

*Faith was taken from her home country of Zimbabwe into slavery in South Africa in 2004. She told her story to the International Organization for Migration, in Hillbrow, Johannesburg, South Africa, in early 2005.*

### Faith

I am 26 years old. I was going to school, but I fell pregnant and had to quit. After having my baby, I had no job. Then, my uncle was living in South Africa. On one of his visits home, he informed me that he had friends in Johannesburg who owned companies, and he could get a job for me there if I came with him. I followed him. We traveled with a Kombi driver and four other men. I was the only girl. We left Bulawayo at about 2pm and arrived at Beitbridge at 10pm. Since the other men and I had no travel documents, we were dropped at Beitbridge, while my uncle and the driver crossed the border. At about 12 midnight, we started to cross the border by foot, and swam across the river. At 3am, we reached the other side, and the men placed a white plastic bag on the road so that the Kombi driver would recognize that we had reached there. The driver saw it, drove up, and picked us up. We continued the journey and got to Pietersburg early in the morning. We then drove straight to Hillbrow. My uncle left me at the minibus driver's house because he had not paid the fare.

After two days, my uncle came back, paid the driver and took me to a club in Hillbrow and said that is where I would live. He said I had to pay my own rent. Then he had a discussion with the owners of the club and abandoned me there.

That night, the runners asked me to go up to my room. Then they sent a white man to sleep with me. That is when I realized that I had been tricked by my uncle. I was very confused. The white man asked me to give him a blowjob. I resisted, so he went down and complained to the owners. They started forcing me to drink alcohol so that I could please the customers. Finally, I had to accept that I had become a prostitute.

My uncle came to see me for the first week or two to collect his money, but after that, he disappeared. When I called home, they told me that he had said that I had run away from him and he did not know where I was. I could not tell my family that I had become a prostitute. I just told them that I was working somewhere. I am very unhappy, but now this is my life. I tried to escape once, but I had no place to go to, so I had to go back there.