

Child Slavery Today?

Request *Stop Trafficking* newsletter at: Stoptraffick@aol.com



Drissa left his home in Mali and traveled over 300 miles to neighboring Côte d'Ivoire in search of work, harvesting cocoa on plantations. On arrival he was sold to a plantation owner, taken to a remote plantation and forced to work from dawn until dusk with no pay.

The work was exhausting. If Drissa showed signs of tiredness he was beaten. At night, along with 17 other young men, he was locked in a small room with only a tin can as a toilet.

When Drissa was caught trying to escape, he was tied up and beaten until he couldn't walk. (*Anti-Slavery: www.antislavery.org*)

In Africa a small child, Martha Wamboi, describes her life on a coffee plantation...
"I pick the raw berries, then I take them to the trough and dump them in. I get 10 shillings. Then I pick another can. For a whole day I get 60 shillings." (Video: *Stolen Childhoods*)

Coffee prices have reached a 30 year low for coffee farmers, yet multinationals record huge profits. By the time the coffee reaches U.S. supermarkets, the price has gone up 4000%! But who gets that extra money?

Not the coffee farmer nor the child picker!

If you buy a \$1.50 cup of coffee, those who harvested the coffee beans may get as little as 1¢. The distributors and coffee companies get the rest.

Two years ago Starbucks raised the average price of its coffees by 11¢ at its 4500 stores in North America. A 12 oz. latte rose to \$2.30 in CA, to \$3.00 in NY. A reporter, interviewing customers, found that most people had no problem paying the extra 11¢! **Why not ask to put that money in the pocket of the farmer?**

By your choosing to pay a few more cents for Fair Trade coffee, you are giving a living wage to those who labor to bring coffee to you. This removes the need for child trafficking and gives poor children some hope for a future.

ACTION: Find out which stores in your neighborhood carry Fair Trade coffee. Visit <http://www.crsfairtrade.org> to learn how to support small scale coffee growers.

Yes! Every year at least 1.2 million youngsters under 18 years of age are sold into some form of slave labor.

There are 211 million child-laborers, between the ages of 5 and 14. Of these, 171 million work in risky conditions. About 120 million children work full time. *Fides, the News Agency for the Vatican Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, Jan. 2006.*

On the commodities exchange in New York, cocoa prices fluctuate dramatically, while the price tag of a chocolate bar stays nearly the same. North Americans and Europeans consume 80% of the cocoa supplied by the third world.

When you buy a 75¢ candy bar, 70¢ goes to the company, 5¢ to the farmer. M&M, the largest chocolate producer in the world, has annual profits of about \$16 billion per year. Yet M&M refuses to buy fair trade chocolate.

Fair Trade chocolate ensures a living wage to those who harvest cocoa and helps eliminate the need to resort to child trafficking. It gives children a chance to receive an education and create a life for themselves.

ACTION: Visit <http://www.globalexchange.org/cocoa> to find out where to obtain Fair Trade chocolate.



Buying products with this label guarantees that the workers are free, have been paid a living wage, and can send their own children to school.



Coffee and cocoa beans should bring dignity to the pickers, as well as pleasure to the consumers.

"Trafficking in persons – in which men, women and children from all over the globe are transported to other countries for the purposes of forced prostitution or labor – inherently rejects the dignity of the human person and exploits conditions of global poverty."

US/Mexico Bishops Pastoral Letter 11.2002