



Case Study 1

Kimmeristan was a country that your company always wanted to enter. As a Central Asian country, not only it provided access to all the Asian markets and to the remote areas of Russia but with the new Silk Road it opened numerous new business opportunities. The undisputed 'eternal leader' of the country may rule with an 'iron fist' but also provides his carefully selected foreign investors and partners with an unprecedented economic stability for long-term, high return investments.

Your company has managed to sign a deal for a joint venture with a Kimmerian entrepreneur called Dodgee Krook, to build a processing factory in the Special Administrative Region of Trouet, an ethnic minority area annexed to Kimmeristan more than 500 years ago. There have been some allegations in the media concerning human rights abuses in Trouet but the audit your company conducted as part of the joint venture due diligence process, found no issues of concern and certainly nothing to support these allegations. On the contrary, the government maintains that it enhances the region economic vitality by giving equal opportunities and incentives to both native Trouetans and the Kimmerians who are moving in hundreds from other regions to Trouet.

You are undertaking a visit to the Trouet factory as part of the employee health and safety standards assurance when it is brought to your attention that an employee has been writing negative comments on Facebook regarding the company. He claims that the company's corporate responsibility is just 'window dressing' and that there are human rights abuses and other issues throughout the supply chain. He writes that although the company is committed to reducing its carbon footprint managers are flying here and there for no particular reason rather than their personal entertainment.

In a preliminary fact-collection enquiry you make, you are told by the Human Resources Department that many Trouetans lack the necessary education, training and experience needed to work in the plant and therefore the factory recruits predominantly Kimmerians, especially in supervisory/management positions. To your surprise, even in the very low skilled cleaning staff, apart from Trouetans, there is a small contingent of 16 workers from the neighbouring Colchestan. In an interview with one cleaner you learn that she has not enough money to feed herself because she owes the sister of her department head, Samina, a significant debt for bringing her into the country, which is accruing a high rate of interest. She lives with the rest of the Colchens in a shared house owned by Samina, who deducts from their wages the rent and the debt before giving them any cash and holds their passports until they repay everything in full.

You also notice some children walking around the factory at different times during the day. You are initially told that they were bringing tea to their parents who are workers in the factory. Yet, after an hour of deeper search you find-out that these children are full-time workers and do not attend school. When you speak to the factory's GM, he explains that they come from very poor Trouetan families and alternatives for them would be to beg on the streets or go into prostitution.

Looking at management's travel accounts you find out that many middle and senior managers use air travel within the country for business purposes instead of the almost equally fast High-Speed Rail. You suspect that this is done to collect frequent flyer points which they can use later for private travel.



Case Study 2

Victim: Cabdinuur, 29- year old Somali male in UK

My name is Cabdinuur but friends usually called me Cabdi, a very common name in Somalia which means “servant of God”. I always wanted to work in hotels and I was hoping to get a job in Hargeisa a city near my village back home. The boss said that I was good but he had not work to give me. He said, however, that a Russian customer who had a hotel in UK asked him if he could recommend employees for building and maintenance jobs. In a few days he told me that the Russian was employing Somalis for his businesses through an employment agency in Mogadishu. He suggested that I visit them. The employment agency said that there was a job in the Russian’s hotel with a salary of £25,000. I told them that I did not have a passport. They said that if I paid them a fee of £4,000 they would take care of my travel to London and all my travel and employment documentation. Back home everyone said that this was a once-in-a lifetime opportunity. I did not have the money but my father and his four brothers gave me all their savings as a loan that I would repay with my UK salary.

Fourteen of us left Mogadishu, all heading for UK building jobs. None of us had a passport. but we were told that Piotr, our minder, held all our travel documents. We went by truck to Djibouti and crossed over to Jazan. Through Saudi Arabia we reached Jordan and Cyprus in the Mediterranean. It was there where Piotr showed some officials a bunch of passports that I realised that something was wrong. They did not look like Somali passports and I was sure that they were fake. I entered the UK through Calais with a French passport and name. It was the only time I had a passport in my hands, then Piotr took it back. This was his key to my life – to the lives of all of us: he owned us!

In London, Piotr passed us over to Igor who told us that the plans had changed and the job in the hotel was no longer on. But he and his brothers had several jobs for us all over London. All 15 of us lived in a two bedroom flat in North London for the next three years. We were dropped off or picked up every day to and from ‘projects’ where we were working for at least 14 hours and getting paid £4 an hour. Igor was retaining money for our ‘lodging’ and our meals, normally turkey sandwiches. Among these projects, six were refurbishments of luxury hotels in central London and four were hotels in nearby cities. Not what I had imagined about working in hotels! In most projects we were never asked to show documents or work permits. Igor said that “protection money” had already been paid for us – and deducted from our wage. Only in a couple of occasions he had to show the fake passports.