



# Oasis Belgium

Newsletter  
July 2009



## Stop the Traffik



Thank you for your support of Oasis as we run “Stop the Traffik” here in Belgium and contribute to the global campaign against human trafficking. Stop the Traffik began because traffickers were taking children Oasis was working with in India. If you have seen the film “Slumdog Millionaire”, you will know that life for street children is tough, but unlike the film it doesn’t always end happily. In Mumbai, two young children called Sunny and Vihini often came to a drop in centre run by Oasis. Suddenly they disappeared and when we checked with their father he said he had sold them to a trafficker. It was this incident that started Stop the Traffik. It’s not just in far away places that trafficking happens though, but also right here in Belgium.

### Inside

**Thai massage parlours** Oasis is teaming up with Serve the City to help marginalized women.

**Exciting new schools work**  
We have produced the lessons which will be used around the world in the “Start Freedom” project and will soon start a youth mentoring project

**Chocolate campaign**  
The campaign has recently had successes with Cadbury and Mars, now for Nestlé!

**The Brussels 20km**  
We ran 20km in the heat of summer and are still here to tell the tale!



## Thai Massage Parlour project

Most people here in Belgium have no idea that there has been a rapid increase in the number of Thai massage parlours in the country. These are parlours directly linked to the sex industry and often have isolated, vulnerable, exploited and sometimes trafficked women in them. When we decided to find out more about what was happening, we quickly came up with a list of 75 parlours to visit.

At Thai new year in April, we teamed up with a group of volunteers from a Christian organisation called Serve the City and took presents to women in Thai massage parlours across Belgium. Mostly the women were very happy to be spoken to and helped. One woman said “No one ever gave us a present here”. We also began to build up a picture of what was happening. Some

of the parlours were much more closed and one of them we reported to the police because it had so many signs of trafficking.

We decided to go back with a newsletter in Thai helping the women connect to the local community because we know that the less isolated a woman is, the less likely it is that she can be abused or held in slavery. The women liked the idea, and even as we visited and asked them what they would like in the newsletter, they began to tell us of the abuse which was happening, with one woman telling us how she had suffered physical abuse for years and knew many women in the same situation. We are now helping her connect to the care she needs. The first Thai language newsletter will come out in August, and it will be produced together with a church called The Well and also a Thai organisation called Nightlight in Bangkok.

**What can you do?** We still need volunteers to help take the newsletter to women in the massage parlours. If you live in Belgium and would like to help, please contact Miet at [miet@oasisbe.org](mailto:miet@oasisbe.org)



Exciting new schools work, which is fighting human trafficking all around the world.

Often when we teach in schools people ask us the question – but what can I do to make a difference.....

In response to this question we designed a youth mentoring program for young people to learn how their skills and dreams can make a difference for a more just world. It's a Flemish language resource and it's called "Recht is niet Krom". We hope it will empower young people across Flanders to use their skills for bringing change.

### What can you do?

Help get your local school involved. Contact Niels at [niels@oasisbe.org](mailto:niels@oasisbe.org) and he'll send you all you need to get your school involved.

Recht is niet Krom!

Imagine if you were offered the opportunity to warn young people about the dangers of human trafficking and how, by making the right choices, they can make themselves and others safer. Imagine you could do this in thousands of schools around the world. Imagine that the UN decided to get involved. Imagine if the UN decided to give you the use of their building in New York to send a webcast message around the world to launch this project. Unbelievable? That is exactly what has happened to us!

At Oasis Belgium has been hard at work producing the education resources to make this happen – lessons for teachers, fact sheets and exciting activities for students to get involved with. In all these will appear in nine languages, including English, Dutch, French, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, Arabic, Hindi and Bangla!

The big launch at the UN in New York and the webcast around the world will take place on October 14<sup>th</sup> and then the lessons will be taught in at least 10,000 schools. All the schools will have put on a play or made a film for the local community, raising awareness about human trafficking. On March 25<sup>th</sup> 2010 we will have thousands of pictures and films of people's actions on the Stop the Traffik website, so we can all share in this global project.

Here in Belgium we are working hard to get the lessons into as many schools as possible, as it is such a great opportunity to reach thousands of young people.

**What can you do?** Help get your local school involved. Go to [www.stophetraffik.org](http://www.stophetraffik.org) to find out how.



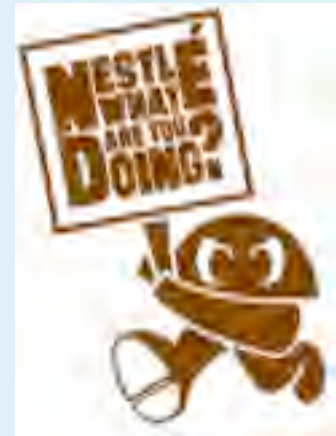
# Traffik free chocolate!

For a few years now, we have been campaigning for chocolate companies to stop sourcing cocoa from farms that exploit trafficked children. In Ivory Coast thousands of children are still being trafficked and forced to work on cocoa farms, picking the beans that make our favourite snack. For years the chocolate industry said that it was too complex a problem, and that it was impossible to get cocoa that was free from trafficking, and then at last, this year things started to turn around.

First Cadbury announced that their famous Dairy Milk Bar in the UK would go Fairtrade this summer. So, we launched a campaign called March on Mars, asking Mars to make similar promises. The result was that two weeks into the campaign Mars announced that they would make their Galaxy bar certified as free from trafficking in the UK and they would work so that all their chocolate was free from trafficking by 2020. That's a long time away, but it is still a major step forward.

## What can you do?

We have now launched a campaign to get Nestlé to follow the rest. If you go to [www.stopthetraffik.org](http://www.stopthetraffik.org) you will be able to sign up to our “KitKat – give me a break” campaign.



## Why do we need traffik free chocolate?

Eight years after the chocolate industry admitted that there was trafficking and child exploitation on the cocoa farms of Ivory Coast, very little has been done. Children are still promised jobs and then exploited. They come from Mali, Burkina Faso and within Ivory

- 1 Cadbury have now promised fairtrade Dairy Milk bars in the UK
- 2 Mars have promised to certify Galaxy bars as traffik free by next year in the UK and the whole of their supply by 2020.
- 3 Now its Nestlé's turn. Join us on the “KitKat – give us a break campaign”



### Run for their lives!

On May 20<sup>th</sup> this year 50 runners completed the Brussels 20km race for Oasis Belgium/Stop the Traffik. It was an amazing experience, running with over 27,000 other people over the hills and cobbles of Brussels. It was fun, but the final hill at 17 kilometres will live long in the memory! Together, we raised more than €7000 to help in the fight against human trafficking.

### Thanks!

Since we launched more than two years ago, people have blessed us with financial support through monthly giving, events and gifts. It's only through this kindness that we are able to do our work. So, to all those who have committed money, time and prayer for us, thank you so much.

If you don't already, please do consider giving to us on a monthly basis, it would be very much appreciated and give us the stability we need to help stop people being bought and sold.

To give in Belgium, you can simply set up a standing order to our account 001-5143317-65. In the UK, please email [phil@oasisbe.org](mailto:phil@oasisbe.org) for a giftaid form. Thanks!



Oasis Belgium is a registered charity in Belgium, and is part of the global Oasis family. Please do check out our website at [www.oasisbe.org](http://www.oasisbe.org) to find out more about what we do and what Oasis is doing around the world!