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ISBN 978-608-65138-9-4

Published by **CRISIS MANAGEMENT CENTER**
GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

Are We Ready For Strategic Activities For Prevention In Human Trafficking?

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Abstract

Safety is one of the fundamental needs of the people and integral part of the quality living. Eliminating the preconditions for the birth of crime is as important as the fight against the criminal activities such as the illegal migration and the human trafficking.

One of the problems in controlling crime is the lack of prevention programs to unite the efforts made by the overall society, the lack of appropriate coordination of the work in this area on behalf of the police, the executive authorities, the local self-government administration, non-governmental organizations and the media.

This paper is based on the premise that the problem of trafficking in persons, whether at the national or local level, can only be addressed effectively on the basis of comprehensive strategies that are based on human rights and that take into account the transnational nature of the problem, the many associated criminal activities, the frequent involvement of organized criminal groups and the profound pain, fear and damage suffered by the victims. It pursues the same purposes as the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Its purpose is to improve the ability, proficiency, knowledge and skills of teachers, lecturers and methodologists as to legal education and training. To this aim, the paper is structured in such a way that different sections each relating to the most relevant topics related to the prevention of trafficking in persons. The subtitles deal respectively with the need: to take into account relevant international law and the emerging international and domestic legal framework; to assess the problem of human trafficking as it presents itself in the specific context of the secondary schools and to develop an effective strategy and capacity for development of strategies concerned; to carry out effective local public education and other measures to prevent human trafficking.

Key words: human trafficking, prevention, human rights, strategies

1. Introduction

Trafficking in human beings is a complex phenomenon that is often driven or influenced by social, economic, cultural and other factors. It takes many different forms. It is dynamic and adaptable and, like many other forms of criminal activity, it is constantly changing in order to defeat efforts by law enforcement to prevent it. Many of these factors are specific to individual trafficking patterns and to the States in which they occur. Some of the common factors are *local conditions that make populations want to migrate in search of better conditions: poverty, oppression, lack of human rights, lack of social or economic opportunity, dangers from conflict or instability and similar conditions*. Political instability, militarism, civil unrest, internal armed conflict and natural disasters may result in an increase in trafficking. The destabilization and displacement of populations increase their vulnerability to exploitation and abuse through trafficking and forced labour. War and civil strife may lead to massive displacements of populations, leaving orphans and street children extremely vulnerable to trafficking. These factors tend to exert pressures on victims that “push” them into migration and hence into the control of traffickers, but other factors that tend to “pull” potential victims can also be significant. Poverty and wealth are relative concepts which lead to both migration and trafficking patterns in which victims move from conditions of extreme poverty to conditions of less-extreme poverty. In that context, the rapid expansion of broadcast and telecommunication media, including the Internet, across the developing world may have increased the desire to migrate to developed countries and, with it, the vulnerability of would-be migrants to traffickers. The practice of entrusting poor children to more affluent friends or relatives may create vulnerability. Some parents sell their children, not just for the money, but also in the hope that their children will escape a situation of chronic poverty and move to a place where they will have a better life and more opportunities. In some States, social or cultural practices also contribute to trafficking. For example, the devaluation of women and girls in a society makes them disproportionately vulnerable to trafficking. Added to these factors are the issues of porous borders, corrupt Government officials, the involvement of international organized criminal groups or networks and limited capacity of or commitment by immigration and law enforcement officers to control borders. Lack of adequate legislation and of political will and commitment to enforce existing legislation or mandates are other factors that facilitate trafficking in persons.

2. Importance of prevention

We learn daily about new ways of preventing, investigating and controlling the crime of trafficking and about more effective ways of protecting and assisting the victims of this crime. The present paper was prepared because there is still much to be learned about what works best to prevent and combat human trafficking under various circumstances. It presents a selection of conceptual, legislative and international and domestic organizational tools in use.

This paper is based on the premise that the problem of trafficking in persons, whether at the national or local level, can only be addressed effectively on the basis of comprehensive strategies that are based on human rights and that take into account the transnational nature of the problem, the many associated criminal activities, the frequent involvement of organized criminal groups and the profound pain, fear and damage suffered by the victims. It pursues the same purposes as the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime. Its purpose is to improve the ability, proficiency, knowledge and skills of teachers, lecturers and methodologists as to legal education and training. To this aim, the paper is structured in such a way that different sections each relating to the most relevant topics related to the prevention of trafficking in persons. The chapters deal respectively with the need: to take into account relevant international law and the emerging international and domestic legal framework; to assess the problem of human trafficking and to develop an effective strategy and capacity for development of strategies concerned; to carry out effective local public education and other measures to prevent human trafficking by action plan.

3. Analysis of Current State - Republic of Macedonia

It is of concern that the human trafficking victims in the Republic of Macedonia come from the country, i.e. they are victims of internal trafficking and the larger numbers are juveniles.

In 2009, in Macedonia there were registered 8 cases of human trafficking, 7 of which were juveniles, 6 were victims of internal trafficking at the age of 14 – 17 years.

The presence of the problem of human trafficking in the country, as well as the need for more appropriate protection of the victims led to taking some measures. Besides the existing shelter centre for human trafficking victims, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy opened also the shelter for human trafficking victims in October 2010. Until October 2010, 70 people victims of human trafficking have been admitted to the shelter of the NGO Otvorena Porta.

3.1. Legal and action-political background of the problem of human trafficking in the Republic of Macedonia

The human trafficking in the past years has become an issue in the Republic of Macedonia. Our country is a country of transit and destination of the human trafficking, but in the last couple of years a special problem has become the internal human trafficking. The Republic of Macedonia has been working for a longer period on building clear policy and a developed network of institutions for fighting human trafficking and illegal migration. The governmental institutions supported by the non-governmental organizations and the international community make serious efforts for eliminating the human trafficking.

Seen more specifically from international legal perspective, the Republic of Macedonia has ratified all the key international and legal instruments from the above mentioned area, including (among others), the Protocol on prevention, eradication, and punishing the human trafficking, especially women and children, which consolidates the Convention of the United Nations for the Transnational Organized Crime, as well as the Convention of the Council of Europe for Fighting Human Trafficking¹. These international legal instruments have additionally strengthened the domestic legislation, by the adoption of new and change in the relevant legal acts².

In the same context, we should specially have in mind the fact that, the Republic of Macedonia after the ratification of the Stabilization and Association Agreement with the European Union in 2004 has taken significant obligations for harmonizing the legislation in the Republic of Macedonia in order to have efficient cooperation in the fight against human trafficking. As a consequence of the abovementioned normative administration in our country (since February 2001) there is National Commission for Fighting Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration, and since 2004 there is a sub-group for fighting children trafficking. In this regard, 2009 commenced the preparation of the National Strategy for Fighting Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration and a National Action Plan for fighting human trafficking and illegal migration and Action Plan for fighting Children Trafficking in the Republic of Macedonia for the period 2009 – 2012. It was adopted by the

¹Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, 49, 14 April 2009.

² In January 2002 a new article was introduced to the **Criminal Code**, 418-a "Human trafficking" (Official Gazette of RM 10/2002). In March 2004 there were changes to article 418-a and two new articles were introduced 418-b and 418 -c (OG 19 as of 30.03.2004). Adoption of the **Law on Witness Protection** (OG 38/2005), **Law on Foreigners** (OG 35/2006). In 2008 there was a change to the article 418-s in the **Criminal Code**, after article 418-c there was new article added after article 418-c, which is 418-d, trafficking of juveniles, in 2008 there were changes to the **Law on Family**² with a new chapter V-a, **Guardianship of juveniles** – victims of human trafficking, with 16 new articles; at the same time with the numerous legal changes made in the past years, in 2009 there was a change to the **Law on Social Protection** where for the first time people that can have the right on the basis of this law are the people victims of human trafficking where the right for day care in shelter centers was introduced (Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia 84/2008).

Government of the Republic of Macedonia on 1st September 2009.³ This national and action political infrastructure is completed with the founding of shelter centre for foreigners by the Ministry of Interior which works since 2001. From October 2010 the care for the victims of the human trafficking from the country is taken over by the country which opened the state shelter for victims of human trafficking which is a clear reflection of the presence of the internal human trafficking in the country.

In the context of the above mentioned, we should underline the fact that the human trafficking as a complex form of organized crime is closely related to other shapes of criminal activities, such as the sexual and other forms of abuse of children, domestic violence, different vulnerable categories of people including especially women, people with disabilities and the like.

At the same time, the wider context of prevention from this evil encompasses a larger series of other questions, such as: fight against poverty and the social exclusion, gender equality and the like⁴.

Hereto, the fight against human trafficking and the prevention of this evil asks for a comprehensive response on national and local scale, reflected by the existence of true and functional partnerships with as large as possible number of state and non-state actors.

4. Priority activities

The proposed Action Plan (Table 1) includes prevention activities for human trafficking, and reduction of the problems of immigrant smuggling and illegal migration and defines the following strategic goals and activities:

SG 1 – Identifying the reasons for the emergence of HT (human trafficking) and IM (illegal migration)

Conducting a research for identification of the risk groups of human trafficking and illegal migration.

SG2 – Strengthening the capacities of the institutions and the non-governmental organizations for implementation of prevention activities.

³ On 28.01.2008 The Government of the Republic of Macedonia has adopted the Standard operational procedures for victims of human trafficking.

⁴ Analogous to this, the abovementioned international and domestic legal and action documents are closely bound to all the relevant international and domestic legal regulations from these areas (such as for example those pertaining to rights of children and women). In this regard, we should have in mind the existence of the large number of of the other national strategies and action plans such as: *Action Plan for Prevention and Fighting Sexual Abuse and Pefohyllia (2009 – 2012)*, *National Strategy for protection of Domestic Violence (2008-11)*, *National Plan for Gender Equality Action*, *National Strategy for Youths* (since 2005), the national action plan from the Roma Decade 2005 – 2012 and the strategy for the Roma in the Republic of Macedonia for the period 2009 – 2011, the national strategy for poverty (mats.go.my) etc. At the same time this presupposes the existence of larger number of legal regulations, including the Law on Family, Law on Social Protection, the legal regulations from the area of education, the Law on Equal Opportunities, the Law on Prevention and Protection from Discrimination etc. |

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No.	Strategic Goal	Activities	Responsible Institutions
2.	Strengthening institutional capacities and non-governmental organizations for implementing prevention activities	2.1. Analysis of the needs for education of professionals from relevant institutions	MoI, NGO, LS, Inspectorate for the market, educational institutions
		2.2. Organizing training, exchange of experiences for the professionals of the relevant institutions and developing mutual cooperation: sector for interior affairs, Social Security Centre, health institutions, media, NGO, educational institutions	NGO
		2.3. Coordination meetings of the local coalition	Local Coalition for fighting HT

No.	Strategic Goal	Activities	Responsible institutions
3.	Continuous education	3.1. Organizing campaign for raising	NGO, LS

	<p>and achievement in the awareness regarding HT and HT and IM</p>	<p>the public awareness for the problem of HT and IM and the legal provision of the criminal act and the punishment predicted from the legislator of this type of criminal acts.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing promotional material; - Developing website; - Media activities. <p>3.2. Marking the week of fighting human trafficking:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Educational workshops with the students from V to VIII grade and high schools; ▪ Day of integrated education in drawing, music, mother tongue and literature on the issue: human trafficking; ▪ Publishing a 	<p>NGO and the Coalition for fighting human trafficking and illegal migration</p>
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		<p>public call for the prize on the subject of human trafficking on the occasion of the week of the fight against human trafficking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Education of the personnel in the establishments for HT ▪ Raising the awareness of the parents for the possibility to have their children exposed to HT ▪ Projecting a film for prevention of HT. ▪ Organizing public event on the issue of human trafficking <p>3.3. Continuous work on the SOS line and information for help of</p>	NGO
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		the victims of violence	
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No.	Strategic Goal	Activities	Responsible institutions
		<p>3.4. Organizing preventive activities for human trafficking for risk groups-young women and girls, from the rural areas, Roma etc. on the issue of human trafficking and antidiscrimination, gender equality, domestic violence.</p>	NGO
		<p>3.5. Organizing lectures for students from faculties and higher schools.</p>	NGO, LS
		<p>3.6. Organizing preventive activities with the local population for the border region for HT and IM.</p>	NGO, border police, SSC
		<p>3.7. Organizing permanent education for the members of the Local coalition for fighting human trafficking.</p>	NGO, Local coalition
		<p>3.8. Making brochures for recognizing the elements and shapes of human trafficking and IM.</p>	NGO, LS

No.	Strategic goals	Activities	Responsible institutions
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4.	Establishing mechanism for reducing the reasons for emergence of HT and IM by economical strengthening of the vulnerable groups.	<p>4.1. Continuous functioning of the migration centre at the Employment agency.</p> <p>4.2. Increasing the accessibility of the labor market to the vulnerable groups (qualification, education, employment).</p>	<p>Employment agency</p> <p>NGO</p>
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Source: Author's recommendation

6. Benefits of the action plan

Expected effects of the Action plan are to identify the reasons for human trafficking and illegal migration, to strengthen the capacity of the institutions and the non-governmental organizations and to implement prevention activities for HT and IM by continuous education of different target groups and raising the public awareness regarding HT and IM.

Establishing and developing cooperation between the civil society and the local authorities is of big importance in the prevention of human trafficking on local level and contribution to the implementation of the National Strategy for Fighting Human Trafficking and Illegal Migration of the Government of the Republic of Macedonia.

The aim of the action plan is fighting human trafficking and the project activities of all of the partners in the project are directed to direct inclusion of the key actors at local level in fighting this evil. The paper should encourage the local actors to take over the responsibility for the issue of human trafficking and to identify decentralized measures against the crimes in human trafficking.

The action plan activities will contribute in the fight against crimes in human trafficking by strengthening capacity and joint action of the population.

Also, the benefits are seen in the context of possible creation of a network of local factors by creating Joint Committee for Fighting Human Trafficking which should identify the possible local measures for fighting the human trafficking by drafting a Local Action Plan for fighting human trafficking. The action plan will also aim to contribute to raising the public awareness for the presence of the problem in human trafficking and increase of the knowledge for the human rights with the youth population.

Conclusion

The action does not foresee the creation of new structures difficult to guarantee over the time, while it aims to ensure that the already existing services directed to contrast HT will be effective and useful to local communities. The establishment of a cross-border network will not require a relevant effort in **financial terms** thanks to the ICTs potentialities, while the running cost of the field offices will not have to be covered since are considered an in-kind contribution of the local partners. The action plan as a core of the proposed strategy is to continue to operate all members of the different partners include in this action, while the education and training activities targeting the students will be included in the curricula and extracurricular activities of the selected schools. The production of communication and information materials as well the development of a need analysis will produce a long term impact without requiring future running costs. The presence of the partners in the target areas as well the involvement of schools and municipalities (where will be considered such an action plan), will guarantee the follow up of the above mentioned results and impact over the time, with any additional cost. From an **institutional perspective**, the action proposed is fully coherent with the *National Programme against Human Trafficking 2008 - 2010* promoted by Macedonian and Albanian Ministries of Interior, foreseeing the Government ownership, involvement of civil society and strengthening of victims' assistance. The creation of a *Cross-border Network* based on the initiatives of local *Joint Committees* involving NGOs, community based organizations, educational institutions and local authorities will ensure the ownership of the action outcomes and a continuous monitoring, making easier any future planning. The action will produce a **political impact** not only in the target municipalities and toward the target groups, but also at national and regional level.

The proposal is expected to produce **a positive impact with tangible results on the following groups**: most motivated teachers of the target schools participating in training and follow-up activities; students from the upper classes of the same schools taking part in

the simulation “Model Human Rights Defenders”, increasing their knowledge on social inclusion and their ability to protect human rights; a larger number of students, teachers, parents, public citizens involved in dissemination activities and raising awareness campaigns.

Macedonian civil society is very active in promoting social inclusion, equality and cohesion in the country. Local civil society groups such as CDIPL - *Centre for Development and Improvement of Public Life*, have been able to propose alternative education methodologies with a strong accent on cultural dialogue. Civil society has tackled several priority issues in terms of respect of fundamental freedom and human rights; through the project, their role as “Human Rights Defenders” will be recognized and supported in front of local and national authorities. By taking part to the Action, civil society organizations will increase their networking capacities with public decentralized services and with the school system; this will contribute to enlarge the impact of their initiatives. Civil society organizations will have moreover the opportunity to enhance their skills in pursuing a public agenda based on a rights-based approach rather than on a need-based analysis; this factor will support them in the formulation of more effective programming and interventions.

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