

Slave 'stock' sold for sex on the Reef

THE trade in slaves from Mozambique is taking place in many parts of the Reef, often involving businessmen who buy and sell the young women as concubines.

The Weekly Mail has traced a number of the slave agents on the Reef and has spoken to Mozambican women living at their houses, sometimes in appalling conditions, while waiting to be sold.

The women, known in the trade as "stock", are kept in tin shacks around the agents' houses.

I posed as the brother of Jabulile Masuku, a former slave who was sold as a concubine for R200, to visit some of these houses in Thokoza, Daveyton and Katlehong.

One of the agents, a man called Dissie, is running two houses in Thokoza on the East Rand, where he keeps the "stock" before it is sold to local businessmen as cheap labour or to individuals who keep young girls as concubines.

At the first house, *The Weekly Mail*

found 15-year-old Toko Mashudu, her sister and two other young girls from Maputo.

Mashudu was fetched from Maputo about two months ago by a dealer called Lazarus and then dumped at one of Dissie's "depots".

"I paid Lazarus money to be brought across and he promised to give me a job," said Mashudu.

Dissie is an agent for Josea Sibuya — whom *The Weekly Mail* exposed two weeks ago as the man who sold Masuku for R200 as a concubine — and keeps the supply from the notorious kaNgwane slave dealer.

Sibuya is believed to be one of the big handlers who lure Mozambican youngsters to South Africa, promising them jobs and then selling them in kaNgwane and Reef townships.

Dissie has since disappeared from his two "depots" and this week a woman at one of the houses denied that he had ever lived there. Mashudu and the other girls had also disappeared.

Posing as the brother of a former slave, **PHIL MOLEFE** discovered young women holed up in tin shacks in East Rand townships — waiting to be sold as cheap labour or concubines

The woman at Dissie's "depot" said Mashudu was only kept at the house to be taught how to perm hair and then work in a salon. She said Mashudu was later taken away but she could not disclose when or who took her.

Masuku found the house in Thokoza where Sibuya had taken her in an attempt to sell her as a concubine to local men.

"This is where Sibuya brought me with the other girl from Mozambique and slept with me every night when he could not find a buyer," said Masuku when we arrived at the house.

"I also know Dissie very well because he is Sibuya's friend and we stayed at this house with him."

I posed as Masuku's brother who

was visiting folks from Maputo to establish contact with people from "home".

Sibuya's den is an ordinary four-roomed council house in Phenduka section, surrounded by many shacks where young girls and older women from Maputo are kept.

The yard is congested and filthy, with dirty water running between a row of tin shacks. The dealers and the agent were not around as the women went about their daily chores, piling the washing line with tattered clothes and one tending to her four-month-old baby.

The women were tight-lipped about how they had been brought to the Reef, apparently keeping to strict orders from the handlers.

But what is certain is that dealers have agents on the Reef who keep the "stock" before buyers come forward.

In Katlehong we met two sisters, Sandra (18) and Annah (15) Aramado Matavela who were picked up from Maputo by Alfred Lubisi.

The two girls live with other Mozam-

bican girls at a house, also surrounded by many shacks, in Goba section. Sandra works at a hair salon and Annah works for a local businessman known as Khoza, and they claimed they earn about R80 a week.

Albert Domingos Bondzela (17) is still struggling to learn a South African language and spoke to me in Portuguese with Masuku interpreting.

Bondzela, who was brought to the Reef by Lubisi, said he worked for a local businessman and earned R60 a week.

Lubisi has been missing since the slave trade was exposed and his "wife" said he was in Maputo.

"He never tells us when he goes and I don't know when he will come back."

Reef businesses flourish on the sweat of these young innocent souls who are sold as cheap labour.

"Many shopowners and vegetable sellers around here are now relying on these people from Maputo because they accept anything they are paid," said Prince Nkosi from Thokoza.