

S3. Ep 5: Show me the money: the economy of human life- the real truth behind Human- trafficking

[00:00:00] **Masechaba Mdaka:** We advise our listeners that content for this episode may be disturbing. Discretion is advised. The international Labor Organization believes there are almost 21 million victims of trafficking around the world. The UN's most recent report found almost half of the victims were forced to work typically in factories, restaurants, and building sites.

[00:00:23] The majority, 53% were exploited in the sex industry. 12 countries reported trafficking for organ removal. The rest of the victims were forced into petty crime or begging, or were children thrown into armed conflict. I was trafficked in my early twenties by a man that I really thought cared about me, and he abused me, starved me, and then eventually, uh, sold me.

[00:00:50] I think what most people think is once you're away from that abuse, that like things go back to normal , but there really isn't, um, there really isn't a normal after that. [00:01:00] Rebecca Carey is a survivor of human trafficking. It's considered among the fastest growing criminal industries in the world. Welcome back.

[00:01:07] Now, Scores of young women go missing every single day in South Africa chasing job opportunities. But in the latest incident now, Gulu na da police rescued four women from a Durban North House. They'd been falsely promised jobs at a call center, when in reality they were being sold into the sex trade.

[00:01:27] Show me the money, the economy of human life, the real truth behind human trafficking. I warmly welcome you to this pin ultimate episode of season three of Let's Talk Human Rights At

the very core of this inhumane trade, if one were to label it as such, human trafficking not only robs innocent people of their dignity, but ultimately the very existence of their lives.

[00:01:57] What we have come to understand of human trafficking [00:02:00] or what can be said of it being a system of modern slavery, is that it is very much a cartel based operation, and also that it has multiple avenues of acquisition. It shapes and molds itself around preexisting and emerging human behavior and trends.

[00:02:19] This means that curbing it also becomes a very difficult task because of its opportunistic. Giving it the bandwidth to sustain itself at the cost and the right to human life and dignity. In this episode journey, I am joined by my fellow f and f colleague, Miss Judy Kaber in the Nairobi Global Partnership Hub Office in Nairobi and Miss Teria Decla from the Joseph Movement in Cape Town.

[00:02:48] Today we look at the increasing threat and prevalence of human trafficking. My heart and mind have been heavily. While researching this topic, my two guests today [00:03:00] come with a wealth of experience and knowledge, which they will share with us today. Judy Kaber is a multiple award-winning journalist, currently working for free Deman Foundation for Freedom East Africa.

[00:03:13] With over 16 years of experience in journalism, Judy is deeply passionate about public policy, human rights, transitional. And gender equality. She is a 2015 fellow of the prestigious Edward r Murrow program for journalists and fellow of the global initiative against transnational organized crime. Judy, who is the immediate winner of the African Labor Migration Awards in the migration and health category was in 2020, recognized for her role in exploring cases of human traffick.

[00:03:46] In East Africa, Judy, I warmly welcome you to this episode, Judy, Your extensive library of work and interaction on the subject matter has brought you closer to the realities [00:04:00] of victims of human trafficking. You also enlighten me on the

bigger picture of this phenomenon. Please take us through the definition and types of human trafficking that.

[00:04:11] Many people like myself assume that human trafficking only involves the illegal and sometimes legal form of moving people across borders.

[00:04:22] **Judie Kaberia:** Yes. Um, human trafficking, um, if you look at the definition is not just trans border, it's also happens within the country and human trafficking. And the reason why we have the word trafficking is because there's a movement from point A to point B, and this movement from point A to point B can be within the country or outside the country and within the countries.

[00:04:42] We realize actually that is the highest form of, uh, human trafficking that we experience. Cause we don't see it as a. And if we had to look at the types of human trafficking, for example, the most, uh, common one is, uh, trafficking for, uh, labor [00:05:00] exploitation. That's domestic servitude. And this one happens internally and also externally.

[00:05:05] We also look at trafficking on body organs, especially among people with albinism and that traffic. And here in this case, it's basically mothering them for harvesting of their body organs, their body parts, mostly the. Which is used for witchcraft. We also have a different type of trafficking, which is very common between Tanzania, Kenya, Uganda, Burundi, and Wanda.

[00:05:27] That is trafficking for begging. So we have people with special needs, people with disabilities who are trafficked for the sake of begging. We also have trafficking for the sake of, uh, sexual exploitation. And this is really commercialized because this is where underage girls below the age of 18 and even younger women up to the age of 25 are traffick.

[00:05:47] Um, uh, for the purposes of, uh, sex exploitation. So those are the different types that we have, but I must say that the biggest of them all is trafficking for domestic substitute, which is [00:06:00] close to slavery.

[00:06:01] **Masechaba Mdaka:** Judy, what are we observing currently in terms of cases? Trends and maybe incidents coming from the region.

[00:06:08] You've just given us some examples around, uh, forced begging, um, labor, uh, harvesting of body organs. Can we maybe also speak to some statistics if, if you have those on record? Yes.

[00:06:21] **Judie Kaberia:** First, if you look at, uh, the main reason behind human trafficking, it's a commercial entity, uh, involving billions and billions of dollars.

[00:06:30] It's not a small, uh, business. It's ran, uh, both locally and internationally and with very powerful people across the globe. That is why every year, thousands and thousands of girls, especially to the Middle East, specifically to Lebanon and Saudi. The numbers are quite high. If we look at, uh, the movement, it's uh, for domestic, uh, servitude.

[00:06:51] It's mostly from the East African countries, but also when you go to the lower parts of the, of Africa, again, we see a lot of movement. And this is because the countries [00:07:00] in Africa are making a lot of money in terms of, uh, domestic, um, domestic inputs and the money that is coming from outside. So because of that commercial part of it and the value that countries continue to enjoy, uh, human trafficking drive, And if you ask the statistics about the people being trafficked, majority of them are women.

[00:07:20] And remember, earlier on we said, um, domestic servitude, kind of slavery for labor is the commonest you are, um, uh, type of human trafficking. and because of that, more women are affected compared to the men. And so it's hard to keep the numbers because this is an underworld activity. Um, and a lot of information is not released.

[00:07:41] But on, um, appropriation, we can decide that. Um, In a week close to a thousand girls. Women are trafficked to the Middle East for the purposes of, uh, domestic salute, but also we have also people trafficked even in countries in Europe, in the US

and not clear [00:08:00] circumstances, not illegal processes, but because it's a criminal activity.

[00:08:03] We don't have the legal or the statistics that are formal. All we get to here is when we get cases of those who are killed, cases of those who are exploited cases of those who are injured and tortured. That's when we are able to estimate how many women are trafficked within Africa. Outside Africa to the Middle East and to the Europe and the us.

[00:08:24] **Masechaba Mdaka:** Judy, this is certainly worrying and if one thinks about what you've just shared with us, one really then worries about the systematic nature of what this looks like and who are the actors who are really involved in this and keep the momentum and, and, and this commercial industry from, from thriving. Um, while we speak of systems, if I may tap into your journalism background.

[00:08:49] The Kahala system. Please take us through what this is and what are the stories and examples from victims, how this links to our discussion today. [00:09:00]

[00:09:00] **Judie Kaberia:** When you talk about the Kahala system, I remember it's like, it was yesterday, I had a one-on-one interaction with thees from Saudi Lebanon, basically from the Arab Gulf, and the stories are really sad.

[00:09:13] One of them was, um, a young lady. She was 25. She moved to Lebanon to work as a nursery school teacher, but when she got there, she started working as a maid. And the AL system, the ka, the AL system is the more than this. What it means is in slavery is if I hire you, I can do to you what I want. I can pay you how much money I want.

[00:09:36] I can have sex with you at whatever I want, and anybody in their family can have sex with you. At this young 25 year old gang was abused by the father of the house, the son of the house. And when she came back to the country, she was completely disfigured. She had to go through surgery just to

correct her pelvic bone because it was completely, um, misplaced and not, That's, that's not the only case.

[00:09:58] The can, Second case I [00:10:00] handled was another young woman at 23 years of age, she was already pregnant. She could not tell whether the father of the child was the son or the father of that. The same case to her. And I try to understand what really happens with the Kal system. So Kahala system is one that worships slavery.

[00:10:16] It's more than this slavery that you are trafficked as a, a commodity that you can do with your commodity, whatever you want. And once you go through the Kahala system, and this is common with Lebanon known and Saudi Arabia, and that's why even if we make how much noise unless our countries. And intergovernmental discussion with these countries.

[00:10:37] This one will continue because the law of the land is supreme in those countries. And for as long as we have the Catholic system, which, um, uh, uh, celebrates slavery, then women will continue suffering. They'll continue getting abused. Other cases, women every day are being flown back to their countries.

[00:10:56] Corpses at least. For example, for the case of [00:11:00] Kenya, every week we are receiving not less than seven bodies of women who have either been killed. Other families cannot not even be able to trace their loved ones. It's just a sad state. But like I say, the governments look at what comes in the money that comes in, and because of the money there that is coming in, it remains silent.

[00:11:17] They turn a blind. To the suffering, the violation, the stolen liberties of the people who cannot choose about how much they should be. Uh, they should be paid. They cannot decide on the number of the working hours. These women, they'll tell you they will sleep only for two hours. Even things like food, they're only allowed to eat what remains after the entire family has eaten.

[00:11:38] If the food is finished, then they don't have even something to. Actually, it's something I would not expect to be happening in the 20th century. This is something that started in the 19th century, uh, in the Gulf Region, which was really known for slavery. It goes way back to the colonization, which was, um, celebrating slavery.

[00:11:56] But it's so embarrassing that in the 20th century we
[00:12:00] still talk of places where employees have no rights. And another thing I must mention to you is that women sign contracts that are written in Arabic. These women are very vulnerable from poor background people who've never been to the city before.

[00:12:13] And when they come, they're given a contract written Arabic, and they have to. When they sign, they don't what is they're signing to. And the Kafala system again says that you have to work for the, the period that is noted. So a lot of times they have to work for two years and they cannot leave because the authority rests upon the boss.

[00:12:34] It keeps the passport, um, your travel documents, and that the only ones who can decide when to stop working and when you can leave, even if you run away from your employer or from the master as they're. And you go to the embassy or to the immigration office, you are told we have to get the permission of the.

[00:12:53] **Masechaba Mdaka:** Judy, it has indeed been a pleasure having you for this conversation. You've really enlightened us and given us [00:13:00] the bigger picture in terms of what this looks like, the picture of human trafficking in the region, and as we think about bringing the conversation closer to home, what does this look like from a country context in South Africa?

[00:13:14] Following on my conversation with Judy, I wish to bring this discussion closer to home. What does this look like for South Africa? I'm now joined by Teria Decla to shed some more light on this topic. Teria Decla is the founder and managing director of the Joseph Movement. She is a member of the National Freedom

Network and continues building relationships and collaborating with various network partners, anti-human trafficking, NPOs companies, media and government.

[00:13:49] She studied psychology and is currently furthering her criminology studies. She has gained experience in both the corporate and non-profit arena. Her [00:14:00] passion for speaking up for the vulnerable grew within her 15 years, working with non-profit organizations, Christian organizations, mission organizations, as well as social and political awareness organizations.

[00:14:14] Welcome t.

[00:14:15] **Tershia de Klerk:** Thank you Ma Chaba, very nice to be with you today and

[00:14:19] **Masechaba Mdaka:** indeed, a pleasure to have you here. Teisha, let's take it from the beginning. How do people get trafficked?

[00:14:26] **Tershia de Klerk:** So when it comes to human trafficking, we need to always remember that one of the most important facts of human trafficking is that transportation is not a prerequisite for human trafficking to take place.

[00:14:40] And then when it comes to the, uh, the description of what is human trafficking, Exactly. Just to simplify it, it takes place when a person's either forced coerced or manipulated, um, into a situation for the use of their body or for their [00:15:00] labor and. The various ways that trafficking takes place nowadays, we've seen with those that actually work on the ground with cases, one of the most popular ways in which victims are being, uh, tricked and trapped into human trafficking.

[00:15:20] Number one is very interesting enough, uh, false job advertisement or job offers. And then secondly comes in people that are being sold by family and that I want to link with what I mentioned earlier, that transportation is not a prerequisite. We see, especially now during, um, or after covid, that so many children

and even women are being prostituted out of their own homes, um, by a lover or by a husband.

[00:15:57] Or parents. [00:16:00] That is a form of human trafficking. And so no transportation or movement happened, but it is human trafficking as a whole or a form of sex trafficking. And then thirdly, we see that the Lover Boy effect comes in as another form of how people are being tricked into human trafficking, and then being trafficked by a friend comes in at number.

[00:16:28] And then only fifthly does abduction come into play. So we see that in media or in the mainstream media. It's normally abduction and kidnappings that that make the headlines. However, the biggest chunk of human trafficking that takes place, or actually situations that happen right under our noses, And so we do try as an organization to also educate the media and encourage them to not [00:17:00] only focus on these so-called juicy stories of kidnappings and abductions, which are definitely real, but most of the human trafficking situations are happening next to.

[00:17:14] In our neighborhoods, down the streets, in our communities. And that is very, very important for, um, you know, the public to grasp

[00:17:24] **Masechaba Mdaka:** Teisha. Thank you for, for, for giving us that, that that outline. Um, following on from what you've just said, um, you've given us examples of the type of trafficking, human trafficking that happens in country, in the exception of people crossing border.

[00:17:42] And this really brings in something that, um, Judy mentioned in our earlier segment about the fact that it's the, the high prevalence of trafficking actually is the one that happens within country. I'd like to talk a little bit about, um, the work, the very, very important work that has done by the Joseph [00:18:00] movement.

[00:18:00] You've mentioned some examples, but, um, understanding that, um, respectfully you cannot speak. Freely and

openly about specific cases, as most of them are sub Judas. What are some of the cases that are, or at least some of the examples that are coming through now, prevalent, say, within the last year or so?

[00:18:20] Well,

[00:18:20] **Tershia de Klerk:** some of the most prevalent cases that we have found happening around us. Besides the, the, the sex trade and sex trafficking, which makes art, um, the biggest chunk of human trafficking that takes place with inside Africa. We've also seen that a labor trafficking has been skyrocketing and what's been happening.

[00:18:50] A lot of people are falling for out of desperation for a fake job office, for instance. And then also we [00:19:00] see an influx of foreigners, you know, coming into our country for a hope of a better future. Um, and that is one thing as well that I, I just want to emphasize. Is that when we say that people's vulnerabilities are being exploited, it is not just, you know, Maybe a woman or a child and you are vulnerable or you are desperate for an income.

[00:19:29] Um, it is also people's dreams, you know, that are being exploited. So we see that these foreigners are coming in with this, this dream of a better future, and they are being exploited by, um, our own people. We have dealt with some cases in well known, uh, shopping malls where there are foreigners working in specific, um, types of shops, and they were tricks into coming into our country [00:20:00] with a promise of a wonderful income and, um, As they entered our country, their identification documents were taken away.

[00:20:10] They then immediately switch into fear mode because they are threatened with the authorities. They, their lives are threatened and their lives of their loved ones are threatened. So, This has become a lot more prevalent. That's why I'm saying that there are so many victims that are right under our noses, and it's very important for us to learn how to identify possible human trafficking, uh, victims.

[00:20:42] Just by some simple red flags and asking some simple questions. One can identify a possible victim and, uh, take action. So when it comes to what the Joseph movement does is a. Our main focus is to [00:21:00] reduce, expose, and prevent human trafficking, and we've seen that only 2% of victims ever get extracted or managed to escape.

[00:21:11] And what does that say to you? It says that prevention is key. Um, we are currently looking at our government who is considering. Illegalizing, the system of prostitution within our country. And that will just explode, um, or make the human trafficking atmosphere explode because prostitution fuels human trafficking.

[00:21:41] So prevention is absolute key. We need to educate, and that is our main focus as the Joseph movement, is to educate and to equip, um, individuals, families, and communities. So that they know what to look out for so that they know [00:22:00] how to identify a victim and so that they know what they can do, um, to keep themselves safe and also to possibly save a life.

[00:22:11] **Masechaba Mdaka:** Teisha, if you could talk us through the process of what prevention, extraction, and rehabilitation looks like and what part does the Joseph

[00:22:21] **Tershia de Klerk:** Movement play in that? We focus mainly on prevention because of. The statistics that we see, and our statistics come from reliable sources. We do not draw statistics from governments, for instance, we draw our statistics from people who do this work may mostly voluntarily.

[00:22:43] Um, we get our statistics from our national human trafficking hotline and we get it from the Global Slavery Index and also from the United Nations. So we focus on prevention mainly because [00:23:00] that is absolute key because of only the 2% that ever gets saved or manages to escape. So, We do, however, work within a network of organizations, um, and also professional individuals, and each focuses on a specific area of human trafficking or sexual exploitation, and there is a very small percentage of them that focuses on extraction and rehabilitation.

[00:23:38] So with the extraction work that's being done, The National Human Trafficking hotline works very closely with, um, you know, mandated departments that come on board and address, um, or even investigate possible human trafficking situations. And then [00:24:00] from there it gets escalated to the hooks who, um, does absolutely amazing work.

[00:24:06] And then we also work with, uh, safe houses. However the safe houses is. Area where the victims are, um, housed, they are taught life skills. They are counseled only for a period, um, in which their case runs. So as soon as a case, um, is finalized or closed in court, those victims are then. Reintegrated into society.

[00:24:45] However, there is a very big gap within South Africa because only a few weeks, or even just a few months, is not enough for proper rehabilitation for [00:25:00] many of these victims, especially, um, victims who come from, uh, the the, um, sex industry. So that is a massive gap that, um, we really do need to try and, and fall within South Africa.

[00:25:17] **Masechaba Mdaka:** Tisha, I'm very glad that you've brought us to the part of the conversation that speaks about. The legalities, um, behind what happens and, and the support recourse prosecutions. Personally, I struggle, uh, with the success rate or what I perceive as the, uh, lack of communication around success, rate of prosecutions or people even being brought on charges of human trafficking.

[00:25:42] One often gets the sense that, you know, you hear of the breaking stories, which leave us shaken, but then very little is said about what happens after. I'm even thinking specifically to international law statutes, which, uh, protect, which speak to the [00:26:00] issue of human trafficking, such as the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, also known as T V P A.

[00:26:07] Without maybe speaking too much about international law and how it stands, what I would really like to know is what is the success rate of clamping down on some of these operations, Especially now that you've spoken about the fact that, um, you know, the gaps in the system that are missing in the South African

case, and also the support, um, the continuation of, of what support looks like, what prosecution looks like, especially, you know, with, with resources and funding being a scarcity.

[00:26:35] **Tershia de Klerk:** Yes, I can completely identify with you Maja, because the success rate is unfortunately very low. As I mentioned earlier, we are only looking at a maximum of 2% of victims that ever get rescued, and that is from what we know. There are a few cases, um, in courts that have been [00:27:00] very successful. There are some that are still on the go and.

[00:27:07] A number of NGOs are also stepping in to assist. To investigate and what we want to encourage, you know, the public is what will assist us is the more people report on human trafficking cases, the more pieces of a puzzle we will have and the more we will be able to prosecute. And that is a very big problem that we face currently because we've heard earlier with our previous guests that it's, as you said, it's, it's, uh, something that's happening underground.

[00:27:50] It is in fact a hidden crime. And the problem with that is that we would find, for instance, that it is overshadowed [00:28:00] by other crimes. We often have to, um, work with SAPs where we have to train SAPs because we see that, for instance, you would have a drug bust and people will get locked up because of their, um, use their drug, drug use or, um, for the, the drug trade or for drug trafficking, et cetera.

[00:28:29] But, SAPs would often overlook a victim of trafficking. When you look at sex trafficking, many of those women, and with all honesty, it is a bigger chunk, um, of women. But it's not only women, it's children, and they are also men, um, that, that full victim to sex trafficking. But many of them are kept in modern day shackles, which.[00:29:00]

[00:29:00] Not just fear, but it is also being dependent on substance abuse. So we find that often trafficked victims are locked up, for instance, for drug use, but in the meantime, they are actually trafficked victims. So, These challenges are what we

are facing and what we are fighting because education, once again, is key and that is really lacking in South Africa.

[00:29:28] And that is where many of us NGOs, um, have to step in. And try and make a difference and even educate, um, government bodies or individuals including SAPs for instance, so that we can have a much higher conviction rate. South Africa has what we call the Paco Tip Acts. It's the prevention and combating of Trafficking in Persons Act, and it's actually, uh, said [00:30:00] to be the best form.

[00:30:02] Of legislation globally when it comes to human trafficking. However, it's not being implemented properly. So a piece of legislation or as we know, you know, any rule can be effective if it's followed or implemented properly. So these are some of the challenges that we are facing. Tesha, I'm so

[00:30:25] **Masechaba Mdaka:** glad you actually speak on that.

[00:30:26] Um, as I was speaking about, The act, um, the Trafficking Victims Protection Act of 2000, and the act that you've now just referred to. Of course, everything is always good in writing, but, um, if it's actually not domesticated and legislated as you say, then that's a completely different conversation then it's, it's toothless essentially.

[00:30:48] It doesn't do anything and. Just coming to, um, speaking about SAPs, which is the South African Police Service for the benefit of our listeners. Um, you know, we, we've often [00:31:00] seen sometimes, uh, very disheartening, um, as we speak about combating and preventing the scourge within society and to open the discussion, you know, on this very worrying issue.

[00:31:11] Um, rap unfortunately in the system is something that, One cannot speak. In the absence of this particular conversation about human trafficking, what is the disruptor in, in the case of human trafficking, where corruption is concerned? I know you and I, um, spoke offline about it, but if you can maybe just give us some examples about what, you know, the, the status of

corruption and how certain things you know, can also happen in terms of collusion or anything like that with regards to the combating and prevention, maybe even people.

[00:31:44] Promulgate, uh, within the legal system, um, and, and abuse

[00:31:49] **Tershia de Klerk:** the system as well? Yes, most definitely. We see that corruption within the authorities and within governments, [00:32:00] unfortunately, is busy fueling. Human trafficking and I'm very privileged to work with people who, whose hearts are really for the cause.

[00:32:14] Many have dedicated their lives to doing this work and some are not. Earning any form of income for the work they are doing, so you know for sure that their hearts are true to the cause and that it's not possible for any corruption to sneak in. So from some of those people who have actually been part of the South African Police Service, they have spoken up and have just said, you know, it is time for us to no longer keep silent.

[00:32:52] And unfortunately, these are people who have seen firsthand the corruption within our, [00:33:00] um, authorities within government, et cetera, that takes place. And they have to be called to account. There are reporting lines, um, or complaint lines that are available that we want to encourage, you know, the public to use.

[00:33:19] We need to all stand up against corruption because unfortunately with human trafficking, it does not only affect individuals. It destroys families, it affects communities. It's affects our economy. It affects businesses. You know, I'm ju it just makes me think of. A panel discussion that I was part of last night where I was discussing the topic of full decriminalization of prostitution, and the two people that was part of the panel were completely [00:34:00] pro uh, full decra of prostitution.

[00:34:04] And it just made me realize that. Our country really needs to be rescued. Um, we see that from their argument. They were saying that, you know, police and so on are playing such a

big role in making the lives difficult of those in the system of prostitution as I would call them. But they would, they would talk about sex.

[00:34:36] Or sex workers, and I just found it so ironic because we know and we have seen that, you know, there are so many victims that come from the system of prostitution that come and tell this story of how [00:35:00] they have been treated by. Police by government officials while they were in the system of prostitution, and we have so many case studies of people who, after years of rehabilitation, have come to a point and have been willing to speak up as a survivor.

[00:35:26] We find it very interesting now with this debate on legalizing prostitution in our country that the voices of the survivors are not being heard. However, the voices of those within the sex work industry are very loud, and it is a very difficult, a very difficult, uh, debate because on the one side, they would say to.

[00:35:55] You know that we need the police to [00:36:00] look after us. They are victimizing us because, um, our people are being locked up for sex work and their rights need to be protected. And all of that. In the meantime, what we are seeing is that many of these people that are called sex workers are being locked up because it's actually against the law to, in our country to be, um, to be selling.

[00:36:32] But in many cases they are not being locked up for that. They're being locked up for their drug use. And often it is overlooked that these women are not just simply sex workers, they are victims of sex trafficking.

[00:36:52] **Masechaba Mdaka:** This is definitely a very important issue to highlight Tish, and, and, and thank you for, for painting the, the picture for the [00:37:00] reality of what it actually looks like for victims, for, for our benefit of our listeners.

[00:37:04] Um, because I think at times, as I mentioned before, that we really don't see what happens behind the screens, be behind what is supposed to be happening around prosecution of

cases. And, um, you know, what that really looks like for victims and those who are. T On that note, um, I'd like to speak about your activism.

[00:37:26] What inspired you to walk this path and find a personal cause with being a human rights defender in this space? And I'd like you please also to just take us through some of the highs and the lows of your daily work. And I can only imagine the incredibly difficult task of what that looks like given the examples that we've been discussing in

[00:37:48] **Tershia de Klerk:** our convers.

[00:37:49] A number of years ago, um, a loved one became a consumer of pornography and then eventually became addicted to pornography, [00:38:00] and that then led to alcoholism. We know with many, with many addictions, it tends to lead to another addiction. . And the reason why I say that he was addicted to pornography is that it was something that he couldn't stay away from.

[00:38:17] It was something that, you know, consumed his life. It had a very strong mental effect on him and. It actually affected his ability to communicate, to sit in a normal conversation and, and have a meaningful conversation with someone. It also affected, obviously, his concentration patterns and his income and all of that, so it led also to Aism and then eventually it led to suicide and in my search to understand his struggles.

[00:38:55] I discovered a more horrifying side to the story, [00:39:00] and that is human trafficking and sexual exploitation, because pornography as well as prostitution feels human trafficking. And when I went into it in more depth, I knew that this was my calling in life, not only to. Warn those in the communities of the dangers of the use of pornography, but also that there's a two-sided story to it.

[00:39:38] As a consumer of pornography, you actually can full victim to it. But also the person on your screen or in front of the camera that seems to be enjoying themselves can possibly also

be a victim. A victim of human trafficking and sexual exploitation. And so some [00:40:00] of the, the lows that I find I face. Every day or, or often is, you know, you, you would receive intel from your network of partners and organizations and often that's, that information has to stay strictly confidential.

[00:40:20] There is a lot that we hear about. There's a lot that we see that makes us understand the true face of human trafficking and. One has to be very, very careful in, you know, debriefing basically, um, is very important for us so that we can continue to stay strong, um, from a mental and a psychological perspective and, you know, corruption as well within the system.

[00:40:54] And government can become very dishearten. And then you know [00:41:00] my work is what gets me out of bed every morning. Knowing that your small part that you play can help save a life. Even in all the work that I've been doing, if I can just save one life, it is worth it.

[00:41:18] **Masechaba Mdaka:** It's always, um, it really does, um, make it more sobering when you, um, attach or you reflect on a personal experience, um, one that helps shapes, you know, um, your thought process and even what you go through life experiencing.

[00:41:35] I think, um, people can definitely attest to the fact that once you put a face, a family member, a friend, , you know, it really does. Uh, it hits home and, um, I think that's one can really commend you for, for taking this path. Um, and, and, and we are grateful for the work that you do. You know, freedom is a fundamental right.

[00:41:57] It's a basic right? It's something that the [00:42:00] free did a shearman foundation for Freedom, rightfully in its name, advocates for, Would you say that people are truly free? Um, is this a utopic idea as we reimagine a world free from this threat to human dignity and even the right to life itself ultimately, you know,

[00:42:19] **Tershia de Klerk:** I.

[00:42:20] Will say that yes, we are free. We are most certainly, we are all free to be educated. We are free to be equipped and informed and free to make an informed decision, and that is why education and empowerment is absolutely key. You know, we are also free to consider what impact our choices will have on, on, not just ourselves and our families, but also on our neighbor.

[00:42:51] And that is something that is so fundamentally important and I find that that is [00:43:00] very lacking with some people who, um, You know who are encouraging and fighting for freedom. You have to actually ask yourself, What do you mean by freedom? What does freedom mean to you? Is it something that is selfish or is it something that does not only include your best interests, but it also includes the best interest of those around you?

[00:43:30] Thank

[00:43:30] **Masechaba Mdaka:** you, Trisha. Um, it's really been, uh, a valuable and, and truly insightful. I definitely walk away from this conversation more equipped and definitely, um, ready. To, to to face the world and, and see it in

[00:43:46] **Tershia de Klerk:** a different way. It was really such a pleasure speaking to you. Thank you so much for the opportunity.

[00:43:51] I appreciate it very much.

[00:43:54] **Masechaba Mdaka:** My conversations with Judy and Teria have been frightening, to say the least, and also a [00:44:00] point of reckoning in some senses. It has also served as an opportunity to reflect on where we, as people have come to and what we do to each other for going the basic human. And dignity needed for a just society.

[00:44:17] And quite honestly, the cruelty prevalent in so many aspects of our society. Something I'm left with is our personal responsibility towards ourselves and towards each other. And in many different ways. Perhaps you are not part of this underworld, but educating yourself and the people in your circle is really key in identifying and bringing attention to these human rights violations.

[00:44:47] My right, your right. All right. Humanity is for us all. This has been the fifth episode of the third. Of Let's Talk [00:45:00] human rights, the f and F Africa Podcast, exploring human rights issues. We trust you have been enlightened and informed by it. In our upcoming season finale two-part episode, we will reflect on the past three seasons, the.

[00:45:16] We have explored and discussed with our phenomenal experts and human rights defenders on several issues across various countries in Africa, many stories, so many people's lives in short moments. We specifically delve into the MABA protocol on the African court. We will unpack the purpose and formation of the African court, its mandate and how it ultimately seeks recourse and justice.

[00:45:45] For the many victims across the continent who have faced personal adversity and atrocities on their person or within their society, please tune in for this important closing episode that provides the [00:46:00] opportunity to interrogate the legislative powers of the continental bodies we entrust to safeguard and balance authority in our respect of countries.

[00:46:12] The Freeman Foundation Sub-Sahara Africa. F and f is an independent German organization that is committed to promoting liberal ideals and politics in Africa, such as human rights, the rule of law, democracy, innovation, digitization, and free trade by conducting campaigns, media. Seminars, workshops, study tours, cultural happenings and training courses.

[00:46:39] The foundation promotes human rights, including freedom of expression, freedom of the press, children's rights, and L G B T Q I A plus rights and engages against violence targeting women. And capital punishment. If you are interested in activities, follow us on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. [00:47:00] Simply check for Predna Foundation, Africa.