

Human Trafficking At World Cup Target Of New Documentary & Relief Efforts By International Humanitarian Group, Operation Blessing International

--*1 Real* Outreach Set To Bring Trafficking Awareness To The Forefront --

(VIRGINIA BEACH, VA.) June 17, 2014 – The World Cup is not only one of the biggest international sporting events on the planet, it is also, unfortunately, a huge magnet for human trafficking, often targeting vulnerable children, says Bill Horan, president of the global humanitarian organization, Operational Blessing International.

To help fight trafficking in Brazil, host country of the 2014 FIFA World Cup, Operation Blessing International (OBI) has created *1 Real: The Other Side of the Coin*, a documentary that is being shown in all 12 World Cup match cities in order to educate families and to help them protect their children from human trafficking.

Says OBI president Horan, human trafficking is a billion dollar industry that exacts a heavy toll, especially on innocent children.

“When large sporting events come to town, young girls are at heavy risk. Not far from where a FIFA World Cup match will be played, a family member or sex trafficker will sell a young child to a predator for as little as fifty cents, or *1 Real*, the currency of Brazil,” says Horan.

The *1 Real* documentary cites a governmental report which states that some 40,000 children and adolescents disappear annually in Brazil, with roughly 15% of these cases going unsolved. David Darg, vice president of international operations for OBI, says “Operation Blessing is focused on the six thousand children each year who are never found; many are known to have been abducted for the trafficking industry.”

1 Real features an interview with a trafficking perpetrator who explains how he targeted young girls, and also includes interviews with several young victims of sex trafficking. A trailer for the documentary can be viewed at: <http://videos.ob.org/1315>

In 8 of the 12 World Cup venue cities, OBI is conducting additional anti-trafficking awareness, prevention, and intervention efforts, in addition to hosting screenings of the film. These vulnerable communities are Sao Paulo, Belo Horizonte, Brasilia, Fortaleza, Natal, Recife, Salvador, and Rio de Janeiro.

To raise awareness for the *1 Real* outreach, OBI will engage in the following activities:

- Distribute copies of *1Real* film via DVDs and Flash Drives
- Create flash mobs in the red light districts in all eight cities, where food and a “Hope Bag” will be given to the girls on the streets. (The goal is to halt prostitution and trafficking for one night in these areas and alert girls to where they can turn for help).
- Show the film where tourists frequent
- Volunteers will travel around via an OBI bus and will wear iPads around their necks to show the film trailer, available in different languages
- 5,000 stickers for taxis and cars. 25,000 Red Card flyers (used in soccer, to indicate expulsion from game) saying, “No to sexual exploitation.” There will be a number on the back to call in Brazil to report sexual exploitation

- 25,000 promo cards explaining the documentary
- Volunteers wearing T-shirts that say, "persons are not for sale," to promote the film and to make a viral impact.

Local churches are supporting OBI in every city, providing housing, logistics, permits and food for the volunteers. OBI is partnering with local volunteer groups' Mekanudos, YWAM kickoff, 27 Million, Stop the Traffik, and UN.GIFT.

OBI is helping to train churches, organizations and volunteers who can reach out to those on the streets. In addition, a special video geared towards the girls and young women who are working the streets has been produced and explains what trafficking is, how to search out a safe place, and how to denounce the practice. Another film, geared toward potential predators, sets out to dissuade them from purchasing sex.

Throughout Latin America and in other countries around the world, Operation Blessing is helping survivors of trafficking by partnering with shelters to provide a safe place to stay and education for the victims. OBI is also helping with training programs to teach victims marketable skills so they can secure gainful work or eventually start their own business. Through local schools, OBI teams are meeting with students, teaching them how to avoid dangerous situations and taking a stand against abuse. This unique school outreach includes two award-winning documentaries, as well as other material and guidelines designed to help victims.

For more information please visit www.ob.org, or for the film, www.ireal.org

ABOUT OPERATION BLESSING INTERNATIONAL:

Operation Blessing International (OBI) is one of the largest charities in America, providing strategic disaster relief, medical aid, hunger relief, clean water and community development in 23 countries around the world on a daily basis. Currently, Forbes ranks OBI as one of its "100 Largest Charities" with an efficiency rating of 99%, and Consumers Digest also named OBI as one of "America's Top Charities" in 2012. Founded in 1978, Operation Blessing International has touched the lives of more than 255 million people in more than 105 countries and 50 states, providing goods and services valued at over \$3.3 billion to date.

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