

Forced Marriage Report

Advocacy, Awareness-raising and Education

The first half of 2017 has involved some very exciting forced marriage projects. We have engaged in numerous initiatives to gain traction in awareness-raising and education, and have continued to work on advocating on behalf of those in, or at risk of, forced marriage.

- It is wonderful that we were successful in obtaining a small grant to help our projects delivery through the John Wallis Small Grants Program
- We have liaised with Helena Zeweri, who has been here from the US conducting research into forced marriage through Monash University. Sharing our knowledge, understandings and experiences has been an invaluable process
- Our participation in the Victorian Forced Marriage Network has continued. The Network is certainly growing and gaining strength through its shared efforts. We have made connections with new colleagues in the forced marriage space, which has in turn opened up opportunities to engage with school and community groups
- A wonderful session was conducted at St Monica's College in Epping, at which we engaged with Year 12 students as part of their Year 12 Community Outreach and Social Justice Reflection Day. We were able to involve students in creating a 3D representation of their new-found understandings of trafficking in humans, forced labour and forced marriage. Part of the display was an amazing life-sized Wedding Dress of Tears. This dress, representing forced marriage, was created from thousands of white tissues and featured small padlocks as bodice embellishments



- We have been involved in a planning day for the Caroline Chisholm College Staff Faith Development Day to take place on 17 July. During the Faith Development Day ACRATH will present to over 200 staff. The focus of our presentation is modern slavery in Australia, with a particular exploration of forced marriage

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Right:
Logos for 3 forms of certification of ethical sourcing of raw materials (chocolate, coffee, tea etc)



Forced Marriage Report continued

- ACRATH's Perth forced marriage Workshop was an incredible opportunity to work with over 80 front-line organisations and education providers. It was also a catalyst to be able to work with the Santa Maria College Year 11 Religious Education Staff Team. During our time at Santa Maria we were able to assist the Year 11 team to develop a Unit of Study for their students on forced marriage
- Planning is currently underway for working with the CEO in Perth for the delivery of a session on forced marriage for their schools' Religious Education leaders
- We have attended a training session in Melbourne with the Federal AGD (Attorney-General's Department) on forced marriage. This session included presentations from the AGD, Australian Federal Police, the Red Cross and the Australian Muslim Women's Centre for Human Rights. It was an outstanding opportunity for updated learning and for networking with new colleagues with whom we have arranged shared presentations in the Islamic community and with Islamic schools
- Recently we met with Hon Natasha Maclaren-Jones MLC as part of the NSW Inquiry into human trafficking. It was a valuable opportunity for us to discuss the work of ACRATH and our network colleagues in working to support CALD communities, in the human trafficking space
- One highlight of the year's work to date has been representing ACRATH, with three other Australian delegates, in Jakarta at the Exchanging Knowledge, Building Relationships: Indonesian and Australian Perspectives on Reducing Child and Forced Marriage Conference. The purpose of the conference was to share successful strategies for reducing the incidence of forced marriage in both Australia and Indonesia. The importance of education was certainly highlighted. Our field trip to an Islamic boarding school was illuminating, as it provided the opportunity to engage with teachers dealing with the challenge of forced marriage within their student cohorts.



The second half of 2017 looks to be as action-packed as the first half. It continues to be an amazing experience to work on ACRATH's forced marriage initiatives, and it is made all the more valuable and successful because of the like-minded organisations with whom we engage on a regular basis.



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We acknowledge the funds received under a grant from the Australian Government. ACRATH also needs core business funding and additional funding for special projects.

Please consider a regular donation to ACRATH so that we can plan ahead.

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