Baltic Sea Region – Information Management to Prevent Trafficking
- BSR IMPT -

A project implemented by the Expert Group for Cooperation on Children at Risk, EGCC, within the Council of the Baltic Sea States partnership with Save the Children Denmark, Tartu Child Support Centre, Estonia and Caritas, Lithuania.

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Background
A serious effort in fighting child trafficking requires a clear understanding of current trends with regard to victims, traffickers, the modus operandi of traffickers, travel routes used, different forms of exploitation children are subjected to when trafficked and root causes. Sometimes the information necessary to track the trends does not rest directly within the scope of problems related to trafficking as such. This is why an information structure and information management is considered crucial when it comes to effective preventive work which necessarily involves several stakeholders in every country. The Baltic Sea Region has already in 2003 set in place a network of National Contact Points for Unaccompanied and Trafficked Children, NCP. The 13 countries presently participating actively in this endeavour have all appointed an NCP who serves as the natural point of contact between child protection professionals in the region. Each National Contact Point works with the limitations that the specific country encounters when it comes to how information is collected, collated and disseminated regarding data, information and intelligence related to children and young people at risk of being trafficked, being exploited or that are somehow in a situation where they may be without protection.

Caritas Lithuania

The role of National Contact Points
The NCP serves as a point of reference for informal requests regarding individual unaccompanied and trafficked children in the region. The role of the National Contact Point is to serve as a highway/gate opener to the system of social care/child protection in the country, thus making information on national structures and valuable persons to contact available for colleagues in other countries when individual cases of children suspected victims of trafficking are identified or when support for a specific unaccompanied child is urgent. The rationale behind this position is naturally to improve efficiency (including the response time and appropriateness) of the assistance to unaccompanied and trafficked children.

The NCPs find themselves in a similar situation as that of other international points of contact or referral mechanisms: If they don't have an information management system in place it is not only difficult for them to assess and judge in what way they can best deploy resources but it is also difficult for them to convey to their colleagues in neighbouring countries useful information that in the best of cases will prevent children from being trafficked. Regularly international organisations ask of referral mechanisms to send them data on the situation regarding trafficking in their country and the referral mechanisms or contact points find themselves in a difficult situation as they don't really have the data available.

Examples of existing sources for data collection (related to child trafficking)
Updated information is believed to be the most efficient way to prevent trafficking but at the same time very difficult to gather. The number of cases prosecuted in one country and the number of identified victims are regularly quoted as data necessary for a country to manage. Data from NGOs supporting victims is another source of information and in some countries data from migratory movements is collected and kept as a reference for the preventive work. Data on the number of women in prostitution or the number of children and young people suspected to be in prostitution are collected in some countries in order to follow changes. The number of children running away from institutions or leaving centres for unaccompanied asylum seekers is in some countries collected and used as vital bits of information. In some countries the number of minors from another country caught by the police is a measurement used to indicate possible trafficking. Often the numbers are collected together with more qualitative information in order to assess the situation but there is an obvious room to discuss what kind of information that have proven to be useful and how the information can be managed and dynamically handled.

Red Barnet
Save the Children Denmark

Caritas Lithuania

Tartu Laste Tugikeskus
MEIE HOOLIME SINUST

Project aim
In this project the aim is to look at the information structures regarding child trafficking in the countries that are members of the EU or closely affiliated to the EU and at the same time members of the CBSS. The ambition is to map existing information and intelligence structures and how these are managed in the countries in question. The project does not aspire to gather the data per se, but to describe the structures the data is collected and managed within. The expectation is that efforts and successes from countries will serve as an inspiration for neighbouring countries. The network of National Contact Points, NCPs, in the CBSS member states are naturally important stakeholders in this chain of information and may be the node through which the relevant information passes. Whichever way the information flows, the NCPs will be kept updated about the project developments and findings.

Project content
A consultant will be hired to conduct interviews with the NCPs and other relevant stakeholders in Norway, Denmark, Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland and Germany. The consultant will conduct interviews with NCPs and with professionals involved in already ongoing information management efforts in order to be able to summarise the regional situation. The project is expected to reveal the best sources for the particular pieces of information to be obtained. To facilitate the work of the expert, he project will arrange three expert meetings with experts from the CBSS member countries that are members of the EU or affiliated through agreements with the EU. At these seminar meetings links between exploitative situations children may find themselves in and trafficking will be explored by some 20 experts from involved countries. They will meet and discuss how to best collect information regarding:

- o Young people in prostitution (Seminar organised by Caritas Lithuania in Vilnius in March 2010.)
- o Unaccompanied asylum seeking children (Seminar organised by Save the Children Denmark in Copenhagen in May 2010.)
- o Child labour and children committing crimes in a country not their own (Seminar organised by Tartu Child Support Centre in Tartu or in Tallinn in September 2010.)

The project aims to
- contribute to an increase of the information on child trafficking available in the region
- strengthen the national multidisciplinary networks preventing child trafficking
- contribute to the establishment of permanent channels of information-sharing on child trafficking within and between the countries involved

Caritas Lithuania

Outputs

The project will present a report on how information may be managed by the end of the project period in the beginning of 2011. Reports from the three seminars will also be produced.

Information

For more information on the project, please contact any of the four partners:

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