

# NEEDS ASSESSMENT AND STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE PROCESS OF REINTEGRATION OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS IN MOLDOVA



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*What is to become of Christina, only 20 years young and newly living with HIV? Born in a loving family, she dreamt of becoming a princess just like in the fairy tales her parents used to read to her at night. But life did not resemble her dreams and expectations of the future. At the age of six she found herself completely alone, losing both her parents in a violent accident. Christina was left without the care of a family and was put in an orphanage in Moldova. When she turned eight, a man came to take her away and became her legal guardian. Christina's hopes and dreams were about to become possible again. What was her happiest day of her life since the dramatic accident was to become her biggest nightmare. This new life gave her awareness that a child should never have at such young age. Her new guardian abused her in words, in forcing her to work and worse of all took away her youthful innocence by raping her continuously until she was sixteen. Then when he felt he was through with her and could gain no more advantage, one day he kicked her out of his house and Christina was again left alone but this time with this traumatic experience. She ended up on the streets and tried her best to survive. Was it bad luck or just destiny? Whatever it was, her nightmare was not about to end. One morning, on a sunny snowy winter day Christina met a man that promised her the world, he talked about things she thought she could never have. He talked about a safe home abroad and a job that could give her many opportunities to meet nice people and maybe one day to meet a man that could erase her past and make her happy. On that same sunny winter day, Christina was trafficked to Turkey. There she realized that life could actually get worse. From there she suffered all kinds of abuses and was forced into prostitution and experienced the horror of the trafficking reality. Later she was moved further to the United Emirates. She was in captivity for about four years before she was able to escape and repatriated by the International Organization for Migration. Back to Moldova, she was once again alone but she was provided shelter by IOM in Chisinau. Christina is now twenty years old and she is infected with HIV<sup>1</sup>! What can organizations do to give her back her life? What is to become of twenty year old Christina?*

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<sup>1</sup> Story told by IOM members to La Strada ones in a meeting to try to find a solution for this girl. She arrived at the shelter on March 30, 2006.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS:

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ABBREVIATIONS	P. 5
I. INTRODUCTION	P.6-11
A. SETTING THE GROUNDS FOR RESEARCH	P.6-9
1. RESEARCH INTEREST AND DIVISION	P.6-7
2. INTERNATIONAL RESPONSABILITIES AND CONVENTIONS	P.8-9
B. REALITY OF MOLDAVIANS	P.9-11
1. MOLDAVIANS' ECONOMIC REALITY	P.9-10
2. MOLDAVIANS' POLITICAL REALITY	P.10-11
3. MOLDAVIANS' SOCIAL REALITY	P.11
II. THE WORLD OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING	P.12-18
A. INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC LEGISLATIONS AND DEFINITIONS	P.12-14
B. THE PROCESS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING	P.14-16
C. SOME DATA ABOUT MOLDOVA	P.16
D. WORLD OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING AND THEIR CAPTIVITY	P.16-18
III. NEEDS OF THE VICTIMS	P.18-24
A. METHODOLOGY USED AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED	P.18
B. BASIC NECESSITIES OF THE VICTIMS	P.19-24
1. HEALTH NEEDS	P.19-20
2. SOCIAL NEEDS	P.20-23
3. FINANCIAL NEEDS	P.23
4. LEGAL NEEDS	P.23-24
IV. PROGRAMS IN CHISINAU	P.25-31
A. POLITICAL PROGRAMS	P.25-26
B. LEGAL PROGRAMS	P.26
C. EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS	P.26-28
D. SOCIAL PROGRAMS	P.28-30
E. COORDINATION PROGRAMS	P.30-31
V. REINTEGRATION IN MOLDOVA	P.31-32
VI. CONCLUSION	P.32-35
BIBLIOGRAPHY	P.36-42
APPENDIX	P.43-46
QUESTIONNAIRES: 1. <u>ENGLISH VERSION</u>	P.43-44
2. <u>FRENCH VERSION</u>	P.45-46

## ABBREVIATIONS:

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CE	Council of Europe
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
CPTW	Center for Prevention of Trafficking in Women
EU	European Union
La Strada	International Center for Women Rights Protection and Promotion
ICCPR	International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICS	Italian Consortium for Solidarity
ILO	International Labor Organization
IO	International Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPEC	International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
OSCE	Organization for the Security and Co-operation in Europe
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease
SEE	South Eastern Europe
TDH	Terre des Hommes
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Developmental Program
UNFPA	United Nations Population Fund
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

## I. INTRODUCTION

### A. SETTING THE GROUNDS FOR RESEARCH

#### 1. RESEARCH INTEREST AND DIVISION

The era of war and poverty during the last century in Europe has given way to one of peace and space for the development of basic human rights instruments in the midst of globalization. However as Johan Galtung argues<sup>2</sup>, conflicts are not necessarily open violent ones but are sometimes indirect, such as women trafficking where most causes of the phenomenon lie in the structure and organization of the society (Galtung, 1996, p.69). It more specifically looks at the interaction between the structure and the agency which can lead to what this scholar labels as structural violence. In order to bring peace in our societies, Johan Galtung brought a new perspective into peace and conflict studies<sup>3</sup>, broadening both peace and conflict definitions, which help human rights activists delve deeper into societal issues (Galtung, 1969, p167). The absence of open conflict in Europe does not preclude the lack of psychological and physical violence derived from social injustice. Brutal human rights violations are happening in front of our door steps, whether or not this motion is intended by the State is beside the point through the eyes of Johan Galtung. Looking at the trafficking issue through his perspective has enabled me to grasp the problem in its fullness. As the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights stated in 2002 "Violations of human rights are both a cause and a consequence of trafficking in persons. Accordingly, it is essential to place the protection of all human rights at the center of any measures taken to prevent and end all trafficking<sup>4</sup>." (UNHCHR, 2002, Article 1) Trafficking in Human Beings involves a plethora of basic human rights violations, from the right to life to the right to health and work, all of which have explicit international instruments specifically calling on the State to ensure those rights.

The great social disparities between countries on the European continent give room for both legal and illegal international activities. In our efforts to form a united Europe, many countries such as Moldova struggle to fulfill membership requirements set by the European Union (EU). They are under great pressure to respect the clauses laid down by the Copenhagen European Council to become a member of the EU: "Membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and, protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union. Membership presupposes the candidate's ability to take on the obligations of membership including adherence to the aims of political, economic and monetary union."<sup>5</sup> Moldova's political

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<sup>2</sup> In Galtung J. *'Pacifism From A Sociological Point Of View'*

<sup>3</sup> In Galtung J. *Violence, 'Peace and Peace Research'* Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 6, No. 3.

<sup>4</sup> International Principles and guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. (2002). International Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking, Article 1.

<sup>5</sup> Copenhagen presidency conclusions: Copenhagen European council criteria.

and economic dream is to assume those obligations one day<sup>6</sup>. However considering the fact that it is the poorest country in Europe with 80% of its population living under the poverty line<sup>7</sup>, the Republic of Moldova is experiencing an economic crisis and consequently, grave basic human rights violations, putting off its chances of ever being able to fulfill those conditions. However, in order to redress the situation in Moldova, the government, international and non-governmental organizations are working hard to develop social, judicial, educational and economic programs to protect its citizens against such human rights violations and dead-locks. The violence victims of such activity experience can be characterize by personal violence inflicted by the traffickers but also by structural violence inflicted by the State indirectly through lack of social protection and high social injustice. In order to reestablish a safe environment the international world and the government of Moldova are focusing on redressing the structures.

Viewing the situation in Galtung's eyes, one should consider the situation in Moldova as an indirect conflict, consequently viewing human trafficking as a result of structural violence; however due to international pressures and double standard motivations, the government of Moldova has been welcoming new policies and actions against trafficking in order to repair some of the consequences of the country's bad political and economic management that has been so devastating on the population. The following thesis research is interested in understanding human trafficking in Moldova by looking at the structure, specifically at the local and international organizations and at the governmental programs developed in order to reintegrate victims into Moldavian society. It will look at how actors involved view and perceive the needs of the victims and how they developed programs to fulfill those needs. It will look at the interaction between the structure (International and local organizations and the government both under the pressure of international and domestic instruments) and the agency (the people in society more specifically the victims). In order to understand both sides, special attention will be given to the lives and conditions of victims of such transnational crime as well as international and domestic instruments. The purpose of this research is to give an assessment on the extent to which local and international organizations and governmental policies (the structure around this societal phenomenon) are fulfilling the needs of victims of trafficking in Moldova. Therefore, in order to assess the response of organizations to those constructed needs, a closer look will be taken at the programs that are in place at present.

Human trafficking is a very large activity that comprises many issues. Narrowing the research to reintegration will enable the research to be qualitative. In order to answer the research puzzle, I will be describing first the world of trafficking in human beings. Such an assessment will provide insight on international and domestic legislations and definitions of trafficking in human beings. It will also provide the reader with insights on the process of trafficking and some data about Moldova and background information about the world of the victims in captivity. Secondly, I will be describing what the organizations in Chisinau view as basic needs of the victims. It was chosen to assess victims' needs through the structure, therefore through the eyes and assumptions of the ones that have been dealing with them for many years, which means the way both international and local organizations in Chisinau have constructed and defined the needs of victims of trafficking. Thirdly, I will evaluate and describe the programs and projects that are in place in Moldova to fulfill what organizations assume to be the most important

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<sup>6</sup> A plan of action has been developed in order for Moldova to enter the EU, however to this day no date has been set.

<sup>7</sup> Estimate of 2001 CIA world fact book, to this date, statistics have not been replaced.

and basic needs of the victims. Finally, a close look will be taken at the reintegration itself and what it really implies.

## 2. INTERNATIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONVENTIONS

The necessity behind providing help to victims of trafficking is extensive, ranging from saving lives, re-establishing healthy social networks, preventing future instances of trafficking by bringing awareness, and contributing to a functional rule of law by helping victims testify against their perpetrators. The research will capture the problem of human trafficking through a human rights-based approach, which acknowledges that every victim is recognized as a person and as a rights-holder. This decision was taken in regards to the recent change in international thinking from a needs-based approach to a rights-based one<sup>8</sup> (Klein Goldewijk and Gaay Forman, 2000, p.15). Lately, the country has been under great pressure by the international world to take steps towards the realization of those rights and in the past decade the government has signed and ratified several international instruments in order to prove its good collaboration toward the international human rights ambitions. Importantly, Moldova has ratified both the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) in 1993<sup>9</sup>. However as was suggested earlier the country is suffering from both economic problems and a weak rule of law, making the implementation of those rights nearly impossible for the government to achieve.

Moldova also has a problem related to high domestic violence driven towards women, contributing to a sort of cultural acceptance and detachment of the phenomenon. The ratification in 1994<sup>10</sup> of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) has been a first attempt to combat the phenomenon. Finally and most importantly, in the past year, the government has ratified the UN Convention against Transnational Organized Crimes (2000) and two of its protocols: the Protocol to Prevent Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000) and the Protocol Against the Smuggling of Migrants by Land, Sea and Air (2000). The declarations and reservations were made upon ratification, acceptance, approval and accession on February 17, 2005<sup>11</sup>. This change in international thinking has led to the recognition of the social and economic rights that are intertwined with civil and political rights. The Moldavian government is now called to not only respect civil and political rights, but also to protect and promote rights to education, jobs, and health. As a result duty bearers such as governments, international organizations (IO) and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) now have increased responsibilities to respect, protect and guarantee these rights. Furthermore, these expanded responsibilities that require governments to ensure the conditions which allow rights to be enjoyed have greatly increased the operating space of all organizations and groups that are involved in these efforts. When assessing the fulfillment of the needs of victims of trafficking, a close look will be taken at all the

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<sup>8</sup> In 'When needs meet rights' by Berma Klein Goldewijk and Bas de Gaay Forman, p. 15

<sup>9</sup> Office of the UN high commissioner for Human Rights: Status of ratifications of the principal international Human Rights Treaties as of 9 June 2004

<sup>10</sup> Office of the UN high commissioner for Human Rights: Status of ratifications of the principal international Human Rights Treaties as of 9 June 2004

<sup>11</sup> Found on the UN Office on Drugs and Crimes website under the convention and each protocol. However a mistake was done on the UNODC website about the date of ratification of the protocol against smuggling of Migrants by Sea, Land and Air by Moldova. Therefore La Strada organization provided me with access to the official data base of the Moldavian government to obtain the right date of ratification.

different actors involved in the reintegration of victims. Unilateral, bilateral and multilateral actors have been working hard to redress the situation of Moldova and all needs to be taken into account in order to analyze the situation properly.

Since it was found that the reality in which the people of Moldova find themselves is a push factor to enter the trafficking world as well as a barrier for the reintegration of victims of trafficking and that it can only be understood by living in their world or looking at life through their eyes, some background about the country is indispensable before going into the political, legal and social programs in place in the capital of Chisinau.

## B. REALITY OF MOLDAVIANS

### 1. MOLDAVIANS' ECONOMIC REALITY

Following the collapse of the Soviet regime and re-emergence of new states in Central and Eastern Europe, the rural and urban areas of the region have been undergoing significant changes in every area of life. New approaches of economic, social and political management have been introduced and developed in order to successfully re-integrate the countries into the European family. However this has not been an easy process for Moldova. The fall of the iron wall has allowed globalization to spread into the country introducing material wants and needs that were non-existent during the Soviet Regime and that are unable to be met due to the high level of poverty. This in turn has opened the doors to trans-national criminal activities such as trafficking in human beings. In Moldova, poverty is feeding this criminal activity. The transition to a market economy has proven to be exceptionally difficult. The economy is vulnerable to fuel prices and the skepticism of foreign investors. Since its economy was highly dependent on the former Soviet Union for energy and raw materials, the breakdown in trade following the fall of the Soviet Regime had a serious effect, aggravated by drought and civil conflict<sup>12</sup>. Poverty is deep and has been spreading mainly in rural communities, where most people reside and work<sup>13</sup>. Four out of ten children under the age of ten live in extreme poverty<sup>14</sup>. Due to high unemployment and low wages, affecting 28,000 young people between the ages of 16 and 29 in 2003<sup>15</sup> and representing nearly 1 in 2 of the total unemployed, there has been a high migratory flow of young people to larger cities and abroad in search for work and better opportunities. Although absolute numbers confirm 370,000<sup>16</sup> people having left the country in search of work, representing about 10 percent of the total population, the Moldavian national bureau of Migration estimated the real number to be at least 570,000<sup>17</sup> if not more. This has had drastic consequences on the new generations, leaving about 28,000 children without the care of both parents, 13,500 children residing in institutions, and in 2003 a total of 3,681 street children were

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<sup>12</sup> Country Profile Republic of Moldova: US Department of State, background notes.

<sup>13</sup> Industry accounts for only 20% of its labor force and its Agricultural shares accounts for more than 1/3. Country Profile Republic of Moldova: US Department of State, background notes.

<sup>14</sup> The United Nations Organization (2005) "The Republic of Moldova: Common Country Report" Chisinau. Pp. 10

<sup>15</sup> The United Nations Organization (2005) "The Republic of Moldova: Common Country Report" Chisinau. Pp. 11

<sup>16</sup> The United Nations Organization (2005) "The Republic of Moldova: Common Country Report" Chisinau. Pp. 11

<sup>17</sup> National Bureau of Migration: Numbers provided by la Strada.



registered (a 40% increase from 2002)<sup>18</sup>. People face such severe living conditions that it provides economic incentives contributing to the process of human trafficking. “One of the victims was sold by her mother for a bottle of Vodka to Gypsies<sup>19</sup>.” At every stage of this criminal movement, people make decision that can very much be explained through the prism of the neo-classical economic equilibrium perspective<sup>20</sup>, proponents of which claim that human beings make choices that give them the best possible economic advantages, given the circumstances they are facing. This theory should help the reader understand that some victims were aware of the risk that they might end up in the wrong network, which could lead them into being trapped and trafficked, when going abroad. However they took the chance in believing it would not happen to them due to the poor conditions and lack of options they faced at home<sup>21</sup>. One should recognize this phenomenon in order to be aware of the challenges the actors face when trying to reintegrate victims. Although the level of re-trafficking has diminished consequently in the past five years<sup>22</sup>, some victims are willing to take another chance to find work abroad, yet again believing they would be luckier than the previous time and end up in with a real job that could help their families and themselves bring bread on the table. As the International Organization for Migration (IOM) rightly pointed out in his second annual report on Moldova this “highlights the need for ongoing evaluation of reintegration efforts as well as the creation of economic opportunities in the areas of origin, both as a prevention and reintegration strategy<sup>23</sup>”

## 2. MOLDAVIANS' POLITICAL REALITY

Moldova is a new republic, before 1940, the country was a territory under the political and economic structures and governance of Romania. Since its independence on August 27<sup>th</sup> 1991 from the Soviet Union, it became a country of its own no longer benefiting from bureaucratic and professional machineries of the previous regime<sup>24</sup>. This has had serious implications for the stability of the region. Today, Moldova is a predominantly rural nation of 4.3 million people<sup>25</sup>; both its leaders and its people have little or no experience at all in managing the internal affairs of the country and running the machinery of the state. Leaders are now faced with the incredible challenge, without the benefit of having the experience of governance, of learning how to steer the country into integration with the international economic order that is based on technology and neo-liberalism. Unfortunately Moldova has been unable to redress its economic and political situation and has opted for a return to communism. Anna Porumbrica, a Moldavian economist expert explains this phenomenon in 2004 by “People are afraid of change and many of the older generations have nostalgia for the old regime, where everything was provided by the state. Politicians are aware of this and play on these

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<sup>18</sup> The United Nations Organization (2005) “The Republic of Moldova: Common Country Report” Chisinau. Pp. 11

<sup>19</sup> Author's interview with Alina Budeci, Psychologist and Office Manager of La Strada, on February 22, 2006.

<sup>20</sup> Castles and Miller (1998) ‘The Age of Migration’ pp. 22-24.

<sup>21</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) Second annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe (2005) pp. 28

<sup>22</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) Second annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe (2005) pp.25

<sup>23</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) Second annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe (2005) pp.29

<sup>24</sup> Historical facts found on the Wikipedia website.

<sup>25</sup> World fact book Moldova, population estimate including the region called Transnistria, 3.2 million excluding it.

emotions.”<sup>26</sup> The corruption and weak rule of law in the country also contribute to the facilitation of the trafficking movement. In Moldova, almost everything can be bought with money, bribing is a common and completely normalized activity. In this kind of political environment, victims are totally left to their misfortune and one can even say that the political structure facilitates this trafficking activity. There are political structural impediments to the realization of basic human rights in Moldova such as the realization of civil and political rights as well as economic, social and cultural rights, which seem to be a push factor for migration and transnational organized crimes such as trafficking in Human being.

### 3. MOLDAVIANS' SOCIAL REALITY

Moldova has a very high domestic violence problem, it was found that 80% of identified victims of trafficking in human beings reported that they were victims of violence in their families<sup>27</sup>. The *raison d'être* for the emergence and rapid spread of trafficking in human beings is not only hit upon economic and political reasons, the culture of violence as well as the lack of a stable and safe environment women and children experience at home, often sets the final step towards leaving everything behind. A survey of victims' lives performed by La Strada Moldova found that 30% of the total victims were orphans and that 27% were raised in incomplete families<sup>28</sup>. Those children are therefore in a so called high-risk group due to their social isolation and consequently, it is very difficult for their reintegration process as they lack a family structure to go back to. As a party of CEDAW, Moldova has been under its periodic review where the committee has revealed that there is a need for a definition of discrimination in Moldavian national legislation as well as a need for additional reports to address family violence and trafficking of girls and women. It invoked the need to increase the number of women in senior government positions and to adopt key laws regarding trafficking in women<sup>29</sup>. There is a real culture of normalized discrimination against women, silence and tolerance about domestic violence only continues to feed trafficking in Moldova. “I endured nine years of consistent physical and emotional abuse at the hands of my husband,” says Angela. “I said nothing about it because I knew my circle of friends would not support me at all. Here in Moldova, it's always the woman's fault when marriages turn sour. We have strong stereotypes in this country, especially about women's roles and functions<sup>30</sup>.” (Angela, 2006 in Hinrichsen, 2006) Women have unequal access to education and to the job market in Moldova and because the risk factor for being drawn into trafficking is not random, and indeed follows characteristics that describe some of the most vulnerable: the poor, those without access to education,

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<sup>26</sup> What Troubles Moldova by Ana Porumbica published on WorldConnected.org, August 2004 Economies studies expert.

<sup>27</sup> The United Nations Organization (2005) “The Republic of Moldova: Common Country Report” Chisinau. Pp. 12

<sup>28</sup> La Strada Moldova, “Trafficking in Persons in Moldova, Comments, Trends, Recommendations” pp.24

<sup>29</sup> CEDAW Initial Report of the Republic of Moldova 23<sup>rd</sup> Session (2000): **103**. The Committee expresses its concern about the increase in trafficking in women and girls for a variety of purposes including sexual exploitation, often under false pretences. **104**. The Committee urges the Government to implement a holistic approach to combat trafficking in women for commercial or sexual purposes. This should include a legislative framework to prosecute and punish traffickers, preventive measures aimed at improving women's economic situation so as to reduce their economic vulnerabilities, and measures to rehabilitate and reintegrate trafficked women where necessary. It also urges the Government to increase international and cross-border cooperation, especially with receiving countries, to reduce the incidence of trafficking and prosecute traffickers, as well as to ensure the protection of the human rights of trafficked women.

<sup>30</sup> Story of Don Hinrichsen *Domestic violence: Ending Silence*: UNFPA report 2006.

children, and those who are disempowered socially and economically, we find that most trafficked people are women.

## II. THE WORLD OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

### A. INTERNATIONAL AND DOMESTIC LEGISLATION AND DEFINITIONS

Trafficking of Human Beings was traditionally a well-conceived network within the chain of the country of origin, the transit one and the destination one and has now extended to internal trafficking as well. This activity, especially for women and children, has four main objectives: sexual exploitation, delinquency and begging and labor exploitation<sup>31</sup>. Nevertheless in 2004 it was found that out of 300 Moldovan victims of trafficking 230 victims were trafficked for the purpose of sexual exploitation<sup>32</sup>. 'When dealing with women and girls of 13 years and older, trafficking for sexual purposes is the main reason'<sup>33</sup>. Therefore most of the organizations in Chisinau that deals with women and girls elaborate programs for victims of trafficking that were used for sexual exploitation. However, it is important to keep in mind that organizations do not separate nor differentiate victims according to the trafficking circumstances. When a victim is found to have been trafficked, they receive the help they need. This will be further explained later on in the paper.

For my research it is important to have a clear definition of trafficking in human beings as well as victims of trafficking. It was found in writings and international discussions that it is hard to find real consensus on the proper definition of trafficking due to its complexity. One of the common disputes is around the lines of differentiating between sexual exploitation<sup>34</sup> and trafficking in human beings. Another major issue was raised in a report done by Donka Petrova and Nadya Kojuharoca: 'Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings: Is Identification Possible?'<sup>35</sup> (Petrova, Kojuharoca, 2005, p.2) This report gives examples to show that it can be extremely hard to know whether or not people are victims of trafficking. The reasons given are that sometimes people will lie in order to get a free ride home, others can just have been sexually exploited and others can just pretend they have not been trafficked in order to keep their families from knowing what truly happened to them. It is hard to make generalizations about victims of trafficking; consequently the best way to identify victims of trafficking is by looking at

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<sup>31</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) Second annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe (2005) pp.8

<sup>32</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) Second annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe (2005) pp.8

<sup>33</sup> Author's interview with Mariana Ianachevici, vice director of Save the Children Moldova, on March 28, 2006

<sup>34</sup> The following definition is not part of this protocol nor defined in the international law however the global alliance against Trafficking in women defines it as "'sexual exploitation' means the participation by a person in prostitution, sexual servitude, or the production of pornographic materials as a result of being subjected to a threat, deception, coercion, abduction, force, abuse of authority, debt bondage or fraud. Even in the absence of any of these factors, where the person participating in prostitution, sexual servitude or the production of pornographic materials in under the age of 18, sexual exploitation shall be deemed to exist."

<sup>35</sup> Donka Petrova and Nadya Kojuharoca (2005) "Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings: Is Identification possible" La Strada, Bulgaria.

cases individually. For the purpose of the research it was chosen to stay rather open within the lines of the definition laid down in the international Protocol 'to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, especially Women and Children' supplemented by the UN Convention Against Transnational Organized Crimes. This protocol defines trafficking in persons as: *"recruitment, transportation, transfer, harboring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability (interpretative note (63)<sup>36</sup>) or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation (interpretative note (64)<sup>37</sup>), forced labor or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs"* [my emphasis]<sup>38</sup> Since government delegates to the negotiations of this protocol could not find consensus on a common meaning of *"exploitation of prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation"* [my emphasis] the protocol does not define it. It is up to the governments to decide on a domestic definition of sexual exploitation for their criminal codes. That is why we find different definitions of trafficking within domestic legislations, varying from considering prostitution trafficking to punishing the prostitutes separately for their illegal actions.

Since the 12<sup>th</sup> of June 2003, the Moldavian domestic legislation tackles trafficking in human beings as part of its Criminal code<sup>39</sup> and in the last two years it has become a sort of model for some analysts of international law due to its well developed interpretation of the UN protocol 'to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children'. The new law on Preventing and combating Trafficking in Human Beings is the first and single national normative act, which determined the rights of victims. It includes an article for both trafficking in human beings (article 165) and the trafficking in children (article 206) respectively. Moldavian law's definition of trafficking is what we can call all-inclusive; while including the forms of trafficking as specified by the UN Protocol, it is much more specific and broader, going above and beyond the protocol. It recognizes trafficking as both commercial sex and as non-commercial sexual exploitation, incorporating mail order brides, trafficking for the purpose of childbearing, and trafficking for marriage under the same trafficking law. It is also more extensive and specific in defining the illegal means to make a case of such crime for court cases than the UN Protocol that just makes the abuse of a position of vulnerability sufficient to establish a case of trafficking.<sup>40</sup> It envelops the general means of recruitment of victims going very specifically into each step. Overall there are very few criticisms that can be established concerning the Moldavian's domestic legislation of

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<sup>36</sup> Interpretative note (63): "The travaux préparatoires should indicate that the reference to the abuse of a position of vulnerability is understood to refer to any situation in which the person involved has no real and acceptable alternative but to submit to the abuse involved."

<sup>37</sup> Interpretative note (64): "The travaux préparatoires should indicate that the Protocol addresses the exploitation of prostitution of others and other forms of sexual exploitation only in the context of trafficking in persons. The terms 'exploitation of the prostitution of others' or 'other forms of sexual exploitation' are not defined in the Protocol, which is therefore without prejudice to how States Parties address prostitution in their respective domestic laws."

<sup>38</sup> Council of Europe Treaty Series-No.197 "Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings" ( Warsaw, 16, V. 2005)

<sup>39</sup> Dr. Mohamed Y. Mattar, Adjunct Professor of Law and Co-Director of The Protection Project of Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies gave a speech at the Conference on Path Breaking Strategies in Global Fight Against Sex Trafficking in Chisinau on November 17-18, 2003 called "The New Moldovan Anti-trafficking Law: A Critique of Articles 165 and 206."

<sup>40</sup> UN Protocol To Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing The United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime. (2000)

trafficking in human beings, however trafficking remains a major issue, the rule of law is weak in the country, the government does not give trafficking in human beings a sufficient priority and it does not have sufficient means to implement this legislation successfully<sup>41</sup>.

As a member of the Council of Europe since 1995, Moldova is also bound to the convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (CETS N.197) which was adopted and opened for signatures in May 2005 by the Committee of Ministers. This treaty deals mainly with the protection of victims of trafficking and the safeguard of their rights, aiming at both prevention of trafficking and prosecution of the traffickers. The convention uses the UN protocol's definition of trafficking in human beings, it includes all forms of trafficking: national and international, voluntary or involuntary, sexual exploitation or forced labor. In this convention, a victim is defined as "*natural person who is subject to trafficking in human beings as defined in this article*"<sup>42</sup> [my emphasis]. It is necessary to look at Moldova's membership in the European Council and to UN conventions as well as at its domestic legislation. However one needs to take into account that the reality is far from what those ideal models adhere to. Moldova might have well developed articles and laws, and might show its good will to implement and respect them to the international world, but the government is far from taking the proper action towards a favorable change for the country. It does not have the means to do so, nor is it capable or even willing to do so.

## B. THE PROCESS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

Although most victims were found to have willingly accepted a job offer in order to find better living opportunities, many fall prey to criminal organizations and become victims of trafficking through forced labor<sup>43</sup>. This business of human body and soul is based on an elaborate system and very well organized chains of illegal activities within the country of origin, the transit and destination one. Moreover, the industry is extremely mobile, which makes it very hard to track the entire process. Traffickers do everything in their power to be discrete and to avoid being caught. On many occasions, the traffickers are able to stay anonymous by binding the girls to silence through threats of punishment which results in a lot of cases being unnoticed. Victims usually go through a three main step process as mentioned earlier. The first one is in the country of origin, which is the foundation or source of the chain and where the least human violations are present as traffickers often need to be smart and manipulative in order to attract as many individuals possible. Although there are places such as Moldova which are recognized as major source countries, in reality trafficking can start anywhere in the world including the western world. The UN Population Fund states "Statistics about trafficking are unreliable for a number of reasons, including the clandestine nature of the activity... but rough estimates suggest that between seven hundred thousands to two million women are trafficked across international borders annually. Adding domestic trafficking would

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<sup>41</sup> In many report Moldavian domestic legislation on trafficking in Human Beings is sited as a good model and after talking to different organizations it was found that the problem is not in the development of a trafficking law but in the fact that the government does not give Trafficking in Human Beings a priority and does not have sufficient funds to put their legislation into action.

<sup>42</sup> Definition found in the Council of Europe's Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Brings. Committee of Ministers, CM(2005)32 Addendum 1 Final. 925 Meeting, 4 Human Rights, 4.5 Council of Europe.

<sup>43</sup> According to the Palermo Protocol forced labor is an element of Human trafficking.

bring the total much higher, to perhaps four million persons per year.”<sup>44</sup> Even though the victims of trafficking include men, women, and children of every age group, the majority are girls and women under the age of 25<sup>45</sup>. Some respond to employment agencies, some are sold by their families to gypsies due to the extreme poverty they live in, some are tricked into traveling with so called family friends or cousins and later in the process find out that they have been kidnapped. Others agree upon becoming prostitutes in order to escape their reality. In any scenario, the girls do not know they are about to enter a world of violence and slavery<sup>46</sup>. This illegal activity has been very difficult to tackle as it involves a wide variety of personnel. The people involved include civil society such as the victims themselves, their parents and families, and close acquaintances consisting of friends and neighbors. It also includes traffickers such as the recruiters, the transporters, the logistical personnel, providers of forged or illicitly obtained documentation, information providers, accommodation providers, body guards and guides; it includes corrupted law enforcement personnel such as police, customs and immigration officers, border guards, lawyers that forge official documents and make fake contracts between traffickers and girls, and unknown consular or visa office staff who close their eyes to obvious cases of trafficking<sup>47</sup>. All these natives in the country of origin participate in the trafficking chain through bribes or other forms of payments. It is often hard for honest law enforcers to know where to start and who to prosecute for the crime of trafficking.

The second step in the chain is the transit country. After being forced or drawn in from their home environments, individuals are transferred across one or more international borders. Transit countries for Moldavian victims include countries such as Ukraine and Romania<sup>48</sup>. During this step traffickers make it clear that individuals have no choice but to accept what ever they want such as prostitution, debt bondage and other forms of involuntary servitude. At this point the individuals start to realize what they have entered into. It is not uncommon for a sacrifice of a girl to take place in order to show the other girls what could happen to them if they try to resist<sup>49</sup>.

The last step in the chain is the receiving or destination country. Here the victims are often sent to urban areas. Important receiving countries for Moldova are the United Emirate and Turkey<sup>50</sup>. In the past two years, destination countries have changed; in 2004 it was found that only 18.1%<sup>51</sup> of the victims were sent to the former traditional destination of South Eastern Europe (SEE) regions. Recently it was found that 44.9% of the victims had been trafficked to Turkey, 14.6% to the Middle East, 11% to Russia and 8.3% to EU countries<sup>52</sup>. Here it is important to acknowledge the fact that those were victims that were able to escape, previously mentioned percentages could vary in

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<sup>44</sup> UNFPA's "Trafficking in Human Misery"

<sup>45</sup> La Strada Moldova, "Trafficking in Persons in Moldova, Comments, Trends, Recommendations" pp.18

<sup>46</sup> La Strada Moldova, "Trafficking in Persons in Moldova, Comments, Trends, Recommendations" pp.33

<sup>47</sup> Report written by June Kane from International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor of the International Labor Organization (2005) 'Child trafficking- The People Involved; A synthesis of findings from Albania, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine.' Switzerland: ILO p. VII

<sup>48</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) Second annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe (2005) pp.23

<sup>49</sup> Kootstra, T. and X. Commandeur (2005) "If Our Skirt is Torn, do not show anyone else but try to sew it up' Safe Return and Social Inclusion of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings. An Inventory of Neglected Aspects in Ten European and Asian Countries." P.13

<sup>50</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) Second annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe (2005) pp.23

<sup>51</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) Second annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe (2005) pp.20

<sup>52</sup> International Organization for Migration (IOM) Second annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in South-Eastern Europe (2005) pp.20

accordance to the difficulty of escaping in certain countries. Numbers of victims from some countries such as the Middle East could be higher, however, they have not been able to flee and come back to Moldova. In the receiving countries individuals are often kept in neglected conditions in a state of virtual house arrest. They usually live in poor conditions, where multiple victims are in a cramped space. They are never left alone and usually do not have their identity papers in their possessions. Although reality after being trafficked to destination countries is often full of violence, drugs, and threats on the part of authorities, it is also from there that the victims are often able to escape or call their parents from client mobiles or other ways.

### C. SOME DATA ABOUT MOLDOVA

Because of the nature of human trafficking, data are lacking in regard to the amount of people being trafficked, varying depending on the source. It has been a challenge to acquire reliable data on which to formulate policies. However some reliable estimates are available. According to the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), where information could be obtained, women were reported to be victims of trafficking in 83% of the cases entered into the database<sup>53</sup>. This is important information taking into account that the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) estimated the EU alone hosts five hundred thousand irregular people<sup>54</sup>. Literature acknowledges the fact that most people being trafficked are women and that they are more exposed than men to forced labor and sexual exploitation. Data from the international Center for Women Rights Protection and Promotion La Strada Moldova, reveals that 83 % of all victims of trafficking were types of sexual services<sup>55</sup>. Also many times it seems that women accept or are unable to resist inhuman working conditions and poor salary<sup>56</sup>. Data from the IOM Rehabilitation Centre estimates that for Moldova, the number of victims of trafficking included a minimum of 1452 victims who were identified and assisted by the Center in the period between January 2000 and December 2004. Of that 21% of victims were under 18 years of age at the initial stage of trafficking and 11% were still children at the moment of repatriation and initial assistance. The majority of victims are very young: 60% are between 18 and 24 years of age when they are identified and returned to Moldova. 35% of victims are mothers and approximately 80% of them are single mothers.

### D. WORLD OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING AND THEIR CAPTIVITY

Victims of trafficking in human beings are often kept in captivity under a mixture of fear, intimidation, abuse, and psychological controls<sup>57</sup>. Although victims react in different ways to their suppression and experience, they tend to share common threats including abuse, violation of their basic human rights, and control under their trafficker. They also have common physical and psychological conditions when they return due to the traumatic and violent experiences they have gone through. During the process of

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<sup>53</sup> UNODC (2003) database on *Human trafficking*.

<sup>54</sup> UNFPA (2004), p. 16 and 68

<sup>55</sup> Data provided by La Strada and dating from early 2006, these data are also used by other NGOs and at international conferences.

<sup>56</sup> UNFPA (2004) p. 12

<sup>57</sup> Found on the US human trafficking website.

exploitation, they are often regarded as disposable possessions and consequently not much attention is given to both their mental and physical health<sup>58</sup>.

Depending on the reason why the person was trafficked and the victim's psychological and physical strength, victims go through very personal experiences and consequently for a successful analysis one would have to look into each case specifically<sup>59</sup>. When a victim enters the world of trafficking, he or she is no longer a person in control of their lives. On the contrary, the victims are totally submitted to their traffickers. They lose their independence and are forced to do things against their will. When dealing with children, boys and very young girls are often forced to beg on the street or to do all kind of jobs. In that case, they have to work under very harsh conditions, such as staying on the street in the cold or under the warm sun for hours without the possibility to move. Others have to work in factories, day and night under very bad and unsafe conditions<sup>60</sup>.

Sexual exploitation is one of the worse forms of trafficking purposes, instead of following their dreams of working abroad; they are raped and forced into prostitution. They have to go through dozens of men per day under the threat of beatings, abominable rapes and even death. They are often under pressure to obey under threat of killing or hurting their families members or even young children. A good illustration of all this, is the movie 'Sex trafficking'<sup>61</sup> where a women receives the hand of her three-year old daughter in order to scare her and keep her from living the trafficking world. These are not made up stories nor exiting movie scenarios, it is the lives of thousands of women and children.

As was mentioned earlier, they are often kept in captivity where they live and sleep with many other women that have similar experiences. Those women learn to know each other in their misery and sometimes help each other out with moral support. It is important to view these victims as people that continue to create and interact in social networks. These women do not only make friends with other prostitutes and victims, some make friends with their clients and even traffickers. The situation of victims is very complex and while victims live in horrific situations, they try their best to survive and find ways to get out of their conditions. This is why, identifying a victim of trafficking is tricky, some women become traffickers themselves, they gain the trust or love of the traffickers and help in this transnational business. Life for those women is hard and they often use a lot of drugs to try to escape their realities. The psychological traumas they go through impair their abilities to think and take right decisions at times. They can become bitter and all these factors can lead them to go to the other side and share with new girls what they have gone through themselves<sup>62</sup>.

Unfortunately things are never black and white and one needs to be careful while dealing with victims. Some of the issues involve trafficking competition, some victims might claim to have been trafficked by another trafficking company, in order to get rid of competition and make her industry flourish. This is a major issue because as was mentioned earlier, while organizations are fighting to provide help for victims of

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<sup>58</sup> Based on Author's interview with Alina Budeci, Psychologist and Office Manager of La Strada, on February 22, 2006.

<sup>59</sup> Based on Author's interview with Irina Todorova, Coordinator of work at the shelter of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), on March 23, 2006.

<sup>60</sup> Based on Author's interview with Mariana Ianachevici, vice director of Save the Children Moldova, on March 28, 2006.

<sup>61</sup> American movie Sex trafficking based on trafficking of women in Bosnia, this movie was recommended to me by la Strada as a good illustration of the conditions in which victims of trafficking live.

<sup>62</sup> Based on Author's interview with Alina Budeci, Psychologist and Office Manager of La Strada, on February 22, 2006 and on Author's interview with Irina Todorova, Coordinator of work at the shelter of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), on March 23, 2006.



trafficking they need to remain under the world's new philosophy and take a rights-based approach to the victims, this implies that no matter what the victims say, need and want, the organizations are bound to provide them and treat them as rights holders<sup>63</sup>. Therefore sometimes organizations provide help to the wrong victims or make misjudgments. The following section, will consider all the needs of the victims and the organizations perceptions of them and priorities, but the reader needs to keep in mind the subtlety of the situation.

### III. NEEDS OF THE VICTIMS

#### A. METHODOLOGY USED AND ORGANIZATIONS INVOLVED

This research is based on interviews with all the organizations that take part in any way in the reintegration process of victims of trafficking in the capital of Moldova. In order to come up with the findings for my research, I set up interviews with all the different agencies involved. Through my work at the international non-governmental organization (NGO) La Strada in Chisinau, I was able to get access to information that led me to those organizations as well as had my interviews facilitated by the reputation and relations La Strada has in the trafficking world in Moldova. The organizations that I interviewed included the International Center for Women Rights Protection and Promotion La Strada, the International Organization for Migration mission to Moldova. (IOM), UN Children Funds (UNICEF), Center for Prevention of Trafficking in Women (CPTW), Save the Children, Terre des Hommes (TDH), International Labor Organization / International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor (ILO/IPEC), the Italian Consortium for Solidarity (ICS), WINROCK international and the Organization for the Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE). In order to get the information I needed this research I used an open-question questionnaire. I made a general one for all the organizations. However depending on the organization I oriented my questions differently. Interviews were conducted both in English and in French, depending on the preference of the interviewee. Although some organizations refused to be recorded, a tape recorder was used in most cases in order to facilitate the flow of the interview and to be able to concentrate on what was being said instead of on what should be remembered and written down. All organizations remained professional at all times and demonstrated a lot of respect and openness during the interview. They were eager to communicate to me the programs they had in place and their thoughts on the issue of reintegration of trafficking victims. However, that does not take away the difficulties of providing the right kind of help to the victims of trafficking. This report is also based on participatory observation, on trafficking documentaries and movies watched and on many talks and interactions with members of different organizations in Chisinau which deal with the victims themselves<sup>64</sup>. The following paragraph will provide insight on the needs of the victims and on how the organizations in Chisinau consider them.

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<sup>63</sup> Based on interview with Elena Balan, project assistant and Liliana Borzin, social assistant coordinator of the Center for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women (CPTW), on April 10, 2006.

<sup>64</sup> As my research is an ethnography I have been very involved on the field in order to try to understand this world and a lot of what is written in this report is based of my personal knowledge gained through my field research.

## B. BASIC NECESSITIES OF THE VICTIMS

Needs of victims of trafficking are not only diverse and complex but also very difficult to redress, they are many matters to take into consideration, some of which might seem almost impossible to resolve. The wide variety of needs that require to be fulfilled includes subjects such as assisted return, providing a secure and friendly environment once they are back in their country of origin, medical assistance for a large multiplicity of physical ills, psychological counseling, financial assistance such as grants to start new businesses or simply in order to feed themselves, housing, education and vocational trainings, providing employment opportunities, administrative assistance for issues such as divorce or the making of new identity papers and legal assistance to bring the victims perpetrators to trail (Landman and Talens, 2003, p.8).<sup>65</sup> It is difficult to determine which of them all is the most important; they all seem to outline an important facet in the reintegration process of victims into a normal and stable life. Organizations such as La Strada, IOM, Save the Children and Terre des Hommes make use of needs' assessment techniques, where they look at each particular case and try to identify what the victim needs to later on provide the person with relevant and sufficient help. The following paragraphs describe what the organizations that I interviewed assume to be some of the victims' major and most frequent needs. It is divided in four paragraphs to elaborate on health, social, financial and legal needs of the victims and will take the perspective of organizations from Chisinau while analyzing those needs. Such division was made on the basis of the outcome of my interviews with the organizations dealing with the reintegration of victims in Moldova.

### 1. HEALTH NEEDS

Health needs include both physical and psychological ones. Victims of trafficking have gone through a lot of unhealthy treatments that need to be looked after. The international NGO La Strada and the NGO Save the children are both organizations that consider these needs with special importance. In my interview with them, they described women and children's physical and psychological conditions that go beyond what one could ever imagine.

Physical characteristics may include signs of rape or sexual abuse, sexually transmitted diseases, bruising, broken bones, or other signs of untreated medical problems, malnutrition, dehydration or poor personal hygiene, headaches, toothaches, eyes aches due to beatings, critical illnesses including diabetes, cancer or heart disease<sup>66</sup>. For these problems victims need medical care. All these conditions have to be dealt with right at the start of the process of reintegration and therefore there are many referrals of organizations to hospitals and special doctors. In order to start the reintegration process victims need to be physical healthy or at least under medical treatment.

Another important health need has to do with the mental health of the victims that have been impaired and need to be taken care of through counseling, group therapy and other forms of treatments. Typical psychological characteristics of victims include post-traumatic stress disorders, severe depression, suicidal ideations, and other

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<sup>65</sup> Cristina Talens and Cecile Landman (2003) "Good Practice on the (re)integration of victims of Trafficking in Human Beings in sex European Countries" Bound Labor in the Netherlands (BLinN) – Novib/Humanitas Change – Anti Trafficking Program OXFAM GBP p8.

<sup>66</sup> Author's interview with Alina Budeci, Psychologist and Office Manager of La Strada, on February 22, 2006.

psychological problems. These problems are expressed through difficulties in sleep, nightmares, flashbacks, drug dependency and being afraid all the time. They fear new people and new places. They have feelings of being disconnected and isolated from the world; they do not trust anyone anymore. Because they were under control for a long period of time, they do not know how to take care of themselves anymore and therefore they do not want to be free and want to remain under control<sup>67</sup>. All these factors have great influence on the victims' reactions and attitude towards themselves and others. Common reactions<sup>68</sup> include fear of being alone, fear of their own anger, fear of others finding out what happened to them, fear of being found and punished by the abuser, fear of going to court, fear of sexually transmittable diseases (STDs) and fear of falling asleep because it opens the door to intolerable nightmares. They feel anger towards themselves for letting it happen, towards others for not protecting them from such tragedy and towards society for the disruption in their lives. They also feel guilt for having made mistakes and having been stupid and naive, guilt for having violated their cultural and religious beliefs and guilt for failing to provide for their families. They feel shameful and dirty; and humiliated when they realize that others cannot tell what happened to them just by looking at them. They also feel betrayed by those who put them in contact with the traffickers, by their God, by their governments and by their families. They lost trust in their abilities to make judgments and in others even those close to them that had nothing to do with their dramatic experience. They feel powerlessness and depression; sometimes they even have suicidal thoughts because they believe that it will never get better and because they are constantly victimized by their families and by being women. Finally they often are under great shock and feel numb and unable to cry. They do not want to acknowledge what really happened to them and so they remain disoriented unable to sit still, with memory problems and great difficulties in getting through each day.

Basically these people need a lot of time to readapt to society and to realize and accept what they went through. The NGO Save the Children professed the difficulty and complexity of the issues when dealing with children, addressing the fact that psychological states of children are much harder to redress because their psychological and physical developments have been impaired by their experience. They do not have the ability to realize how much they need help. They are often in adolescence and on top of the natural teenage rebellion and feelings of not fitting in in the world; they often have no families or have been sold by them and are therefore unable to return home<sup>69</sup>. Only time and professional help and support can enable them to regain psychological balance and physical health. It was found that most organizations put a priority on the health needs of victims. La Strada, Save the Children, IOM, CPTW and the Italian Consortium for Solidarity are all organizations that put a priority to psychological counseling. But the process is long and the vice president of Save the children made it very clear how in order to improve counseling and tackle the problem in the right way, we should not be idealistic on the success of the organizations in providing such help and we should realize that most victims are never able to regain a healthy psychological state. Also when looking at physical illnesses, dramatic situations persist where incurable diseases are present such as HIV. An example was given in the beginning of the report of a girl whose story was a deadlock for the IOM organization.

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<sup>67</sup> Author's interview with Alina Budeci, Psychologist and Office Manager of La Strada, on February 22, 2006.

<sup>68</sup> Global Alliance Against Traffic in women (1997) "Practical guide in assisting trafficked women" Bangkok, p.8-9

<sup>69</sup> Author's interview with Mariana Ianachevici, vice director of Save the Children Moldova, on March 28, 2006

## 2. SOCIAL NEEDS

Social needs include a wide variety of actions and issues that need to be contemplated. But first let us go over victims' social networks. Save the children, La Strada and IOM are such organizations that believe that when a victim is able to go back to their families, they have a higher chance of successful reintegration. 'Analyzing our cases, we find that those that have families have a better and faster one to reintegrate.'<sup>70</sup> This is due to family support, to a sense of feeling home again and secure. Organizations try to work closely with families in order to make them understand and help the victims reintegrate into their respective communities. However, one needs to be reminded that in some cases, victims were sold by family members (4%) or family friends (6%)<sup>71</sup>. In the case of children, if the organization is able to prove that they were sold by their parents; organizations such as Save the Children and UNICEF report the child to the ministry of education, which is the totalitarian authority on issues concerning children. Such reporting is important as it prevents the child from coming back to an environment that would put him in a vulnerable position to be re-trafficked or further abused by family. In such instance, the child needs to be provided with another safe environment such as a shelter, an institution or a host family, where he will be able to rehabilitate from his/her traumatic experience and form healthy social networks consisting of loving tutors and other children to play with. 'The children need to feel children again, need to feel that they can trust and count on adults to take care of them or provide them with the love they have been lacking.'<sup>72</sup> Such an environment is indispensable for the well development and successful reintegration of children.

In the case of adult victims, issues are a little different, some women do not want to return home due to the fact that they do not want their families to know what happened to them, others feel betrayed and some cannot return home without putting themselves at risk again. In order to cure the wounds, it is important for them to feel comfortable and at home, being in a shelter such as the IOM one, can help reintegration into a normal social life; 'We also find the sort of groups approach, social contact with other victims to be really useful, where they can share what they have experience, those things that have not been so good but that others in the same situation can understand.' Now a distinction needs to be made between the victims that want to testify against their perpetrators and those who do not. If one wants to go to court, they need to be provided an environment where they can be totally safe. Witness protection programs are in place by CPTW and IOM, who provide victims with a safe and secure environment where they do not have to fear their traffickers. The reason why La Strada, CPTW and IOM consider this extremely important is because if a victim does not feel safe, they cannot start a positive reintegration process. If they fear being re-trafficked or found by their traffickers, victims will not open up to psychologists or doctors and will therefore remain in an unhealthy psychological state.

Another social need is behind the victims' backgrounds. Although 'Lately victims profiles seem to differ quite a lot, generally they come from rural places or from poor areas from Chisinau and other towns. They have no education or very low ones and come from poor families.'<sup>73</sup> The victims have not have the opportunity to develop their

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<sup>70</sup> Author's interview with Irina Todorova, Coordinator of work at the shelter of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), on March 23, 2006.

<sup>71</sup> Numbers provided by La Strada Analytical department.

<sup>72</sup> Author's interview with Mariana Ianachevici, vice director of Save the Children Moldova, on March 28, 2006.

<sup>73</sup> Author's interview with Alina Budeci, Psychologist and Office Manager of La Strada, on February 22, 2006.

minds and are not aware of their personal skills. Most are not even aware of the opportunities they have to work. When dealing with trafficking victims, it is common that they believe the only thing they are good at is prostitution or begging or what ever they have been doing during their exploitation years. Not only do they have no skills and very poor educational background but they also lack trust in themselves. This means that it is very hard to make them function in society and this impairs greatly their reintegration process. So they need to be provided with educational and vocational trainings. All organizations interviewed raised the issue of empowering the victims so that they can make it on their own. The goal of agencies that deal with victims is of course not to make them dependent on them. This is a tricky issue because as was mentioned before, many times victims' psychological states tend to make them want to be controlled and therefore unable or unwilling to make decisions for themselves. Here, organizations struggle between providing the help the victims need and at the same time making sure they do not make them dependent. Organizations such as WINROCK international, Italian Consortium Solidarity and Terre des Hommes<sup>74</sup> take it really seriously; they work with systems in place in the villages and refer victims to different agencies more then provide them with direct help. These referrals are to both public and private programs available to provide things such as counseling, treatment, education and other services needed. It also includes referrals to centers where victims can receive support such as domestic violence and rape crisis centers. This however has impediments on the services provided because as Moldova is a very poor and corrupted country, there are no real and functioning medical, educational, labor and other systems in place. Referrals to dysfunctional agencies cannot provide the right help to victims and one can therefore raise questions whether those organizations are successful in providing help. La Strada, IOM, Save the Children and ILO/IPEC have been working in providing educational and vocational training to victims, they have been working closely together to empower those victims and raise their professional level to a functioning one<sup>75</sup>. However they have revealed that it is not an easy process and like any kind of schooling it takes time and a lot of patience.

Another main and very important social need is providing access to the job market for the victims. In a country where work is sparse, and unemployment is high, it is hard to find a job. In order to reintegrate and start a new life, victims need to make money and provide for themselves, their children and families. Most organizations have contacts with employers and are able to provide access to jobs. The victims also need training in several employment-related skills such as writing CVs, participating successfully in professional interviews, and interacting in socially appropriate ways with employees and employers. IOM and La Strada have given serious priority to such training<sup>76</sup>.

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<sup>74</sup> Based on author's interview with Veacelav Balan, information Coordinator of Winrock international, on April 11, 2006, on author's interview with Cristiano Barale, technical operational Assistant FACT of Terre des Hommes, on April 18, 2006 and on author's interview with Stefania Chirizzi, director of Italian Consortium Solidarity, on May 4, 2006.

<sup>75</sup> Based on author's interview with Alina Budeci, Psychologist and Office Manager of La Strada, on February 22, 2006, on author's interview with Irina Todorova, Coordinator of work at the shelter of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), on March 23, 2006, on author's interview with Viorica Ghimpu, national program manager of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and the International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor Moldova (IPEC), on April 18, 2006 and on author's interview with Mariana Ianachevici, vice director of Save the Children Moldova, on March 28, 2006.

<sup>76</sup> Based on author's interview with Alina Budeci, Psychologist and Office Manager of La Strada, on February 22, 2006 and on author's interview with Irina Todorova, Coordinator of work at the shelter of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), on March 23, 2006.

Social and health needs are interrelated and therefore need to be dealt with at the same time but one cannot ignore the financial needs of these victims. The following paragraph is as important and calls for attention right at the start of the reintegration process.

### 3. FINANCIAL NEEDS

Financial requirements include numerous elements, starting from the first step in the reintegration process, which is providing the victims with money for their safe return home. IOM, La Strada, Save the Children, Terre des Hommes, ILO/IPOEC, OSCE have special funds directed towards this goal. They also have contacts in many countries through different partner organizations, governments, police departments, and through affiliate headquarters and different missions that enable them to guarantee safe returns. When the victims are still in the state of exploitation there are also funds and contacts available abroad. 'La Strada has four hundred contacts abroad in forty-seven different countries, so they are able to contact other organizations that could help locally, be it State organizations, other NGOs or La Strada if present in the country.'<sup>77</sup> Contacts are critical in this case. The process of reintegration starts from the very first day the victims leave their captive environments. While legal issues can take time, they need to be provided with shelter and food for the time being in addition to being provided with access to the proper agencies so that legal issues such as repatriation can be addressed<sup>78</sup>.

Since victims were exploited, they come home with nothing and need to be provided with some of the basic needs such as shelter, clothing, food and water. All these material needs must be taken care of right away. IOM views these needs as taking precedence over all others. For instance, IOM not only provides a shelter for victims but also tries to find other forms of housing when necessary. Save the Children also provides shelter and grants for anything that the child might need.

Another important aspect is financial assistance such as grants to start new businesses. Organizations such as WINROCK international, Italian Consortium Solidarity, OSCE, UNICEF and IOM provide a lot of funds to empower the victims and help them start on their own<sup>79</sup>. Such grants cover a wide range of things, basically anything that can enable victims to start a new life and make money for themselves. 'We try to buy things that could empower them such as if someone is really good at sewing, we buy them a sewing machine. Anything that can help them make a living.'<sup>80</sup> Finally victims ought to receive legal help in certain domains to fulfill their civil rights, the next paragraph will further elaborate on different legal needs.

### 4. LEGAL NEEDS

There are several legal issues that necessitate legal assistance and support. As rights holders, victims need to be provided with knowledge about their rights and the roles they can play in the juridical system. CPTW is a project that focuses on providing any kind of legal help to victims along side with social assistance, ranging from witness

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<sup>77</sup> Author's interview with Alina Budeci, Psychologist and Office Manager of La Strada, on February 22, 2006.

<sup>78</sup> Author's interview with Mariana Ianachevici, vice director of Save the Children Moldova, on March 28, 2006.

<sup>79</sup> Based on author's interview with all those organizations.

<sup>80</sup> Author's interview with Irina Todorova, Coordinator of work at the shelter of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), on March 23, 2006.

protection programs for victims who wish to testify to legal advice for divorces and other civil or administrative matters.

For victims that want to prosecute their perpetrators, one of the first steps to be taken is to enroll victims in witness protection programs or other forms of security that enables victims to be isolated from threats and intimidation from their traffickers and perpetrators. During this time victims require a close psychological follow-up, going to trial makes victims go through what they have gone through all over again and therefore intensifies their psychological distress.<sup>81</sup> Also there is a need for investigation into victims' particular cases so that they can prove and identify important events that can help their case. At all times organizations guarantee confidentiality and try their best to enable victims to receive compensation for their crimes. When discussing such issues with IOM and CPTW it became clear that the rule of law is weak in Moldova and although CPTW represents victims of trafficking in criminal, civil and administrative law suits and tries to have its lawyers represent the best interests of victims based on the legal provisions of the crime of trafficking stipulated by the criminal code, the civil code, and the code of administrative violations of the Republic of Moldova, both organizations were doubtful whether or not going through trial is beneficial for the victims. A crime of trafficking is extremely hard to prove and if not successful, stigmatization of prostitution might lead the victims to experience more suffering than if they had not gone through such a process. Although laws concerning trafficking in Moldova are extremely well developed, the corruption and weak rule of law makes it hard to bring the perpetrators to prison<sup>82</sup>.

Other legal counseling includes administrative and civil assistance such as providing insights on how to get a divorce, how to refer domestic violence, how to make new identity papers, advice on working contracts and so on. The victims need to sort out many legal issues and due to their poor educational backgrounds, they often feel helpless and little things can seem mountains to achieve. Such assistance is crucial for their reintegration in society and for their psychological well-being.

While most organizations fight to resolve some of the victims' worse problems, it does not mean that they are successful. The extent of the problem is so widespread and so difficult to control and address that it makes little hope possible. However one needs to understand that if an organization is able to save the life of one woman it is a success. Although thousands of women are being trafficked and only few have the chance of escaping and being provided with access to reintegration programs in place by IOs and NGOs to start being reintegrated, one needs to take into account the difficulty of such a process and acknowledge the efforts of many people who provide what they can to the victims.

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<sup>81</sup> Author's interview with Elena Balan, project assistant and Liliana Borzin, social assistant coordinator of the Center for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women (CPTW), on April 10, 2006.

<sup>82</sup> Based on author's interview with Irina Todorova, Coordinator of work at the shelter of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), on March 23, 2006 and based on author's interview with Elena Balan, project assistant and Liliana Borzin, social assistant coordinator of the Center for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women (CPTW), on April 10, 2006.

## IV. PROGRAMS IN PLACE IN CHISINAU

As was described earlier, all those needs take time to deal with and due to the only recent effort toward reintegrating victims of trafficking, there is up to this day no consequent data to show whether or not the basic needs of the victims have all been identified. IOs and NGOs in Chisinau, which deal with the reintegration of victims of trafficking, all have different mandates and often concentrate on addressing different needs pertaining to the different phases of reintegration. The following section will provide insight on how these organizations actually fulfill the needs of the victims through programs they have in place in the country. Some of the organizations work closely together and collaborate on special projects. Therefore they will be considered together.

### A. POLITICAL PROGRAMS

A couple of years ago, before IOs and NGOs started taking some responsibilities towards victims of trafficking, the State had sole responsibility for the reintegration of trafficking victims. Victims repatriated had no programs in place to help them<sup>83</sup> unless they were minors. If so, they were under the mandate of the Ministry of interior affairs and Ministry of Education.

The Ministry of Interior Affairs has two centers for children under eighteen. One is the Temporary Placement Center, which is an emergency center run by police where children above the age of four can be placed for a maximum of twenty-one days. The other center is the Health Center and Social Protection, which is for children under four years old. There, they receive health treatments and emergency needs through doctors, social workers and psychologists. These centers are still in place today. However NGOs and IOs work closely with this Ministry in order to provide further help to the victims. Before those organizations were in place, the children used to be sent back to their families or to institutions without any follow ups. The arrival of organizations has greatly improved the prospect of reintegration of victims of trafficking as they are able to refer them to different institutions and provide direct help to them.

The Ministry of Education, which is what they call the institution 'totalitaire'<sup>84</sup>, is responsible for all minors and has inspectors in charge of monitoring the situation of children covering every region in Moldova. Organizations work closely with this Ministry in order to extend their capacities. Children that have been trafficked are registered at the Ministry in order to facilitate children's protection. Keeping in mind that most children have been trafficked or sold by their own parents, it would be very dangerous to send them back to their old environments. However, children remain under their parents care and authority unless it has been ruled by the court that they are not capable of doing so.

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<sup>83</sup> Based on author's interview with Cristiano Barale, technical operational Assistant FACT of Terre des Hommes, on April 18, 2006 and author's interview with Mariana Ianachevici, vice director of Save the Children Moldova, on March 28, 2006.

<sup>84</sup> I was not able to really grasp the meaning of that word in English, they kept using it in many different context and using the French word. The instant translation would be Totalitarian but what they meant is the chief supreme.



Therefore, registering children to the Ministry of Education is essential for the well-being and reintegration of the children<sup>85</sup>.

## B. LEGAL PROGRAMS

CPTW is the only program that provides legal assistance to victims of trafficking in Moldova. It was funded in 2001 by the NGO International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of the US State Department and is coordinated by UNDP. Its main goal is to provide victims of trafficking access to the judicial system. It provides both direct and indirect help via hotline consultations and represents the interest of victims from the time a suit is filed to the court ruling. The stages of help consist of both legal and social assistance and also involves witness protection when necessary. The help provided by CPTW starts with a social worker who talks to the victim and provides social and psychological support. Then a team is formed consisting of the victim, the social worker and the lawyer in order to do an assessment of the victim. From that moment on, the lawyer is involved with the victim and assesses his/her needs. Referrals to different agencies such as NGOs, IOs, and medical centers are made. Then a work plan is elaborated and CPTW starts monitoring the case by bringing the case to trial and writing testimonies to police. Cases can take from two to three years. During this time, they supervise each case until the sentencing of the court. Finally after the ruling, they continue to help the victims' reintegration into society by facilitating them to get education and jobs. The final step consists of referring them to organizations such as La Strada, IOM and ILO/IPEC which provides victims with other forms of needs. Here it is important to note that CPTW and the three organizations mentioned earlier work closely together. Victims are referred to CPTW by them and some still are under the protection of those organizations while receiving help from CPTW<sup>86</sup>. The organization has helped many victims in 2004 only. It represented 140 trafficking victims and filed 63 criminal suits where traffickers received up to 15 years in prison and victims received compensations for both moral and material damages<sup>87</sup>.

## C. EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS

Italian Consortium Solidarity and Winrock international are two organizations that have partnered together in order to provide employment opportunities to young (16-24) and vulnerable women especially from rural areas. They have a new project which started in October 2005 and is a four year plan. The project called New Perspective for Women consist of providing training in areas such as personal leadership, information about domestic violence, and working abroad but mostly gives provides assistance to women in the form of grants and expert guidance on starting new businesses. The project takes place in four main regions of Moldova. Offices are located in strategic areas close to the borders where trafficking is very high. This project does not provide

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<sup>85</sup> Based on author's interview with Cristiano Barale, technical operational Assistant FACT of Terre des Hommes, on April 18, 2006 and author's interview with Mariana Ianachevici, vice director of Save the Children Moldova, on March 28, 2006.

<sup>86</sup> Based on Author's interview with Elena Balan, project assistant and Liliana Borzin, social assistant coordinator of the Center for the Prevention of Trafficking in Women (CPTW), on April 10, 2006

<sup>87</sup> Data found on UNDP website, under the CPTW project.

direct help to victims of trafficking, but works with organizations that are in place in the area. Its objective is to strengthen communication and coordination among local, national and international actors. In other words, this project consists of coordinating and referring victims to different agencies. Whether or not this perspective and technique of work is successful is still under question. Without spreading false rumors, one needs to remember that corruption in the country is high and present in more organizations than one could imagine. When asking real numbers and facts about the project, I was unable to receive any concrete information. Most activities were in the air or yet to be implemented. However the project is only recent and still needs to be implemented. The NGO Italian Consortium Solidarity and the project Winrock international are two organizations that have few personnel and yet it seems that they are covering many activities. My interview with them left me with many questions and when discussing it with La Strada and IOM members they raised similar questions about the extent of their activities. Through the eyes of the people implementing the New Women Perspective program, Moldova is going in the right direction. They believe every girl to have more and more options keeping them away from being trafficked. However trafficking is only rising in the country and their involvement with governmental agencies might have to do with their perspective on the situation in Moldova<sup>88</sup>.

Italian Consortium Solidarity was also involved in a project providing both protection and reintegration to victims and potential victims. In 2002 and 2003, it launched an income generating project to help victims re-enter the business world. The project was done in collaboration with IOM Moldova and the Moldovan Ministry of Labor. The project aimed at promoting the reintegration of victims of trafficking in the local society by combining two main aspects: micro-enterprise legislations and non-cash grants. To be more specific, the steps that were followed by this project started with informing the population about this project through local agencies in the area. Then they did a selection of young women on bases of age, personal background and education. These young women (16-24 years old) received training in general fields such as accounting and management. Following this training, participants were asked to develop a very basic personal business plan for themselves. ICS then did a selection and picked the plans that were the most feasible and provided women with grants to start their business. Later those women continued to be monitored and supervised to follow their process. However, although it was meant for women that had been trafficked, the organization confessed that most women who had been trafficked were not ready to follow the trainings and start taking their lives into their own hands. Little proof was given that actual victims were selected and ICS director mentioned how most participants selected were ones that had experienced the least trauma and were already able to start on their own. The problem with such a project is that it does not offer all the help the victims actually need and therefore it does not actually give a proper chance to the victims of trafficking of ever being selected by such a project. As was elaborated upon earlier, victims are very disturbed psychologically and therefore it does not permit them

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<sup>88</sup> Paragraph based on author's interview with Veacelav Balan, information Coordinator of Winrock international, on April 11, 2006 and on author's interview with Stefania Chirizzi, director of Italian Consortium Solidarity, on May 4, 2006 as well as on brochures provided by those organizations describing the project New Women Perspective.

to reintegrate the business world just like that<sup>89</sup>. This project has now been interrupted but is supposed to be set in motion again in the coming months<sup>90</sup>.

La Strada and IOM are the most efficient in the help they are able to provide because they use what I like to call an integral approach. They offer all the needs they believe trafficking victims need. This approach has proven to be the most effective up to now. The following paragraph will describe both approaches and programs which involve many social programs.

#### D. SOCIAL PROGRAMS

La Strada's mandate is quite wide. This international network NGO has many contacts both at the national and international level. It offers victims with access to very different agencies that enable victims to receive the help they require. The first contact with victims is mostly through their hotline staffed by trained counselors available 24 hours 7-days-a-week and their drop-in center. Victims that are still in captivity, families of victims and repatriated victims call the center for all kinds of information and help. From there, counselors and social workers make use of a needs' assessment technique in order to identify who is the victim, what help she or he requires and how they will be able to provide such help. To be more specific, after talking to the hotline counselor a preliminary identification is made, the victim is then invited to come to the drop-in center in order for the member of La Strada to acquire some information to understand and get to know their experience. This of course is essential to providing adequate help to the person. Alina Budeci, the Psychologist and Office Manager of La Strada, emphasizes the importance of looking at individuals separately and making personal assessments of their needs, keeping in mind that each person is different and therefore requires special personal assistance. When victims are still in the process of being exploited, they are provided counselor help through the hotline and a way out of their present situation is sought. La Strada has about 400 contacts abroad in 47 different countries, so they are able to contact other organizations that can help locally, be it State organizations, other NGOs or La Strada if present in the country.

When a needs assessment is made, La Strada refers victims to other local and international NGOs that are able to provide the help needed for them, such agencies include IOM and its shelters, State institutions, local NGOs in regions where victims are located, CPTW for legal help, social services agencies, and so on. La Strada provides indirect help through this referral system and a direct one through the organization's mobile groups that are able to reach victims in countryside areas. They work in close collaboration with organizations and donors such OSCE and the Dutch government which provides funds for educational and vocational training as well as summer camps which are organized for victims. This further enables La Strada to provide humanitarian assistance, and to improve and quicken the rehabilitation process of victims. The summer camps have been quite advantageous and followed with positive results. A major concern regarding victims is their relationship with their children, because many finds themselves rejected and not understood by them. In a ten-day camp, both victims and their children work in groups consisting of other victims and their children, priest,

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<sup>89</sup> Paragraph based on author's interview with Stefania Chirizzi, director of Italian Consortium Solidarity, on May 4, 2006

<sup>90</sup> ISC director did not provide any specific date on when they were going to implement it again. We have yet to see if it will actually be the case.

medical worker, psychologist and others. These camps have shown to help victims overcome some of their post traumatic stress syndromes.

The organization also provides basic humanitarian aid for them, consisting of money to sustain themselves at the beginning of their repatriation. Besides referring victims to different places they have projects with other organizations and do educational and vocational trainings in close collaboration<sup>91</sup>.

Another important organization that is involved in social reintegration programs is the IOM Mission to Moldova, its main goal is to protect migrants' human rights, defend their human dignity and well-being. They have a department specifically focused on combating trafficking in human beings through return and reintegration of victims of trafficking. This agency controls a rehabilitation center for victims where they provide mental health assistance and psychological support to victims. They also provide vocational training and job placement assistance as well as grants to start small businesses<sup>92</sup>. Over 70% of more than a thousand victims repatriated by IOM have benefited from social reintegration services<sup>93</sup>. IOM is one of the biggest and most influential organizations when it comes to reintegration of victims. However it works hand-in-hand with other important organizations such as La Strada and CPTW. Considering its international influence and budget, it is able to extend its mandate.

The IOM shelter services and activities are divided into a minors' and a women's branch. IOM has a crises intervention program for minors and young women where they provide medical help, psychological help, educational and vocational training and the possibility to work at the same time. During this process of help, victims are followed very closely at every level and once the course is finished IOM provides them with employment opportunities. This international organization has contacts with the national labor employment market enabling access for victims to the job market. However as was mentioned earlier, IOM considers follow up and empowerment indispensable. Therefore once victims have jobs, they are able to continue receiving counseling and training for the employment sector. These integration programs, as IOM calls them, are individually based and after three months they are re-contacted in order to see how things are going. However this is not an easy process, as Irina Todorova, Coordinator of work at the shelter of IOM puts it, each individual is different and needs serious follow up<sup>94</sup>. "Our reintegration program is really individually based. Depending on the family status, we try to evaluate their situation based on their environment to see what help they need and the duration of it. Some become confident very quickly, they take initiatives and others need more time and more guidance."

IOM also has a vocational training school, a center where sixteen people can be accommodated. In this center, staff is available for providing school support. Victims can remain there a period of two or three months, depending on the length of the studies needed.

Finally, IOM has an apartment used for transitional housing, where about twelve people can live when they need temporary placement. This place is used mostly for children that are orphans or mothers with small children that are not able to go to work. It is transitional housing.

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<sup>91</sup> Based on author's interview with Alina Budeci, Psychologist and Office Manager of La Strada, on February 22, 2006.

<sup>92</sup> Author's interview with Irina Todorova, Coordinator of work at the shelter of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), on March 23, 2006.

<sup>93</sup> Statistics found on IOM Website: <http://www.iom.md/reintegration.html>

<sup>94</sup> Author's interview with Irina Todorova, Coordinator of work at the shelter of the International Organization for Migration (IOM), on March 23, 2006.

IOM works closely with UN agencies as well. UNDP is at the moment developing the means to do a sort of so-called follow up or normal continuation to take over IOM crises intervention. They are developing a program of centers where individuals, who are not ready yet to positively function in society, can remain up to 12 months. They are opening three centers specializing in trafficking victims. However, UNDP was not interviewed, and at present it has only plans of implementing new centers and I was able to acquire this information through my interview with Irena Todorova and talks with other IOM members.

Finally IOM provides material support for almost all material needs of victims ranging from bread and milk to grants to start small businesses. They are especially keen in providing funds that can empower victims but also provide victims with cloth and food to survive. IOM considers material needs the most essential in order to help the reintegration process. Once their material security is stable, they believe healing will follow.

## E. COORDINATION OF ORGANIZATION

OSCE is a very influential organization due to its international appeal and respect. Although its main mandate is to deal with the Transnistrian conflict, a large department focuses on anti-trafficking. Its objective is to help and assist the Moldavian government in fulfilling its international commitments and consequently it is very much involved with all the agencies working alongside the government to fight trafficking in human beings. OSCE is a sort of coordination body in that regard. It organizes a meeting for all organizations involved in human trafficking, where organizations can discuss their problems and share their successes as well as share ideas which in turn should improve the different agencies' activities. OSCE does not provide direct help to victims, but work with organizations such as La Strada, Save the Children, WINROCK International and ILO/IPEC. OSCE gives money to these organizations as well as capacity building methods. It funds their projects, ensures conference attendance and offers them all sorts of useful materials. It also works with IOM but more as a partner. They have weekly contacts and OSCE helps IOM on the political level, facilitating their activities when necessary<sup>95</sup>.

Terre des hommes is a non-governmental organization that works closely with civil society and uses a community based approach. Its activities in Moldova started in 2004 and have focused on children being trafficked to Russia. It works closely with another NGO called Meeting Based in Russia and has developed a transnational intervention between Moldavia and Russia in order to minimize the trafficking flows and to facilitate the repatriation of children. The activities of Terre des hommes consists of four main areas: research, prevention, protection and coordination. These are covered in three regions of Moldova: the Central West region bordering Romanian, Soroca bordering Ukraine and Chisinau where the main office is located.

Terre des hommes, Save the children and UNICEF are partners in a project which covers services of rehabilitation, assistance and voluntary return of children being trafficked. The main goals of this project is to reinforce local authorities' capacities and to facilitate coordination of actors involved in children's protection and reintegration into their families, host families or institutions. This is assumed by providing all the needs

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<sup>95</sup> Author's interview with Antonia Demio, Director of the anti-trafficking department of the OSCE, on May 12, 2006.

they believe are important for them. Thus, they work closely with the Ministry of Education to register children being repatriated and to work with their inspectors. They work with the Ministry of interior affairs to find durable solutions for the children in their centers. They are in contact with local NGOs working in the area, IOs to provide grants and advice, schools to monitor what the children are doing, hospitals for medical treatments, local social workers and psychologists for mental treatment, families including host ones and orphanages to follow up on the children, and so on. This project does not provide direct help but referrals to other institutions; it is a sort of monitoring project. They work with the system in place to reach sustainability in the reintegration process of children. This raises a lot of problems such as delays and inactions. Coordinating actors that are themselves dysfunctional in the help they provide is not only a challenge but often a deadlock, where after a lot of effort, you hit a wall.

Save the Children provides shelter for children that are unable to be placed in their families. The project is large and covers a lot of activities. However, when going into details and specifics, I found it really hard to get any specific numbers on the children being repatriated. Organizations seemed reluctant to discuss concrete numbers that could have been for a variety of reasons such as lack of information or even lack of cases that if revealed could jeopardize their funding. How many children have been repatriated is a number still in the air for the research<sup>96</sup>.

One of the main problems encountered while doing the interviews was to know whether or not people were providing me with accurate information and statistics. Corruption is a very prevalent problem. The problem in Moldova is that people are poor and money can become poisonous when you do not have it. A lot of people I met were sincere and worked really hard to help victims but others were not. Projects in Moldova are extremely well described to attract international donors, it seems that all organizations are working very hard and providing a lot of help to victims but the reality is far from that. There are lack of financial means, lack of efforts, lack of coordination and lack of willingness from actors to put a priority to the reintegration of victims of trafficking. There are so many problems in Moldova that often people cannot see trafficking as a major priority. However, the efforts of reintegrating victims in Moldova are increasing and reintegration is slowly happening in the midst of serious internal problems.

## V. REINTEGRATION IN MOLDOVA

There are several forces that drive the effort to reintegrate trafficking victims. International pressure exerted through the UN, the Council of Europe, and other multinational bodies have forced Moldova to give victims a higher priority. Moldova's aspirations to gain membership in the EU and to integrate more fully into the international political and economic machinery are helped by improving its human rights record. This gives the human rights community a legitimate bureaucratic channel to voice its concern and influence the activities that the Moldavian government takes on behalf of the trafficking victims. Another force that helps drive the reintegration effort is

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<sup>96</sup> Paragraph based on Author's interview with Cristiano Barale, technical operational Assistant FACT of Terre des Hommes, on April 18, 2006 and on author's interview with Mariana Ianachevici, vice director of Save the Children Moldova, on March 28, 2006.

economic development. As Moldova works to strengthen its economy, improve its technological capacities, and modernize its markets, it must also possess a workforce that is trained, educated, and functionally capable. In the case of trafficking, reintegration is not just the reintegration of victims in society but as was said before it is an attempt to make them something they could not be before. Through their educational training, NGOs and IOs have been able to empower them to a point where they are able to make a living for themselves and their families. Therefore reintegration of victims can be categorized under both economical empowerment and the redress of the human rights violations they have experienced.

Reintegration is far from being an easy process as has been shown throughout the research but organizations have developed ways of identifying the needs of the victims and from there have tried and are still trying the best they can to provide victims with the right programs. Of course programs that are in place at the moment are based on NGO's and IO's assumptions about what is the right process to take. For example, some organizations may focus on work skills and employment, while others focus on psychological counseling. This not only reflects their strength as an organization and what they are best suited to carry out, but a belief that some needs are more fundamental or important to reintegration. There is significant variation in the approaches currently taken, and one can easily find flaws and biases. An important point is that the reintegration of victims of trafficking is a new activity and there is no guideline to real success. Victims each experience their human rights violation in different ways. Some need more psychological counseling than others, some may need more social interactions with other victims, and others may need more time alone to reflect and heal through exercise of religion. Individuals react differently to programs NGOs and IOs have in place and it is therefore very hard to generalize, as many directors have mentioned. It is important for organizations to stay open and flexible to the needs of victims. This is probably the most important issue when reintegrating victims. The NGOs that are the most therapeutic are the ones that are aware of this issue.

Structural problems do not facilitate reintegration of victims. NGOs and IOs being aware of these structural problems work closely with government in order to change the structure within the country. Programs of reintegration target practical obstacles such as poverty to enable victims to become independent and strong entities in the midst of a developing country. It is done by working within the structure of the country. La Strada, IOM and OSCE are such organizations that are in contact with the Moldavian government and attempt to make things move not only through the people but through the structure. It is one of many ways to facilitate reintegration and stop further trafficking of humans.

Reintegration is therefore not just an attempt to heal victims emotionally but also to make them functional in their respective communities. This in turn can positively influence the victims themselves and the economical development of the country. Reintegration has to take into account the many problems that are derived from the organization of the country, only then will its effort in stopping trafficking be successful.

## VI. CONCLUSION

Structural violence has been present in Moldova for many years. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, life has become very difficult for both civil society and State Structures

of the country. As Galtung says “violence is present when human beings are being influenced so that their actual somatic and mental realizations are below their potential realizations (Galtung, 1969, p.168)<sup>97</sup>.” The challenge in Moldova has been to redress the economical and political situation of the country to enable the flow of basic human rights and the reconstruction of a functional State. Moldova has been under great pressure to work towards that direction and has shown its goodwill through the ratification of many UN conventions and protocols as well as becoming a member of the Council of Europe. However this does not suggest its capacity to redress its situation alone. Moldavian laws are obviously well developed and ready to be set in motion. However, the lack of material means and skills is one of Moldova’s strongest down sides. The country is poor and is badly managed. Therefore it is not surprising that most anti-trafficking measures and initiatives are supported by NGOs and international organizations. The government of Moldova is not ready to deal with their problems alone and firmly needs outside support both financially and through international expertise.

Human trafficking in Moldova is not only a product of what Galtung calls structural violence, where the structure suppresses its people due to the way the country is organized but it is also a product of personal violence. This structuralist approach sees socio-economic contradictions lying at the bases of violent or indirect conflicts. It often claims that conflict is derived from violence inherent to political, economic, and geopolitical structures, and as such requires incremental structural change to remove oppression. Social injustices are seen in Moldova through poverty, gender discrimination, domestic violence, lack of opportunity for youth, unemployment and limited or conditioned access to education. These are all push factors for both traffickers and victims to enter this illegal transnational activity. Factors such as the ones mentioned above are born from malfunctioning economic, social and political structures in Moldova. However human trafficking is also a product of personal violence. Looking at victims’ experiences reveals the presence of extreme one-on-one violence exercised on them. Where in the case of structural violence, the State does not intend the phenomenon to take place, in the case of personal violence the traffickers or clients intentionally make victims suffer the worse atrocities.

Galtung theory helps us understand the situation more in depths by allowing us to look at both instances. As presented earlier, Moldova is experiencing a so called indirect conflict, and this approach makes us focus on structures and structural change as important elements for redressing a situation of structural violence in the midst of personal violence. Interestingly, both the Moldavian government and the international world have been working on a structural change in the country. This research has described one of the ways, bilateral, lateral and multilateral actors are working to improve and at times change the way Moldova’s society is organized.

The research has focused on the reintegration of victims of trafficking, looking at how actors perceive the needs of the victims and how they organize themselves in order to fulfil those needs. It is an interesting example of how the government of Moldova, other governments, IOs and NGOs are working together in order to find a solution against one of the consequences of what Galtung calls structural violence. As was elaborated upon, victims of trafficking have many needs that require serious intervention and care. Upon arrivals, their living condition is as bad, if not worse then when they left the country to find better opportunities. They have gone through so many traumas that they need medical and psychological care. They need to be provided with financial help,

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<sup>97</sup> In “Violence, Peace, and Peace Research” by Johan Galtung (1969) In journal of Peace Research, Vol. 6, No. 3., pp. 168.



educational and vocational training and finally a job to start functioning in society again. Not only do they require means to start a whole new life but they also need legal support to prosecute their perpetrators and for other civil and administrative matters. Reintegration in this research was not only seen as simple repatriation and return to their old environment, but as a sort of development to empower them to a level that is higher than their base line level side by side with curing them from the consequences of being a victim of trafficking.

Organizations have worked with them for many years and elaborated programs that they believe can help redress their situations. In Moldova today, about ten organizations including NGOs and IOs are working on reintegrating victims, all having different mandates working together at times or keeping each other informed through coordination agencies such as OSCE. The labour of all organizations seems to be well divided. Some organization mandates focus on legal aspects, others on financial or social ones, others on health issues and so on. From the research it was found that most influential organizations are those that have what I call an integral approach, where all needs are covered by one organization or when referral systems are well developed and enables interaction and good communication between the different agencies providing victims with services. The dysfunctional State and bad management of the country leaves many regions with dysfunctional systems. This makes it extremely difficult to work following the co-development approach. Victims are not things nor can they be used as guinea pigs. They need to be handled with care if the reintegration process is going to be successful.

Although the international world has been helping the country a lot to redress itself, many internal forces work against the motivation of local and international organizations. Such forces include low national capacity, small country with brain drain, not enough staff in the different organizations, small civil society and most importantly high corruption. Staffs from border patrols, police, small NGOs and others involved, are not trained enough for the work they are doing. There is a lack of education and knowledge to make a real difference and to improve the current trafficking situation. However many people are ready to give up their lives to solve the problem. Some are extremely motivated and passionate about their work. It has been a challenge for OSCE to find the right balance of financial support given to older versus newer NGOs. The knowledge and capacities of the older organizations that have been working for many years is extremely important but there is sometimes burn outs and pessimism in those organizations so the enthusiasm of the younger ones is indispensable to keep on fighting against the trafficking crime.

Another important force that limits the actions of all the organizations is the fact that the government often wants the IOs and NGOs to do the work and get credit for it themselves. The Moldavian government is not willing nor does it have capacity to resolve problems and to implement the policies and law articles they have already developed. Capacity is a very important dilemma in the case of Moldova. Today the international world puts priority and is pressuring countries to take action against human trafficking. Moldova is one of those countries that have a very small capacity. If the international world pressures them to fight trafficking, they will take action or at least let IOs and NGOs develop programs. But when one who has a small capacity focuses on something it often means it closes its eyes to other issues. Lack of capacity hand in hand with internal and international pressures can be extremely dangerous. The Moldovan government takes the actions that they are being pressured to take. However, prosecution of human trafficking violations will stop or diminish if international priority changes to another problem.

Moldova also has an internal conflict: the Transnistrian conflict. Russian forces are presently occupying territory east of the Dniester River, supporting the Slavic majority population, who has proclaimed a "Transnistria" Republic. Although this territory is not recognized as a separate entity to Moldova, the country is at the moment divided around this conflict line. Transnistria has its own government and even a different country calling code. This has great implications for the fight against trafficking. First, it is an unstable geographical region, which creates fertile grounds for transnational crimes through the black market and poverty, thus feeding trafficking. More than forty percent of victims come from there<sup>98</sup>. The region is looking for international recognition so it is not in their advantage to acknowledge its trafficking problem as it reveals human rights violations. The region has a different political and legal system preventing the action of unregistered IOs or NGOs in the region. Furthermore, because it is not recognized as a state, donors restrict money spent in that area. There is big advertisement for working abroad and except posting posters on top of advertisements, there is little organizations can do. Also the different country code makes hotlines in Moldova inaccessible or expensive for victims. Finally the victims that come from Transnistria cannot return home if they want to be set in reintegration programs. The conflict in Transnistria is a major barrier to the actions of organizations and until this political situation is dealt with, there is little improvement that can be done.

There is a lot of improvement that needs to be done regarding the reintegration of victims. Mostly it should be acknowledged that victims are people with experiences. Working abroad has taught them skills and expertise that should be used. As IOM and La Strada emphasized, victims are active actors who need to be empowered to help themselves. The reintegration process is long and for it to be successful, long term collaboration with victims to see their development is vital. However one needs to look at the bigger picture and be reminded that countries in the Western world need migration and could benefit greatly from it, just as poorer countries could benefit through remittances. Further research should focus more on the bilateral actors and their involvement in all this. Trafficking is a small part of huge migration issues that are rising up today. The richer countries have a lot of responsibility in what poor countries are experiencing and finding a solution together could be a way to resolve both parties growing problems.

#### FINAL WORDS:

“You should know to climb, when others are going down,  
You should know to smile, when the hate is killing you,  
You should know to smile, when your soul is crying,  
May you be warm, even when it is snowing outside.”<sup>99</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> IOM statistics provided during informal discussions with its staff members.

<sup>99</sup> Legend written on a present given by la Strada to me on my farewell party. Those words did not only touch me but they are very symbolic to me and after doing this research. It brings hope and courage in a world were desperation is often what most people choose as an option instead of living (in the case of victims) or continuing to fight for the right cause (in the case of people that work in reintegration NGOs and IOs).

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## APPENDIX

Open-question questionnaire used to interview organizations in Chisinau, Moldova. The following questionnaire was modified according to the organization, when it was necessary.

### ENGLISH VERSION:

#### STATE OF VICTIMS OF TRAFFICKING

- *How are victims able to get in touch with your organization?*
- *What are the victims' typical living conditions and life situations when they start seeking for your help?*
- *What is the physical state of the victims at the time of initial contact with your organization?*
- *What is the psychological state of the victims at the time of initial contact with your organization?*
- *How open are the victims to receive help from your organization?*

#### ABOUT THE NEEDS OF THE VICTIMS

- *Does your organization make a distinction between victims that wants to testify against their traffickers and the ones that do not?*

#### IF YES:

- *What would you say is the first and most important action to take towards a victim of trafficking that wishes to testify in order to start her reintegration process?*
- *What would you say is the first and most important action to take towards a victim of trafficking that doesn't wish to testify in order to start her reintegration process?*
- *What does your organization see as the important needs of the victims?*
- *Which of these needs does your organization consider the hardest to meet?*
- *How did you come about with knowing what those needs were?*

#### ABOUT THE SERVICES AND PROGRAMS SET IN PLACE BY THE ORGANIZATION

- *What programs are set in place by your organization in order to successfully help the victims reintegrate into their respective societies?*
- *What is process of help you organization gives to the victims, starting from first contact to the end of contact with the victim?*
- *What opportunities do you offer the victims to prevent them to reenter the trafficking world and to avoid having them put themselves into vulnerable situations by looking for work abroad?*
- *Which international organizations or NGOs do you work closely with?*

### *ABOUT THE NEW PROTOCOLS*

Your country has just ratified the UN convention on Transnational crimes (2000) and its Protocol to Prevent Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000) on February 17<sup>th</sup> 2005.

- *Has your organization's mandate change in any way since those protocols have been signed?*
- *Have they had an impact on the present situation, if yes then what kind of impact?*
- *Has the government taken any action since the ratifications to prevent this phenomenon to spread and to take bigger proportions?*

### *ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE VICTIMS*

- *What is the success of reintegration?*

## FRENCH VERSION:

### ETAT DES VICTIMES DE TRAFFIQUE

- *Comment les victimes se sont-elles mises en contact avec votre organisation ?*
- *Quelles sont les conditions et situations de vie typiques des victimes quand elles sont en contact avec vous ?*
- *Quel est l'état physique des victimes au moment du contact initial avec votre organisation ?*
- *Quel est l'état psychique des victimes au moment du contact initial avec votre organisation ?*
- *Les victimes sont-elles ouvertes à recevoir de l'aide de votre organisation ?*

### SUR LES BESOINS DES VICTIMES

- *Y a-t-il une différence dans l'aide que vous procurez aux victimes qui désirent témoigner en justice et celles qui ne le désirent pas ?*

#### SI OUI:

- *Que pensez-vous être la première et la plus importante action à prendre pour une victime qui veut témoigner pour qu'elle commence une bonne réintégration ?*
- *Que pensez-vous être la première et la plus importante action à prendre pour une victime qui ne veut pas témoigner pour qu'elle commence une bonne réintégration ?*
- *Que-ce que votre organisation considère les besoins les plus importants à prendre en considération pour une victime ?*
- *Quels besoins sont les plus difficiles à offrir ?*
- *Comment êtes-vous parvenu à ces conclusions ?*

### SUR LES SERVICES ET LES PROGRAMMES MISES EN PLACE PAR L'ORGANISATION

- *Quels genres de programmes avez-vous mis en place pour aider les victimes à se réintégrer dans leur société respective ?*
- *Quel est le processus d'aide que votre organisation fournit aux victimes, en commençant par le premier contact jusqu'à la fin de contact ?*
- *Quelles opportunités fournissez-vous aux victimes afin de les aider à ne pas se remettre dans une position vulnérable ou ils pourraient retomber dans le monde du trafic ?*
- *Quel sont les organisations internationales ou les ONG avec qui vous avez un rapport professionnel rapproché ?*

### *SUR LES NOUVEAUX PROTOCOLES:*

Votre pays a ratifié la convention des Nations Unies sur les crimes transnationaux et les protocoles qui en suivent.

Protocol to Prevent Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2000) on February 17<sup>th</sup> 2005.

- *Avez-vous fait l'expérience de changement dans le mandat (mission) de votre organisation?*
- *Est-ce que cette ratification a eu un impacte sur la situation présente du trafic?*
- *Est-ce que vous considérez que votre gouvernement a pris certaines actions pour respecter cette convention et ces protocoles?*

### *SUR LE FUTUR DES VICTIMES*

- *Quel est le succès de réintégration?*