to why she could be bailed out.

Sometimes I wonder whether women like us are

allowed to call and receive justice. If you do not face bad experiences like us, they will not be able to understand how seriously the experiences affect our mental condition. The sentences from the court are the only one thing which proves that we are victims. Moreover, the justice we receive is one method for curing our painful hearts.

3. New Life in Our Hands

The meetings arranged by Foundation For Women have given the chance to victims to participate and meet other victims. I got a fund for silk weaving. My mother is very good at this. We hoped to earn income in both agriculture and silk weaving to support our family.

However, I could not escape from the suffering. It was because after I came back from Italy I met Sak, my new partner who told me that he loved me and wanted to take care of me and my family. Sak told me that he had divorced from his ex-wife. He wanted to start a new family with me. We had stayed together about a year till I was pregnant. However, I found that he had not divorced his wife like he told me.

I do remember that day when his mobile phone rang while he was in a toilet. I answered the phone and heard a woman's voice. She asked me when Sak would come home. I asked her who she was. She said she was his wife. After Sak walked out from the toilet, I asked him about the woman. Then he brought me to see her.

I was so hurt when Sak told his wife that I was just only someone he knew. I cried hard as I had seen Sak's true self who had I hoped to rely on. His wife started to shout at me and hit me. Sak grasped my arms and let his wife hit me. Finally she hit my abdomen with her legs.

At that time, I was four months pregnant. Therefore after I was hit, I had a hemorrhage. However they did not stop hitting me but dragged me to a police station. She reported to a policeman that I snatched her husband even though I was having a serious hemorrhage. The policeman was her friend. He believed whatever she said while I was trying to explain. Until another policeman asked me why I was seriously hemorrhaging, I explained the story to him. Thus he sent me to a hospital and he

told me to report to the police.

At the hospital, a doctor checked the baby's condition. He told me that I lost too much blood so that my baby might not be able to live. I started to cry. I asked the doctor to contact and inform my mother and my sister about me. Next the doctor sent me to a hospital in the province. Here I was informed that my baby could not stay with me. When my mother and my sister arrived, I was crying. They consoled me to stop thinking about the incident. I had to stay in the hospital as a result of the serious hemorrhage.

When I stayed home, my mother boiled herbal plants for me. She took good care of me until I was stronger. I appreciated her so much. She must have been so tired because she was always with me and worried about me. I decided to report to the police that Sak and his wife injured me both physically and emotionally.

At this moment, I realised that I should not believe any men again. I should be strong in order to maintain the remaining of my life and to give moral support to my mother who is getting old. We will work in our fields and

create future for our descendants. I told my mother I would not go far away from my house again.

Questions

1. In which country did Parn and her friends go to work?
2. What kind of problems did Parn face after she came back home?
3. How is the progress of the proceeding with the agency?
Will Parn receive justice?
4. How is Sak's habit?
5. What are the Parn's solutions in her life?
6. Are there any women in your village facing the problems like Parn?
7. How do we prevent these problems for such women like Parn?

Come know each others here
With love and hope
With the right to think and try
Forget sadness throw it to the sea
If waves are still in the sea,
We will stand on the coast firmly
Having the same heart from now on
Making wishes and dreams for the future

By Eurm, Live Our Lives Group
2006

Because she is female
Staying amongst real, poor, hurt and cold
Thus, hopefully to grasp the stars
Take out pain from eyes
Because she is builder
Work for hopes and wishes
If work hard, endure
Never weak or quit

By Pimtham
2007

Live Our Lives Group

Live Our Lives Group was established by women who had suffered terrible times during migrating to work in foreign countries. The members are the victims of international human trafficking in Asia, Europe and Africa. After attending activities arranged by the Foundation For Women such as curing, rehabilitating, finding solutions for their lives, calling for justice and claiming damages as the victims of human trafficking. Those attended agreed to work together and to provide moral support to each other. Moreover, they want to prevent other women from going through the experiences they faced abroad. Live Our Lives Group began to provide a venue for people to get together as we support them to step forward in their lives.

Presently, there are about 50 members in Live Our Lives Group all around Thailand. New members are always welcome.

For those interested in joining, please contact to

the address of Foundation For Women. The foundation works to assist and provide moral support to the members.

The temporary address:

Foundation For Women

295 Jaransanitwong 62

Soi Wat Paolohid Bangplad Bangkok 10700

Tel 02-4251246, 02-4335149

E-mail yingsoogroup@gmail.com

If bodies are weak
If hearts are weak with no hope
If lives lack energy
If dreams become cloudy
Remember your friends here
With advice for bright directions
Staying with you near or far
With moral support all the times

By Nee, Live Our Lives Group
2008

She is alone in wide world
Lonely way doesn't know right or wrong
Finding a friend advisor
Decide the way together
For female friends fighters
The world sees you alive to be creators
At the far away with moon light
Wait for you and me to see all

By Pimtham
2007

Foundation For Women

Foundation For Women is a Non Governmental Organization to ensure and promote human rights of women and to provide assistance to women and children. Moreover the organization also raises awareness of the current problems of women such as violence in the family or other kinds of violence in communities such as sex and human trafficking.

Background

In March 1984, a small project for women called “Women’s news centre” was started. The objective of the centre is to provide information about working overseas for women in order to prevent them from being deceived into prostitution. The centre also produces educational media for women for different professions.

In 1985, “Women Shelter” was started in order to support women who was hit by their husbands and to campaign against violent violence in the family. Next,

in 1986, “Khum lar Project” began for awareness raising campaign in the communities to prevent children into the prostitution. “Khum lar books” have been produced and used as educational media by teachers in schools.

The centre also runs many projects such as the research on migration and human trafficking in children and women by “The New Value Campaign project”, the media production project targeting female teenagers through training community volunteers in preventing violence against women and children.

Foundation For Women registered as a foundation at the end of 1986. In 2005 it was announced to be a Public Interest Organization, no. 605.

Objectives

1. To assist women through poverty and support underprivileged women in the society.
2. To provide education and educational media for women in different professions.
3. To promote women’s rights noted under the international declaration by the United Nations (UN)

4. To research and disseminate information for women and help projects to develop women.

5. To promote the rights of consumers and mass communication.

6. To cooperate with other civil rights organisations and NGOs.

Current Activities

Presently, Foundation For Women runs many projects as below.

News Centre for Women Project

The news centre for women gives advice to women who have come back from working overseas. It is evident from the current situation that many women have been deceived and exploited by human traffickers. Most women lack information on how to get assistance. They also do not know their rights or how to ask for legal assistances. Thus they have to handle problems such as heavy debts, threats and responsibilities to their families by themselves. As a result they end up having

no choice but to migrate overseas and they run the risk of being exploited by human traffickers.

The news centre for women provides temporary accommodation and provides legal assistance, vocational information and vocational funds. The centre also arranges meetings for women who have come back from working abroad and to provide moral support for them.

Assistance Project for Foreign Women and children

Foundation For Women provides assistance for foreign children and women who became victims of human trafficking or being exploited or violated. The project operates in the detention center of the Immigration Bureau. The Foundation For Women cooperates with the Immigration Bureau to identify victims of human trafficking. Moreover the project also assists women and children who have been severely abused by assisting their return to hometowns. In addition, the project arranges activities and provides information in order to prevent those women and children in the detention center and governmental shelter from being deceived once again. The project aims to assist

foreign women and children for legal protection and damages. Foundation For Women have followed-up and evaluated the needs of women and children who were victims in order to prevent them from being the victims of human trafficking again.

Crate a New life of Women and Children in the Andaman (Tsunami affected area) Project

Foundation For Women works in community areas destroyed and affected by Tsunami in cooperation with local volunteers. The project wants to campaign to prevent and solve violence. Violence against children and women can be found in families in many ways such as physical violence, sexual violence, and mental violence. Such violence will badly affect physical conditions and it may lead to death. Therefore, violence in families is a long term problem which has a serious affect on children's development. It can also obstruct life security and effects communities and society.

The foundation has campaigned against family violence in community. The foundation has encouraged

knowledge of family violence at the community level to prevent family violence.

Shelter Project for Women and Children Trafficked Persons

Foundation For women and Social Action for Women launched a shelter for women and children's victims of human trafficking. The first objective of the project is to prevent Burmese woman and children of victims of human trafficking not to become victims again. Secondly, the project assists Burmese women and children who are under the risk of being exploited when travelling back to their hometowns. Thirdly, the project provides solutions for victims of human trafficking. Next, as a result of assistance from the project, the victims will be able to rely on themselves when they reintegrate into their society. The project intends to promote cooperation between private and government sectors in order to assist women and children of victims of human trafficking and to reintegrate them to society again.

Project for Campaigning and Monitoring the Implementation of “Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW)”

Foundation For Women which is the coordinator of women’s networks (for progress and peace) published the training handbook for the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. The project has arranged training and promoted the handbook to be distributed among concerned personnel in government, private sectors and public organizations who work for women.

Foundation For Women, the member organizations and the related networks such as Hill tribe Woman Network and Disabled Woman Network collaborate to encourage the government to implement projects under the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women. The network has collaborated to write a public report and to provide suggestions for the CEDAW Committee. They also follow-up and monitor the outcome of the CEDAW meetings. In addition, they also monitor the

outcome of the law enforcement such as the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act, the Domestic Violence Victim Protection Act and related new laws such as the Act on Gender Equality.

Join donation for Foundation For Women
by check or money orders

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Or Transfer money to saving account

Account name “Foundation For Women”

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