



WE ARE UNITING ANTI-SLAVERY
EFFORTS TO BRING ABOUT TANGIBLE
CHANGE



NationalFreedomNetwork

Newsletter

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It has been a busy year so far! We knew that our work was going to intensify but at the beginning of the year, had no idea quite how this would look. Here is a brief update on some of the excitement we have been involved in over the past six months. Enjoy the read!

Representing Civil Society at National Government level

Earlier this year the NFN had a meeting request from Adv. Sewpaul, the Deputy Chief State Law Advisor for Constitution Development at the Department of Justice. She is also the Chairperson for the National Inter-sectoral Committee for Trafficking in Persons (NIC:TIP) where the NFN sits as Civil Society representative. Several others were present at this meeting in March, including representatives from The Presidency and UNODC.



Diane Wilkinson felt that the meeting went well, with express interest from Government's side in getting to know the NFN better and to engage and build relationship with the organisations working on the ground - both the prominent ones as well as the smaller ones.



The NFN was also invited to represent Civil Society on the newly formed National Task Team, which held its first meeting on 26 June. Our team member Dr. Marcel van der Watt attended and will be the official representative in this forum. He is passionate about bringing the voices on the ground up to the ears of Government.



Networking

Obviously the core of what we do is networking (and we love it)! The past six months have seen two successful NFN online gathering and discussion sessions that were open to all our official members across the country. It was great to connect and talk through topics and issues that affect us all, as well as share some of the solutions and success stories with one another.

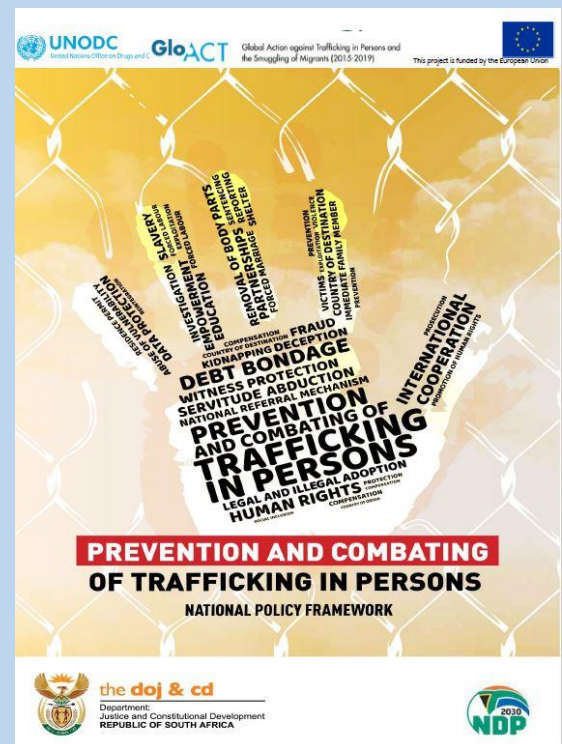
We also initiated five in-person networking days across Gauteng, where we met up with over 60 Network members, potential members and others working in the field. These days are very long but also such fun, and we love the personal interaction that results in each of us feeling encouraged, empowered and - most importantly - feeling connected and not so alone in this heavy work.

In addition to the Networking we have, in the past six months, introduced 154 people to each other in efforts to strengthen unity and collaboration.

NPF Launch: 25 April 2019

The long awaited National Policy Framework (NPF) for Trafficking in Persons was launched in Pretoria on 25 April and the NFN was invited to attend. This document basically comprises the National Strategy and National Action Plan for our country, in terms of how we are going to be dealing with Human Trafficking going forward. It gives clear direction and guidance in terms of priority areas and also allows for greater accountability.

One of the comments that stood out for us was when the facilitator, Mr. Kunene from the UNODC, said that it's a brilliant document because it is owned by Government, but also had so much input from Civil Society. We are so proud to have been able to facilitate much of this input, and really grateful to our Government colleagues for considering and including the voices from the ground when drafting the NPF.



KZN Task Team meeting: 30 May 2019

We were guests at the HHPPB (KZN) Provincial Task Team meeting. It was a great time of networking; both catching up with old colleagues and putting faces to names that we have known only via email for a long time! We were also given the opportunity to present on the NFN and to answer any questions that people had about us. This visit was such a success that we have decided to try and reach every single Provincial Task Team in this way, and our next visit will hopefully be to the North West Task Team. Below Diane and Marina pose with some of the incredible HHPPB members and JJ Harder from the US Embassy.



SADC Project

The American Bar Association: Rule Of Law Initiative (ABA ROLI) recently finalised a project headed up by Susan Marx, that focused on the harmonisation of Counter-Trafficking Laws in the SADC region, with the aim to also increase coordination between these countries.

The NFN was involved in a workshop held in Mozambique during March and asked to present at a workshop in June, where we had the pleasure of introducing the NFN to Prosecutors from the various SADC countries, and elaborating on what we do and how we aim to work with, support and serve Government in our counter-Trafficking efforts.



Awareness Event

Chantal Barra-Tewitz outdid herself with another fabulous awareness event held in Gauteng on 31 March 2019, themed this year as "Hope Grows Here". There were 110 people in attendance who all learned more about Human Trafficking and Cyber Safety. In excess of R7000 worth of toiletry donations were collected on the day, and have been donated towards three shelters for trafficking victims. Thank you Chantal for all the effort you put into planning and hosting the event, you are a shining example of what just ONE person can do!



Safe House Support

Thank you to the many people who made donations of clothing needed for 22 male victims of human trafficking. We also received donations of over 1200 pieces of ladies underwear, which were collected, sorted and distributed to 12 shelters for women. The ladies were so grateful for these 'forgotten' items.



Call to Action

Many victims arrive with just the clothes on their backs, and the shelters then call on us to assist. We are currently collecting clothes for this cause so that we have a ready supply of nice clothing to provide when and as the need arises. Please get in touch should you have anything you would like to donate. A huge THANK YOU to the Roodt family, who have generously donated storage space for our Safe House Support donations and supplies, we are so grateful for this space!