

HAGAR NEWS

Hagar USA | c/o Town Bank | P.O. Box 180620 | Delafield, WI 53018

personal transformation
social reintegration
economic empowerment



AT HAGAR, WE BELIEVE IN HOPE

Dreams Gone Sour

Cambodian employment agencies prey on underage girls

In the off-chance that you travelled from Phnom Penh, Cambodia to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia recently, you may have noticed 40-50 unaccompanied Cambodian women on your flight. This is a growing phenomenon. Every year in increasing numbers, Cambodian women seek the promise of employment in Malaysia. Sadly, there have been growing instances of abuse, mistreatment, and illegal detention of women through cross-border recruitment agencies. Too often the job-seekers are not women at all, but girls as young as 13.

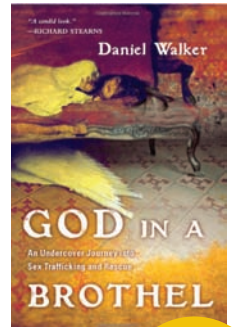
Although the legal working age for domestic workers is 18 in Cambodia and 21 in Malaysia, underage girls are recruited, their passports taken, and documents falsified. Then, they are detained in 'training centers,' ostensibly to learn job-related skills. Sadly, the centers are notorious for lack of food, overcrowding, and physical and sexual abuse. Dreams of becoming fairly paid domestic helpers, nannies, and factory workers soon go sour.

As our newsletter goes to print, Hagar Cambodia has received five more girls rescued from these centers. They join other girls in our care from similar circumstances. Hagar caseworkers are investigating each case, assessing levels of trauma, and locating families. Thankfully, this issue is currently receiving significant media attention in Cambodia. Government authorities are taking note. We are advocating that these abusive practices, which prey on vulnerable young women, will stop.

God in a Brothel

by Daniel Walker

published by
InterVarsity Press 2011



God in a Brothel is the true story of an undercover investigator's experiences infiltrating the multi-billion dollar global sex industry. It is the story of a rescuer who freed many hundreds of victims leading to the prosecution of dozens of perpetrators. It is the personal story of Daniel Walker, a New Zealander who followed a path of costly discipleship, agonizing failure and unlikely redemption. Perhaps most importantly, it is a story of triumph for the victims released from lives of slavery.

At Hagar, we treasure this story because we witness the transformation of clients released through Daniel Walker's good work, every day. We highly recommend that you read this book.

Must
Read!

“ I have escaped the darkness. I am experiencing the fullness of life. ”

—Thi

After three years of abuse on the streets, Thi was brought to Hagar. Now, life is coming full circle. He is a third year university student and intern in Hagar Cambodia's computer department. Read full story at hagarusa.org/stories/there-is-always-hope/

Serving the Most Forgotten



In Afghanistan, Hagar prepares to open The Lighthouse, a transitional care center for women and girls who cannot go home due to threats of violence.

In the course of our research to determine this next step, Hagar Afghanistan interviewed 45 women in prison. Of these, 39 claimed that upon release they would have no family support and nowhere to go. According to 19 women, their families had threatened death upon their return. Reasons for incarceration speak volumes about the status of women in Afghanistan:

- 38% due to forced sex work
- 27% for running away from a forced marriage
- 19% for being raped
- 15% for running away to live with another man

“In all things we aim to follow the example of Jesus who never gave up and who coaxed life from the darkest corners of human experience.”



Hagar's First Olympian Racing to his Potential

Born with an intellectual disability, Ratanak had a tough time growing up. Even his own relatives called him names. His mother says that she had nearly given up. Then, when he was 15, she learned about Hagar Cambodia's House of Smiles program.

Since then, Ratanak's mother says, "our lives have never been the same." Now 18 years old, he's got friends and he loves studying 2nd grade in an integrated classroom. He works part-time in a small café.

Still, no one ever dreamed that he would represent Cambodia in the Special Olympic Games in Greece. Last summer, he won silver and bronze medals in the 100 and 200 meter dash. He received them proudly among 7000 other competitors from around the world.

"Now everyone believes that my son has potential. When they hear his story, they are amazed. They never thought that a boy like him could accomplish so much," says Ratanak's mother.

"I am the proudest mom in the world knowing that I have a son like Ratanak."

Read full story, *The Proudest Mom in the World*, at hagarusa.org/stories.



Reflection from... Hagar Vietnam's Leader:

I've been reminded recently of the extremely challenging work that Hagar social workers and counselors have to face. With limited resources, expertise, and staff, our case workers are sometimes called upon to do the impossible.

Our Vietnam team has recently had to deal with runaway clients, a perpetrator who locked his wife in a cage, and a client suffering from severe panic attacks. At the same time we're supporting sick babies of women who were trafficked to be surrogate mothers. All of this is in addition to the other ongoing cases that need our attention.

I so admire all of our caseworkers for their courage and their heart. They are clearly committed to do 'whatever it takes for as long as it takes' for these difficult cases.

— Agnes Lam, Hagar Vietnam
Country Representative

Our Board

Hagar USA welcomes new Board Chairperson, **Joseph Garcia**, of Bowie, Maryland. Under his leadership, the following Directors govern Hagar USA, a 501c3 organization:

- **Clarisse Chung**, San Jose, CA
- **Emily Hill**, Cincinnati, OH
- **Shelli Kronic**, San Jose, CA
- **Jason Mather**, Long Beach, CA
- **Talmage Payne**, Phnom Penh, Cambodia

HAGAR

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