Dear Reader,

We are here to announce our joint commitment to address trafficking in human beings in a coordinated and comprehensive manner. Through exchanging of views and experience, sharing of good practices, strengthening cooperation between Euro-Mediterranean Caritas organizations and other stakeholders we are all committed to join our efforts and focus on better prevention of trafficking and more effective protection of victims in line with human rights standards.

Human trafficking can target everyone; women, men and children for forced sexual and labor exploitation, for removal of organs. It destroys lives and causes families to apart. It occurs in every country, among wealthy and poor nations, in urban and rural areas, in the streets and inside the closed doors. It is not someone else's problem. It is our problem.

In recent years, increased international attention and understanding of the problem has prompted the countries to develop international coordination and advocacy actions taking into account the transnational extent of trafficking. But the increased globalization, economic and social crises, international conflicts has created a vacuum where human trafficking is in high demand, very profitable and less risky. Human trafficking is spreading all over the world and is growing and the international community has to strengthen its ability to respond.

We need to understand the dynamics of human trafficking to jointly provide appropriate interventions to combat it.

Movses Hakobyan
Caritas Armenia

THE ACTIVITY OF THE PROJECT:

STUDY VISIT PROGRAM IN ARMENIA

Armenian Caritas has organized a Study Visit Program in Armenia in the frames of “Human Trafficking, a Common Challenge for the New Century” project for Euro-Mediterranean partners from Turkey, Ukraine, Romania, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and France. They have come in Armenia to exchange experience and to strengthen their ability to combat trafficking.

The highlights of the program were the seminar entitled “Prevention with Young Communities in Armenia” and the conference “Prevention of Human Trafficking – 9 Years at School” which took place on 24-25th of February, 2012.

The following objectives were set up to organize the seminar:

- To get familiar with Human Trafficking realities in Armenia;
- To strengthen the Partners capacity in working with schools and school communities;
- To promote and share Armenian Caritas experience in the way of working with school communities and raising schoolchildren awareness on Human Trafficking;
- To share with partners the mechanism of the implementation of the program; development of educating module for the teachers and pupils, training of the teachers and pupils, evaluation of activities;
- To promote the way of cooperation and collaboration with local and international organizations and government institutions dealing with Human Trafficking and school education.

During the first part of the seminar Armenian Caritas “Prevention of Illegal Migration and Trafficking” Program Manager introduced the general Human Trafficking situation in Armenia,
the results achieved during 9 years trainings at schools for high grade pupils, talked about the working tools and methods used by the trainers in Armenia. Then the project trainers presented the way of monitoring the trainings at school, the way of making evaluations and the future plans. The plans were connected with the new project of trafficking that was the establishment of Migration and Trafficking Resource Centre (MTRC).

The second part of the seminar was continued by the meetings with the representatives of the government and International Organization for Migration. The Chief Specialist of Public Education Department from the Ministry of Education introduced the works done by the government and the procedure of inclusion of “trafficking” theme into the curriculum of school education. Trafficking related books for the teachers and for the pupils were developed by the experts of the National Institute of Education (NIE). 2400 teachers from all over Armenia have been trained by NIE, International Organization for Migration and Armenian Caritas.

The next meeting was held with the representatives of International Organization for Migration who presented their regional project called “Prevention of Trafficking at School Education in Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan”. The project aimed at developing and distributing educational materials to increase the understanding of the dangers of trafficking, realities of migration and awareness of available preventive support mechanisms among secondary school pupils, teachers and parents. They presented the history of the books created in collaboration with other organizations. Armenian Caritas in recent years has used the books for the trainings at schools as well.

The partners were also taken to one of the project beneficiary schools in Yerevan where trainings on illegal migration and trafficking theme have been organized for high grade pupils. The following objectives were set up to organize the conference:

- To summarize of Armenian Caritas several years experience in prevention of illegal migration and trafficking at school level;
- To encourage open discussions on propositions and suggestions received from the schools (received from the teachers’ and pupils’ Evaluations Reports) to enhance the level of Human Trafficking information dissemination at school communities and in general;
- To identify the gaps in the law of Armenia on trafficking and to raise modest methods to combat Human Trafficking at local level;
- To formulate written suggestions, recommendations to the Governmental Anti-trafficking Council for improving their policy in fight with trafficking phenomenon.

All the Partners were invited to Tsaghkadzor Resort to participate at the conference. The beneficiary school teachers and school administration, the State representatives, international and national NGOs active in the field were the participants of the conference.

The guests had speeches and each introduced the works done in the sphere of Human Trafficking and the project manager summarized several years experience in the field. The second part of the conference was organized in the way of workshop. The workshop was facilitated by an expert of US embassy in Armenia, who introduced US State Department, Trafficking in person report referring to Armenia starting from 2002 and the Tier classifications.

During the second part of the workshop the participants were divided into groups and the following tasks were given to the groups to discuss and to make suggestions:

- Children are part of the vulnerable groups of the society and are easy target for traffickers. Please, provide your recommendations on the necessary efforts that the government and society are required to undertake to protect the children;
- What efforts (legisitative, institutional, activities, etc.) shall the government take in schools, especially in special schools to prevent trafficking;
- US Department of State evaluates trafficking in persons situation in countries (including Armenia) based on the minimum standards set by the US Government. Please, provide your recommendations to the Government of Armenia on what kind of efforts it shall take to solve the trafficking related issues.

The groups were given 30 minutes for discussions. After the discussions one participant out of each group presented their suggestions and recommendations based on the discussions with the group members. Among the recommendations, the government is asked to:

- ensure social protection and stability of family (creation of work places, increase of salaries, etc.);
- provide Information access/awareness about trafficking for the community, family and children;
- work/meet with parents community to prevent trafficking and other similar threats;

Concrete suggestions and recommendations were made by participants addressed to the government for improving the trafficking situation in the country.

After the conference, recommendations in a form of civic letter have been presented to the attention of the Government Anti-trafficking Council.

Movses Hakobyan
Caritas Armenia
Armenia is comprised of 10 regions (marzes) and the capital city of Yerevan. About 65% of the total population lives in urban areas, of which one third lives in Yerevan. Agriculture generates 21% of Armenia’s gross domestic product (GDP) and employs about 45 percent of the labor force. Services sector, concentrated in public administration and trade, generates 44.7 percent of Armenia’s GDP. As a small developing economy, Armenia depends on external markets and faces the daunting challenge of tackling poverty.

The country is characterized by the high rate of unemployment and poverty. In 2009 34.1% of country population was poor. Between 2008 and 2009, 214,000 people became poor, raising the total to 1.1 million people. Likewise, 245,000 people became very poor, raising the total to more than 650,000. Actual unemployment rate is 27.5% according to the International Labour Organization. In 2009 informal employment in Armenia was 52.1%. The study shows that informal jobs are low paid offering no protection and high risk exposure.

MIGRATION
Migration from Armenia is a widespread phenomenon; so severe that the Armenian Government is reluctant to research and release realistic figures about it. The figures available indicate that at least 35% of the population has migrated from Armenia during the last two decades. A large number of young people, even those who have invested in education, cannot find any promising opportunities for employment, and consequently consider migration to be their only option.

The well-educated and highly qualified migrants are able to use official migration channels when leaving their country of origin. They often succeed in creating a dignified life in their host countries. Many others do not have the same chance and often fall victim to trafficking and exploitation, losing their self-respect and the possibility for a dignified return to their original societies. Poorer families are at particular risk.

The lack of information concerning trafficking, the links between illegal migration and trafficking increases trafficking risks among migrants.

TRAFFICKING
According to the US trafficking in persons report Armenia is a source country for women and girls subjected to sex trafficking, as well as a source and destination country for women subjected to forced labor, and a source country for men subjected to force labor.

The Government of Armenia does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking; however, it is making significant efforts to do so. According to the US trafficking in persons report Armenia is recommended to:

- increase the number of victims referred to NGO service providers for assistance;
- investigate and prosecute government officials suspected of trafficking-related complicity and convict and punish complicit officials;
- continue efforts to raise public awareness about both sex and labor trafficking.

In February 2011, the government added the victims of trafficking to the list of vulnerable persons eligible for extra employment assistance. The government officially identified 19 trafficking victims in 2010 and referred 12 of them to NGOs for assistance, compared with 16 victims of trafficking identified and 22 referred to NGOs in 2009.

The lack of appropriate protection for victims who provide testimony continued to be an issue of concern; this may have hampered Armenia’s prosecution efforts. As Armenia is mainly a source country for trafficking it is an absolute necessity to inform youth and public in general about dangers of trafficking.

ARMENIAN CARITAS
Since 2003, Armenian Caritas has been largely engaged in anti-trafficking activities, by raising awareness of high grade pupils on the issue of trafficking and illegal migration through organization of training of trainers/teachers (ToT), lectures for students, seminars for parents.

The following advocacy actions have been realized during project implementation:

- Thousands of booklets, leaflets and posters have been developed, published and distributed;
- Several TV debates have been organized during project cycle;
- Mass media interviews and reportages have been carried out;
- Thematic drawing exhibitions have been set up with the participation of representatives from the Ministry of Education;
- Round table discussions have been organized with participation of governmental and non-governmental representatives;
- Lobbying activities have been carried out during Armenian Inter-Agency Commission on counter trafficking meetings.

Armenian Caritas has had its great input in fighting against human trafficking in Armenia. It works in close collaboration with the governmental Anti-trafficking Commission, non-governmental national and international organizations. Armenian Caritas is a full member of Armenian UN Theme Group on Anti-Trafficking and also a member of Anti-Trafficking Caucasus (Georgia and Armenia) Network. Armenian Caritas is also an affiliate of Christian Organization against Trafficking Network (COATNET).

Movses Hakobyan
Caritas Armenia
NATIONAL CAMPAIGN “CHILDHOOD IS NOT A CHILD LABOR”

Caritas Albania since 2007 is an official member of the Albanian Coalition “All Together Against Child Trafficking” (BKTF).

This coalition is a nongovernmental association of 28 national and international organizations that operates in Albania to reduce child trafficking and exploitation and violence against children.

BKTF in close cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, Office of the Anti-trafficking Coordinator has organized several activities in 7 regions in Albania, in the frame of the national campaign “Childhood is NOT Child Labor”.

The campaign was launched in Tirana on the 10th of June 2011 and continued in, Kukës, Shkodra, Tirana, Durrës, Elbasan, Korça. Activities were organized in different schools and aimed at raising public awareness on child protection issue, institutions working in this field.

Caritas Albania and the BKTF coalition in collaboration with the National Coordinator of the Office Against Human Trafficking, the Regional Anti-trafficking Committee in Fier, the Directory of Education in Fier, organized an awareness event “Child is NOT child Labor” on January 30, 2012, in the School Mark Dashi. In this activity were present around 120 children from different grades, teachers, and the pedagogical staff. The main goal of this activity was increasing the awareness of children, teachers and the community of Fier, that childhood does not represent a labor force to increase the incomes.

Children who participated in the activity, apart from listening to the messages and commitment of the local and central government in improving the services for the protection of vulnerable children did also present their own messages through essays, poetries and dances.

Also, Caritas Albania has supported with financial and logistical support on organizing this event. The project coordinator of Caritas Albania, Aurora Koqeku, was present in all the coordination meetings, in order to plan, organize, manage this activity, launch the activities in schools and implement it in different schools.

At the end of the activity the participants were invited to visit the exhibition with pictures and drawings prepared by the children.

Aurora Koqeku
Caritas Albania
NEW PROJECT IN BOSNIA AND HERZEGOVINA
Caritas of Bishop’s conference of Bosnia and Herzegovina (Caritas BCBH), is on the beginning of a new phase of the project “Enhancing local capacities to stop trafficking.” On 1st of January 2012 started the sixth phase of the project, which is implemented since 2004. Since the beginning of the year till today, Caritas Bosnia and Herzegovina has had mostly networking activities.

1. NETWORKING
1. Meetings with Caritas Swiss, CRS, Inter Religious Council, coordinators and potential partners for next phase of the project.
2. Project manager Ivana Kozina attended training SEE YOU-EMOTION 2 (How to develop creative and emotional stress management skills in non-formal education) Training was held in Iceland from 4th to 11th of February 2012.
   The acquired knowledge and skills will be very useful in group work, especially with Roma youth.

2. MEETING: CARITAS SWISS & CARITAS BC BH
Project Coordinator, Ivana Kozina and Zlatan Savic held a working meeting in the Swiss Caritas on 19th of March. The aim of the meeting was to develop a log frame of the project for 2012 and 2013. Possible future activities in the project, particularly the workshops with young Roma were discussed.

Project coordinator, held a regular meeting with the Ministry of Security where she presented the planned activities in the project for 2012. Ministry of Security is satisfied with planned activities that will be implemented by Caritas Bosnia and Herzegovina in 2012.

-Mr. Mujanovic is Professor at the Faculty of Criminology Sciences and one of the key persons in making the National Action Plan for the Prevention of Trafficking in Bosnia and Herzegovina 2013/2015. Work with the young Roma people and the role of Caritas BC BH in efforts of B&H in prevention of trafficking was discussed.Professor Mujanovic is willing to cooperate with Caritas BC BH in preventing trafficking.

3. ECONOMIC EMPOWERMENT
CARITAS BANJA LUKA
In the beginning of 2012 Caritas Banja Luka had several meetings with potential beneficiaries for the economic empowerment. Caritas Banja Luka, considered the option to support more beneficiaries within the ongoing project with the chicken instead of bee production.

The reason for this change (earlier Caritas Banja Luka was focused mostly on the bee production) was the significant reduce of the work in their carpentry workshop in Banja Luka and recent leave of the carpenters from that workshop. Caritas Banja Luka assess that between 7-10 families can be supported in the program of the economic empowerment within our project in 2012/2013. Caritas Mostar, started with economic support in 2012. They have supported already 2 families from Ortijes parish. The beneficiaries received the economic packages for bee production and chicken.

4. APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM
-Caritas Banja Luka, will start with apprenticeship program on May 01, 2012 with the first apprentice. They had already formed the preliminary list of the potential apprentices.
-Caritas Sarajevo, the apprenticeship program in kindergarten “Sveta Obitelj” Caritas Sarajevo already started in 2012.
ADVOCACY ACTION AT THE OCCASION OF THE FRENCH PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION

On the occasion of the French presidential election, the Collective “Together against Trafficking in Human Beings” sent some recommendations to the candidates to raise their awareness and challenge them on this subject. This Collective includes 25 French organizations involved directly or indirectly with victims in France, in countries of destination and origin of victims of human trafficking. Determined to fight against the commodification of the person, the Collective is mobilized with a double objective: increasing public awareness on this complex issue and engaging French and European policy makers to clearly and strongly commit themselves against this crime.

Four recommendations were made:

- The first recommendation concerns international texts and their application. The Collective reminds the candidates of various international agreements devoted to the protection of foreigners against human trafficking and exploitation in which France is party:
  - The 2000 United Nations Protocol called the “Palermo Protocol” is the first instrument through which the international community has sought to understand this issue;
  - The Convention of the Council of Europe on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings adopted in Warsaw in 2005, which extends the protection to all victims, be trafficking national or transnational, connected to organized crime or not;
  - The 2011 European Directive concerning the prevention of human trafficking, the fight against this phenomenon, and victims’ protection.

- The second emphasizes on the fact that the French migration policy should not be at the expense of victims of human trafficking. This requires a coordinated and multidisciplinary approach to integrate the prevention of human trafficking, the protection of the victims’ rights and the prosecution of offenders, in partnership with the civil society and through the strengthening of international cooperation. Article L 316-1 of the French Code of the Entry and Stay of foreigners and the Right of Asylum provides a right of residence for victims of trafficking, but it is too rarely applied.

- The third recommendation emphasizes the importance to train staff of French institutions so that they are better able to meet the specific needs of this issue. This training will enable the staff to better identify victims, to inform them about their rights and to provide for greater penalties for offenders. France must provide more trainings on the identification of victims of trafficking to staff of retention centers for irregular migrants and continue to train other officers, including border police.

- The fourth and final recommendation calls the candidates upon the non implementation of the National Plan of Action against Trafficking in Human Beings. The National Plan was developed in France by an interministerial and inter-NGO working group and handed to the Ministers of Interior and Justice in 2010. In 2012, it is still not implemented. Financial means and human resources must be allocated to the fight against human trafficking.

Geneviève Colas
Caritas France
FIGHT AGAINST TRAFFICKING IN TURKEY

In the context of activities of human trafficking, Turkey has been described as a destination country for the new waves of migration starting in the 1990s. Parallel to the development of prevention methods on the international level, starting from 2003, Turkey also started to take steps to fight against human trafficking by adopting specific laws (United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime and additional Protocols Trafficking in Human Beings and Smuggling of Migrants were ratified. The Article 80 of the Criminal Code put into force on June 2005 defines the crime of trafficking of human beings and the related punishments; in December 2006 forced prostitution was included into the same article.)

A “National Task Force on Combating trafficking in human beings, led by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, was established with participation of the Ministry of Interior Affairs, Ministry of Health, Municipalities, intergovernmental organizations such as IOM and some NGOs. The Task Force defines National Action Plans and the administrative procedures needing to be implemented. However, the lack of data and gathered information regarding the issue is the crucial point that limits the ability to talk about exact numbers in the handling of this problem. The determination of status as “victim” has been made under the responsibility of the police and law enforcement officers in Turkey since 2004. Starting in that year, Human Resource Development Foundation (HRDF) – an NGO engaged in this field- started to research facts and numbers on the subject in Turkey. According to the report of HRDF published in 2008, the majority of the victims are from Moldavia, Russia Ukraine Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, and Azerbaijan. Between 2004 - 2009 the number of victims was confirmed to be 1075 by the Turkish National Police. An important development regarding the support program for trafficked persons is that two shelters were opened for trafficked women in Turkey. The first one was opened in Istanbul in 2004 and a year after that the second one was opened in Ankara. The state took the responsibility of providing psychological counseling and free medical service to them. According to the data of Ministry of Foreign Affairs that was gathered for the program of Fight Against Illegal Migration and Human Trafficking, between the years 2004-2007, 464 trafficked women reached to the shelters. Besides that, 1336 traffickers were arrested during the same period. The higher number of human traffickers reveals the fact that the real number of trafficked women is much more than the ones who could reach the shelters. Another improvement is that an emergency helpline (157 Counter Trafficking Line) has been functioning 24 hours a day, 7 days a week in different languages since 2005, run by IOM.

Awareness campaigns on the media (the first one was launched in 2006), distribution of informative leaflets at the main tourist border gates, training for law officials, circulation of a Guideline on the Fight against Trafficking in human beings, in police stations are other steps forward. What needs to be improved in Turkey– especially considering the country’s position at the crossroad of Europe, Asia and Middle East- is the mutual collaboration on both the national and international level for the prevention of human trafficking. Hence, more involvement of civil actors is also an important need in the field. Caritas Turkey is member of the COATNET network and since autumn 2011 is partner of joint Euro-Mediterranean project, aiming to gather all Caritas partners’ efforts, ideas and experiences together for combating this human rights violation.

Chiara Rambaldi
Caritas Turkey
STREET ACTION “DON’T BECOME A SLAVE”

A street action “Don’t Become a Slave” was held in small towns of Lviv region (Ukraine). It lasted for a week from the 2nd to the 6th of April 2012. The aim of the event was to inform the public about the problem of human trafficking and about the illegal labor migration, their causes and outcomes. The action was organized and conducted by the efforts of concerned youth and volunteers. Before the start of the street action young people and volunteers interested in the problem took part in the training that was devoted to the problems of human trafficking and illegal migration. They got necessary information for clear understanding of the problem, its reasons and its results. During the street action volunteers distributed informative booklets with preventive information and answered thematic questions from those who were interested. More than 500 booklets were distributed during the street action.

The street action was conducted in several small towns because the residents of big cities are always better informed about the problem of human trafficking. As a result, dwellers of big cities rarely have problems with illegal migration abroad and not so often become victims of human trafficking. At the same time population of small towns don't know much about these problems and as, a result, suffer from them.

The street action made some people puzzled as they didn’t use to speak about such problems. But almost every person who was involved in some way into the street action confessed that the information he received is really necessary and important for him. Such informative street events are very often the only one way for people in remote towns and villages to get to know so serious and influential information.

Natalia Holynska  
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