



LA STRADA INTERNATIONAL – GOALS GLOBAL INITIATIVE

Shift emphasis in the current anti trafficking debate

The core of the crime of trafficking is **exploitation, violence and abuse**. Unfortunately anti trafficking policies do not necessarily serve the best interests of exploited and abused persons or vulnerable groups. The emphasis in the trafficking debate and consequently the focus in the majority of the policies and measures have been on how people arrive in a situation of sexual exploitation. The focus is on migration and on the sex industry. Anti-migration policies, policies that restrict the human rights of irregular migrants and policies that criminalise prostitutes or their clients, have been developed and implemented in the name of anti trafficking but have increased the vulnerability of those most likely to be affected by trafficking.

However the aim of any anti trafficking policy of measure should be to end **all exploitative (labour) situations**; to protect the rights of adults and children that have been exploited and to prevent others to get entrapped in an exploitative situation.

Therefore the human rights based approach needs to be integrated in all anti trafficking mechanisms and measures. A human rights based approach to trafficking does not only require **unconditioned support** schemes for trafficked persons but also opposes anti-trafficking measures which adversely affect or infringe upon the human rights of trafficked persons or other affected groups. This approach requires that **human rights are at the core of any anti trafficking strategy**. It integrates the norms, standards and principles of the international human rights system into legislation, policies, programs and processes.

Tool: Human Rights Assessment Instrument that assesses the effects of anti trafficking measures on the human rights of affected group before implementation.

Tool: Monitoring Mechanism to constantly review the effects, both positive and negative, of anti trafficking policies and measures.

Focus on root causes

The Global Initiative should stimulate international anti trafficking policies that aim to **prevent** trafficking to address root causes of trafficking in human beings instead of merely address the criminal aspect of trafficking.

Trafficking in human beings will continue to exist as long as the root causes; poverty, unemployment especially among women, lacking education, gender equality and discrimination remain to exist. Fighting these root causes is in line with the Millennium Development Goals numbers 1, 2 and 3: Eradicate extreme **poverty** and hunger, Achieve universal primary **education**, Promote **gender equality** and empower women. These goals need to be achieved all around the world, as poverty, lack of education and gender inequality are not restricted to the so called 3rd world countries, but also occur in richer countries.

Tool: All exiting tools on women's empowerment, education and poverty reduction

Acknowledge labour migration and protect migrant workers rights

Anti trafficking rhetoric is being used by governments to close borders, both in countries of origin and countries of destination. The global initiative should initiate an innovative and open discussion on labour migration in which current trends in labour migration and the reality of migrant workers are central. There is a need for more tolerant and **flexible immigration policies**.

This discussion could connect to the **policy priorities for 2008 of the European Commission** and the recommendation of the World Bank to encourage **circular migration**. This broad discussion with states, institutions, unions, NGO's and the general public should address the benefits of migration for both source and destination countries.

Informal and unregulated work activities should be brought within the protection of Labour laws to ensure that all workers enjoy the same labour rights.

Tools: UN Convention on the Protection of the Rights of all Migrant workers and their Families

Existing ILO treaties

Existing tools to protect migrants workers rights developed by NGO's

Address demand in the broadest way

The current discussion about demand is only focussed on trafficking for prostitution and does not address other forms of trafficked (forced and exploitative) labour nor does it include the **role of states** and the **private sector**. In destination countries there is a growing need for unskilled and labour intensive work in order to be able to compete with low wage countries. This work is mostly done by illegal, irregular and unprotected migrant workers. Both governments and the cooperates are accountable for this exploitative situation and should take their responsibility to change it.

Stimulate and support **fair trade** and create awareness raising among the general public.

Tools: Exiting labour laws.

Fair trade campaigns

One global project

And finally the Global Initiative should take its own aim to harness and synergize these efforts, to get others to join in, and to set in motion a broad-based global movement that will attract the political will and resources, very seriously. UN.GIFT should bring together all these projects and initiatives on trafficking into one global project in which all (international) organisations cooperate in order to increase the impact of all actions taken. Overlap, duplication and gaps in actions, should be as much as possible be avoided at all time, as well as the ad hoc approach. Hereto support and cooperation of all actors towards the global initiative is essential, while the UN should fully take into account all existing practises, organisations and actions. NGO's, not only in the field of anti trafficking but also in the field of women's empowerment, migrants rights, fair trade, children's rights, development, poverty, should be recognised as important stakeholders, (financially) supported and be involved as equal partners in the project.

La Strada International, May 2007

De Wittenstraat 25

1052 AK Amsterdam

The Netherlands

Telephone: 00 31 (0) 20 6881414

Fax: 00 31 (0) 20 6881013

E-mail: info@lastradainternational.org

Website: www.lastradainternational.org