



'If our skirt is torn, ...'



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'If our skirt is torn, ...'

Safe Return and Social Inclusion of Victims of Traffic in Human Beings.
An Inventory of Neglected Aspects in Ten European and Asian Countries.

**'If our skirt is torn,
do not show anyone else
but try to sew it up'**

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An Inventory of Neglected Aspects in Ten European and Asian Countries.

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Preface

Every day, victims of traffic in human beings return to their home countries and try to pick up their lives again after the ordeal they have gone through. This is not an easy task and often human rights are violated again in the process.

Safe return and social inclusion of victims are essential to break the cycle of traffic in human beings. Only then re-trafficking can be prevented. Therefore, as directors of STV and ICCO, we are very happy to have engaged in a joint project on this topic, in collaboration with ten partner organisations of ICCO and KerkinActie.

This report will give you insight into 150 individual cases of trafficking from five Eastern European and four Asian countries. It enlightens how return and social inclusion, or the lack thereof, affected these women's lives. The report also provides information on laws, policies and practices. Finally, in its conclusions and recommendations, it suggests future steps to be taken.

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'I had never imagined that my life could pass through such an awful and inhuman phase. My name is Sengly, I am 26 years old, and I am from Kg. Thom. My father is a taxi driver, my mother is a housewife and I have five younger sisters and brothers. When I turned 20, I started a fruit business in the market. It was not very big, but the money could help my family as well as enable my siblings to continue attending school. I had left school after only three years in order to help take care of my younger siblings, and my sister left after finishing primary school in order to help me at the market.

Over the last few years there were a few cases of marriage between young women who lived near my village to Taiwanese men. Some received presents from the grooms while some did not, as they had only to present themselves. I knew that matchmakers had been contacting my parents, but my parents disagreed with marriage because they thought that not speaking the language, in addition to living in a different culture-would cause problems for me. I followed my parents' decision because I knew they didn't want me to come up against any problems.

In March 2002, an agent came looking for young women to travel to Taiwan - not to marry Taiwanese men, but to work as domestic help. My parents were still reluctant for me to go but I thought that it might be a good chance for me to experience a foreign country and also to earn more money for the family. In any case, domestic work is not a problem for me because I have done chores since I was very young. I managed to convince my parents and at last they agreed to let me go.

The agent put my family into contact with a Taiwanese man who said that he had a business in Phnom Penh, but also needed a housekeeper to work in his house in Taiwan. He said that he would soon be finishing his business in Phnom Penh, and would take me back home with him. He asked me to learn Chinese, but I could not manage this in such a short time. He told my parents that I needed to have a passport for travelling which he could arrange, but I had to pay the cost of it back when I got my salary, as well as pay for the airfare. Later he said that he would pay for all the expenses because he liked me and would treat me as his sister. My family was very happy to hear that. We were told that I had to have a tourist visa in order to work in Taiwan because the Taiwanese government does not accept Cambodian workers.

I was so excited. The day I left Cambodia (in May 2002), my father and two of my brothers came to see me off at the

airport. I was shown a passport at the airport, but it was not given to me. Someone, a Khmer man whom I did not know who was travelling with the Taiwanese man, held it for us (I said 'us' because we were travelling in a group together with a dozen other women). When my passport was shown to me, I could see that it contained my photograph, but I was told to memorize my name as Hideko Okuyama, should I be asked for it. I was told not to talk or say anything else.

We travelled by plane to Thailand and stayed there for two days. In Thailand, a few of the women in our group were taken somewhere else and were replaced by Thai women. Afterwards, we departed for Hong Kong and stayed there for a few more days. The Khmer man who had accompanied us as a travel guide did not go with us to Hong Kong. In Hong Kong, all the Cambodian and Thai women were taken out except me; I was left alone to continue my way to Taiwan. In either in Thailand or Hong Kong-I don't remember which one - we were told to stay quietly at the place and could not go out. I felt excited still as I had never been abroad in my life. I wasn't suspicious, as I knew that I was going to Taiwan.

After I arrived in Taiwan, I was taken to a place a long way from the airport but I don't know where it was. I stayed in a hotel for the night and the next morning was taken by car to another city. Having reached this place, I was brought to a house where I saw a lot of Chinese women, and was told to share a room with one of them. There was also a man living in the house with the women. I was never given my passport, and from that point on, never saw the Taiwanese man who had brought me from Cambodia again.

For the first two days in Taiwan, I wondered why there was no housework for me to do, and why none of the other women were doing it. Instead, we watched pornographic films every day. Some of the women dressed up beautifully and went out, either for a few hours or for the whole night, but always accompanied by the man who lived in the house. Some of them were being beaten and forced to drink urine, but I don't know why. After two days, I was forced to have sex with the man in the house. As I did not speak Chinese, the other women in the house pointed out a sexual scene in the film and pushed me into the room. I dared not refuse because the people looked at me and I was scared of receiving the same punishment as the other women. From that day on, I was forced to serve clients. The clients made bookings through phone calls and women were sent to the agreed places. Normally, we were taken to meet the clients at hotels.

We were not allowed to leave the house, except when meeting with clients and then we were always accompanied by the man who lived in the house. If we wanted any sort of food it was bought for us, as were dresses, for which we had to pay with our salaries. My salaries differed from month to month; I didn't understand why and was told that it was due to the number of clients I received each month. I tried to save money with the hope that one day I could return to Cambodia. I worked for five months, changing places four times, but I knew that it was the same Sex Shop Company because one time I returned to a place that I had worked in before. Then, one day in November 2002 the police arrested me while I was serving a client in a hotel, and I was taken to prison.

In prison, the police asked me for my documents by showing me some papers and a passport, but I had nothing to show them because I had never been given my passport. They asked me a lot of questions that I couldn't understand, but one day, they brought a few sheets of paper to me and told me to fill them in. The documents were written in Khmer, and tears rolled down my cheeks, as this was the first time I had seen Khmer letters since leaving Cambodia. On top of the paper it said, "We are a humanitarian organisation that is helping you by providing information translated into Khmer, despite our minimal knowledge of the language. Please fill in the information requested below". I tried to write down all of the personal information they were asking for. Nothing more happened until the day I was brought to court, where I was given an interpreter whom I hardly understood since his Khmer was very poor. The judge imprisoned me for four months for illegal entry into Taiwan, counting from the day I was arrested. A week later I was released, and deported back to Cambodia.

At the airport where my father and my brothers saw me off a few months ago, there was no-one waiting for me. The police asked me why and how I got to Taiwan, where I stayed, what I did, and so forth. They took all the papers that the judge and the police in Taiwan had given me, and told me to wait in a room. About two hours later, a staff member from an NGO came to me and took me to a shelter. A few days later, my father came to visit me, followed by my mother together with my siblings. We wept together, and I decided to go back home to live with my family. We avoided talking about things that could remind me of the bad experiences that I had just had. My parents told me to bury everything deeply, and forget about it. They said that 'If our skirt is torn, do not show anyone else but try to sew it up'.



Photo: Roel Banger

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Chapter 1 • **Introduction**

1.1 Migration and traffic in human beings

The migration debate is 'hot'. The trend in most of the countries of the European Union (EU) is to restrict the opportunities of potential migrants and to close the borders. People who are found to be in a country illegally are arrested and returned to their country of origin, irrespective of whether the "illegal" is a trafficker or a victim of trafficking. The EU is working on unifying its border control policies and standardising the laws and regulations that are in place in each of the Member States. In practice, this legislation is leading to greater restrictions for those seeking better opportunities.

Traffic in human beings¹ is a poignant side effect of international migration policies such as these. Victims of trafficking are denied the fundamental rights to freedom and mobility, free choice of labour, and physical and psychological integrity. As countries of destination, the EU member states are part of this phenomenon. The accession countries to the EU are involved in the problem as well; as countries of origin, and also as transit countries and countries of destination. Within Asia, trafficking also occurs throughout the region and individual countries may be countries of origin, transit or destination.

Statistics reflecting the scale of the phenomenon are hard to report and greatly differ from publication to publication. They also depend on the terminology used. A metaphor often used is that of the tip of the iceberg, where the iceberg represents the total number of victims of traffic in human beings and the tip relates to the number of cases that surface and are brought to the attention of authorities and NGOs.

The figures we quote here come from the first report of the Dutch National Rapporteur on Traffic in Human Beings², although the National Rapporteur adds that she herself has not been able to verify these figures. "According to various estimates, each year between 700,000 and 2,000,000 women and children are trafficked world-wide. Of these, in Europe around 175,000 to 200,000 are trafficked from Central and Eastern Europe to Western Europe, largely for the sex industry. It is also estimated that world-wide more than 200 million human beings live under one form of slavery or another; the number of people world-wide that live under slavery-like conditions as a result of THB is estimated at nine million. Even if the actual numbers were considerably lower, it is still clear that this is a problem of overwhelming proportions."

Every year the American Department of State publishes a Trafficking in Persons Report, known as the TIP Report. The 2004 volume³, states, "During the last year, the U.S. Government estimated that 600,000 – 800,000 people were trafficked across transnational borders worldwide. Analyses of data reveal that 80 percent of the victims trafficked across international borders are female and 70 percent of those females are trafficked for sexual exploitation. Estimates that include global intra-country trafficking in persons range from two to four million."

Due to the above-mentioned premises of the migration debate, policy makers perceive traffic in human beings mainly in terms of illegality, hence needing suppression and prevention. The human rights perspective is often overlooked and the cyclical nature of trafficking is neglected. The trafficking cycle consists of the period before and during the trafficking situation, up to and including the ending of the coercive situation, and ends with social inclusion of the victim into society, in the country of origin, destination or a third country.

1.2 The ICCO and STV project on Safe Return and Social Inclusion

Within the cycle of traffic in human beings the process of recovery, which commences from the moment that the woman is taken out of the coercive situation, is an underexposed aspect. The process of recovery may include return to the home country or a third country, but may also involve social inclusion in the country of destination. This neglected aspect of the trafficking cycle was reason for the Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation (ICCO) and the Dutch Foundation against Trafficking in Women (STV) to join forces in the implementation of a project addressing this particular topic.

The project brought together ICCO, Kerkinactie (Global Ministries of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands) and STV partner organizations who all have a strong, well-earned reputation on the issue of trafficking and who have provided social assistance to victims of trafficking for many years. Five of the organizations are based in Central and Eastern Europe⁴, and five are based in Asia⁵.

A first international consultation was held in February 2004, during which expertise was exchanged with Dutch Members of Parliament and the Dutch National Rapporteur on Trafficking in Human Beings. It was recognized that the process of recovery involves more than solely the return of victims to, and their social inclusion

in the countries of origin; however there was an immediate recognition of the need to determine what happens to the women who return, what problems they are confronted with, and the best ways of enabling these women to obtain their basic rights. Given the direct contact the partner organizations have with victims of trafficking, it was decided to compile an inventory of individual cases, which would be supplemented with information on laws, policies, and social infrastructure at national and international level. The partner organizations in Central and Eastern Europe and Asia, as well as STV provided data for the inventory.

The results of this inventory are summarised in this report and will be discussed at the concluding workshop of the project in November 2004. On that occasion, the report will be presented to the Dutch Minister for Immigration and Integration, Mrs. M.C.F. Verdonk, and will also be discussed with the Dutch civil society and Members of the European Parliament.

1.3 Objective

The objective of the inventory is threefold. The results should give insight into what has happened to the lives of the 150 women about whom data were submitted, after their coercive situation was ended. The women from different parts of Central and Eastern Europe and South and South-East Asia have in common that their basic human rights were harshly violated. The inventory should also give insight into the effects of both legislation and policies of each of the states concerning the process of safe return and social inclusion from a rights-based perspective. Finally, this insight should lead to recommendations for policy makers and organizations working with victims of trafficking, resulting in new initiatives to protect their rights and improve the services provided to them.

1.4 Methodology

The study has its foundation in the Partner Consultation of February 2004, at which the topic was decided. From the topic two questionnaires were formulated, one on the micro level of individual cases and one on the macro level of national and international legislation and governmental policy. As far as possible the questionnaires were in multiple-choice format, to ensure comparability of the answers, taking into consideration the diverse situations in each of the countries. The macro questionnaire on policies and laws was expanded with some open questions.

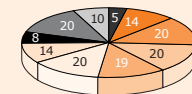
The questionnaires concerning individual cases were divided into eight parts and 69 questions, each relating to a phase in the trafficking cycle. Some questions were repeated across the different sections, such as those concerning the services required by and provided to victims of trafficking. Not all questions could be completed due to lack of data. For example, STV hardly had any information on what happened after a woman returns to her country of origin, whereas the NGOs from countries of origin sometimes did not have a clear picture

of the circumstances before return.

The cases of trafficking investigated in this inventory were chosen as a result of three main selection criteria. Firstly, cases had to be chosen from clients who had been assisted in 2003. Secondly, the cases should offer insight into the best practices of the organizations involved. Last but not least, there should be enough information on the particular case. The only Western European NGO (STV) that participated in the research required a fourth criterion, which was the nationality of the women; only cases from the countries participating in the research were to be used. Unfortunately this led to the absence of Asian cases for the Dutch NGO. STV had four Thai cases in 2003, but two of them were already described by the Thai partner and the other two cases contained too little information to be involved. The number of cases contributed differed from NGO to NGO, due to availability of information and numbers of women assisted every year.

In total, 150 questionnaires on individual cases were returned, together with ten questionnaires on policies and laws. Of these, 107 (72%) came from Central and Eastern Europe, and 43 (28%) cases were provided by the Asian partner organizations. It should be noted that these 150 individual cases do not represent all women who have been trafficked from the partner countries. In fact, they are just the tip of the iceberg mentioned above.

Contribution of case studies



- Netherlands/Eastern Europe (14)
- Albania (20)
- Romania (20)
- Bulgaria (19)
- Moldova (20)
- Belarus (14)
- Nepal (8)
- India (20)
- Cambodia (10)
- Thailand (5)

1.5 Structure of the report

The chapters of the report are structured according to the phases in the trafficking cycle.

In Chapter 2, 'The Trafficking Situation', the personal backgrounds of the women involved are described, how they were recruited, under which circumstances they were forced into prostitution or other forms of trafficking and

¹ Trafficking is "The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons by means of 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 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 minimum, the exploitation of prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs", *United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime*, United Nations 2000 *Trafficking in Human Beings. First report of the Dutch National Rapporteur*, Bureau NRM, The Hague, 2002, page 4

² 2004 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, United States Department of State, June 2004

³ The Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania, Useful for Albanian Women (UAW), Animus/La Strada Bulgaria, WYCA/La Strada Belarus and La Strada Moldova

⁴ Women's Rehabilitation Centre (WOREC) in Nepal, Jagori and Sanlaap in India, Cambodian Women and Development Agency (CWDA) in Cambodia and the Foundation for Women (FFW) in Thailand

what happened to them in the country of destination after they escaped.

Chapter 3, 'Safe Return and Social Inclusion', addresses the period after which the woman returned to her home country or a third country. It describes how her return was prepared, what assistance she received, whether return was safe and if, prior to departure, a risk assessment had been conducted to determine whether or not there would be any possible risks associated with her return. It then continues to describe the circumstances she finds herself in after return and whether she was able to rebuild her life.

Chapter 4, 'Conclusions and Recommendations' outlines the main conclusions and suggests further steps to be taken.

In between the chapters, the stories of six individual women from Cambodia, Bulgaria, Nepal and Bangladesh give a human face to the quantitative data processed for this report. The annexes to the report contain a list of contributors and a list of abbreviations.

Case study

Milena

From Bulgaria to the Netherlands

Milena is a 14 year old Bulgarian girl of Roma origin who is a survivor of trafficking in human beings. She was referred to the Crisis Unit of the Animus Association by a border police officer after arriving at Sofia airport from the Netherlands in September 2003. During a conversation with a social worker at the Crisis Unit, Milena explained that she had been sold to another family of Roma origin living permanently in Amsterdam by her mother and her brother. Milena had been told that she was to marry the Dutch family's son but after her relatives left, her "parents-in-law" forced her to steal from stores and from people on the street. According to her she was not good at stealing and the police caught her but then released her. As Milena could not bear living with this family she escaped and for ten days stayed with a man she had met, but the family found her. They were very angry with her and beat her, and then called her mother and asked for their money back. But Milena's family refused to return the money they had received for selling their daughter and so the family in Amsterdam sold her on to a Turkish pimp.

According to Milena, she lived with the Turkish pimp for about eight months. During this time she was kept locked in his house in Utrecht and forced to work as a prostitute, in the house as well as on the street.

Milena managed to escape from the house in which she was held captive by breaking a window and creeping out through the glass. She called the Dutch police and they started an investigation, during which time she was placed in a Catholic shelter in Utrecht while waiting for a passport to be issued to her. However, according to Milena the Dutch police officers did not believe her statement, even though evidence of her presence in the trafficker's house was found and neighbours testified to have seen her running away from the house covered in blood. Despite her objections Milena was sent back to Bulgaria and no institution in the country was notified about her case. After she arrived in Bulgaria she had nowhere to go. She turned to a border police officer for help and he referred her to the Animus Association.

Milena was accommodated at the Animus Association Crisis Unit and stayed there for ten days. She received ten sessions of crisis counselling with a focus on her emotional well-being and the development of a safety plan for her. Milena was terrified that her family would find her and sell her into prostitution again. After discussing her fears with her counsellor, she agreed to be interviewed by police officers from the Anti-trafficking team of the National Service for Combating Organized Crime, who were invited to the Crisis Unit to talk with her. The

Regional Police Department responsible for the area where the Crisis Unit is situated was also notified about the case in order to provide protection to Milena.

The State Agency for Child Protection was informed about Milena's situation immediately after she arrived at Animus. At a subsequent meeting between different experts from Animus and the local Child Protection Department it was decided that Milena would be temporarily placed in a home for children deprived of parental care. Also, her family was to be placed under investigation in order to start the procedure for denial of parent's rights to custody of Milena.

Milena was placed at the home for children deprived of parental care. For safety reasons her mother was not notified of her new address. A multidisciplinary team of professionals from the local Child Protection Department, the home and the Animus Association was established, and met every two weeks. These meetings were organized in order to develop a comprehensive care program for Milena, who was also present and actively participating in the process.

It turned out that Milena had only completed two years of school and was willing to continue with her education. This proved to be very complicated however because she was too old to be enrolled in the third grade alongside children eight years of age, and the Bulgarian education system does not provide individual educational programs for children who have not yet completed eighth grade. It was decided that until a better solution was found her counsellor at the home would give her lessons. The team also agreed with Milena's commitment to undergoing long-term counselling at the Animus Association on a regular basis to help her to recover from her traumatic experience.

A much more important issue came to light when it was discovered that Milena was seven months pregnant. The situation was extremely complicated because on the one hand Milena's parents had not yet been denied their parental rights and so still had custody of her, and on the other, being a child herself, she would not be able to take care of her baby alone. According to the regulations of the home, Milena could not stay there with her baby and in the event that she wanted to keep it, she would have to be accommodated elsewhere. If Milena was to decide to offer the baby for adoption she would need the permission of her own parents as she was still a minor. More importantly, she was extremely frightened and confused and could not make up her mind whether to keep the baby or not.

After this dramatic shift in the situation the multidisciplinary team immediately gathered to discuss Milena's options. The Italian organization "Amici dei bambini" which works to support single mothers has a branch in Bulgaria, and became involved in discussing the case. Its representatives offered to provide accommodation and social assistance to Milena and her baby for the next two years, and to help her organize her life. They were concerned however about her status as a minor and that her parents had not yet been deprived of their custodial rights. At the same time Milena's capacity for being able to take good care of her baby was under question.

At the same time another problem occurred. Information about Milena's case was leaked to the media, and a newspaper journalist interviewed Milena without the permission of the Department for Child Protection, which is illegal with regard to minors. Two articles were published in the paper revealing Milena's full name, her address at the home and several pictures of her. Much of the information in the article was twisted or untrue. Later the article was further transformed and re-published by a tabloid newspaper, and was also posted on the Internet. Such publicity could only serve to endanger the girl's safety.

Ultimately, a foster family willing to take care of both Milena and her baby was found, and Milena and the baby stayed with them for five months. Fostering is a very new practice in Bulgaria, and it had been particularly difficult to reach this outcome. During this period no legal proceedings against Milena's mother and brother were undertaken by the Prosecution because there was not enough evidence to start a court case for trafficking. In the spring of 2004 a court procedure for denial of parental rights on the basis of child neglect commenced, rather than for trafficking in children.

The foster family found the situation very difficult because Milena had suffered severe psychological trauma and was behaving in a very self-destructive way. She telephoned the traffickers in the Netherlands from the foster parents' house and told many people her new address even though there was a strong possibility that her family was looking for her. Also, because her relatives had not been charged with trafficking, the police were not able to grant Milena, the baby or the foster family special protection.

In the early summer of 2004 Milena's brother (who was involved in selling her in the Netherlands) and other relatives went looking for her at the home for children deprived of parental care. As many children from the home knew the address of Milena's foster family it was dangerous for her to stay there any longer. She and her baby were immediately transferred to a safe place while the multidisciplinary team of experts from the Animus Association and the State Agency for Child Protection met to discuss her and the baby's safety and protection. They decided that Milena and her baby would be accommodated in the country at a shelter for single mothers, run by an NGO working on the prevention of child

abandonment. Milena could stay there for up to six months, and receive social support from the shelter staff.

At first this seemed like the best possible solution, despite the short period of stay in the shelter (as there was a chance that it could be prolonged). But Milena proved incapable taking proper care for her baby outside the structure of the foster family. She was not only a minor, but she was deeply traumatized as well and despite her sincere intention to become a "good mother" her behaviour was inconsistent and unreliable. She would forget to feed the baby or change her nappies and she would often leave her alone and go out to meet friends. Also Milena's behaviour gradually became promiscuous and she tended to fall into abusive relationships. As the shelter staff was not trained to work with survivors of trafficking, it was very difficult for them to cope with this situation and be assertive about the shelter rules and Milena's daily chores.

The baby became ill and was taken to a hospital, where doctors found that the illness was due to Milena's neglect of the baby's basic needs. Worse still, soon after they were hospitalized Milena escaped from the hospital taking the baby with her. The local police found her the following day at the apartment of a Roma man known for his previous criminal activity. These events were the main reasons for the hospital administration and the local Department for Child Protection to demand that Milena be denied her parental rights as her behaviour puts the baby's health and wellbeing in danger.

Currently Milena and her baby are still staying at the shelter. No satisfactory solution for permanent accommodation and comprehensive care for her and her baby has been found so far.



Photo: Pauke van den Heuvel

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Chapter 2 • The Trafficking Situation

The Trafficking Situation

2.1 Laws and policies: national and international legislation regarding trafficking in human beings

International legislation

On the international level, one treaty stood out as being important in each of the countries included in the research: the United Nations "Palermo Protocol" (2000). The Palermo Protocol¹ is aimed at combating trafficking in persons, by adopting measures to prevent trafficking, to punish the traffickers, and to protect the victims (UN, 2000). All countries in this study have signed it, except for Nepal. Four out of nine signatories have also ratified the protocol (Albania, Romania, Bulgaria and Belarus) or are likely to do so in late 2004 (the Netherlands). Although NGOs are to some extent critical of the Protocol, it is appreciated that prior to ratification, national legislation regarding traffic in human beings should in most countries be amended according to the requirements of the Protocol. For example, at the time of writing in several countries only trafficking for prostitution is penalized. Upon ratification of the Protocol, other forms of forced labour should be included in the national legislation.

On the European level, the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Nice 2000) calls for prohibition of slavery and forced labour. In the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union (Maastricht 1992) measures have already been called upon to prevent and combat trafficking in human beings.

In 2002 the Council of the European Union agreed on a 'Framework Decision on Combating Trafficking in Human Beings'. The Decision, which came into effect in August 2002, obliges EU Member States to ensure that trafficking in human beings is included in the penal code, following the definition of the Palermo Protocol.

Furthermore, the EU Member States had to amend their national legislation on several issues before July 2003 in accordance with the Council's 'Directive on the Short-Term Residence Permit issued to Victims of Action to Facilitate Illegal Migration or Trafficking in Human Beings who cooperate with the Competent Authorities'. This Proposal deals with minimum requirements regarding the issuing of residence permits for victims of trafficking who cooperate with the police. The main elements are a 30-day reflection period during which the woman is given the opportunity to decide whether or not to press charges, and a six-month temporary residence permit upon pressing charges, which is renewable every six months. During this time, the witness should be granted access to health care, shelter, free legal aid, free interpretation and translation services, social welfare if the victim is without funds, and access to vocational training, education, and work.

Very recently, in October 2004, the Experts Group of the European Union Commission on Trafficking in Human Beings published its recommendations to the European Commission in a draft report which will be finalised at the beginning of November 2004². Concerning safe return and social inclusion, the Experts Group recommends that "Member States should establish appropriate return procedures with due regard to the privacy, safety, dignity and health of the trafficked person. These procedures should be laid down in Protocols for the return of trafficked persons and should apply to all involved agencies. Such protocols/procedures should at least address the following issues: the prompt return of the person on her/his wish; information to the trafficked person; risks assessments regarding the safety of the trafficked person during and after return; confidentiality of any information relating to the person being trafficked; guarantees that no reference to the status of the person as being trafficked is made in any document related to her/his return (such as stamps in passports); the arrangement of proper identity documents; arrangement for basic necessities during travel."

The Group also recommends that "Member States should in co-operation with countries of origin and in close partnership with local NGOs develop voluntary and safe return programmes in countries of origin to ensure that trafficked persons who return to their home country have access to long term assistance and support in order to secure their safety and well-being, to enable them to find viable means of existence, to prevent re-victimization and reduce the risk of re-trafficking. NGOs providing these services should be adequately financed and co-operation between NGOs and other civil society organisations in countries of origin, transit and destination should be encouraged and facilitated." It goes on to say that "Return and long term assistance programmes should aim at the empowerment of the trafficked person. The needs, views and concerns of the trafficked person should be at the centre."

The Experts Group is not a formal body within the European Union, but consists of experts on the issue of trafficking who are divided among five categories, these being Member States, Accession States, NGOs, intergovernmental organizations and international organizations. The European Commission is likely to react on the report at the beginning of 2005; aspects that will be accepted will not be known until then.

National legislation

In all countries national law exists on trafficking in human beings. In Moldova, this legislation exists in draft form. In general, legislation is incorporated into the Penal Codes, in which trafficking and forced or bonded labour are prohibited (the Netherlands, Albania, Romania, Bulgaria, India and Cambodia).

At the ICCO Partner Consultation in February 2004 it was mentioned that, although women make up the majority of victims, trafficking concerns male victims as well. In line with this observation, legislation in the Netherlands and Bulgaria, as well as the draft law of Moldova state that trafficking may concern both men and women. In India and Thailand, the focus on trafficking concerns women only.

In three countries, Romania, Bulgaria and India, trafficking addresses not only prostitution, but also slavery in other forms of labour. In the Netherlands and Moldova, a forthcoming law will integrate other forms of labour to the definition of trafficking in compliance with the Palermo Protocol.

In Moldova, Bulgaria and India, the laws on trafficking address aspects of safe return and social inclusion. In Nepal a law on safe return and social inclusion could not be passed, due to dissolution of the Parliament. In the Netherlands, a National Action Plan is being drafted, which is likely to include a provision for safe return and social inclusion. The Moldavian draft law includes a full chapter addressing "social rehabilitation and protection" of victims of trafficking. The Bulgarian law discusses the cooperation of the government with civil society for the purpose of providing support to the victim of trafficking. This support consists of medical and psychological support, legal aid, accommodation, and establishing contact with the family of the victim. The Indian law deals with the rescue of the victim of trafficking from the coercive situation, and with accommodation of this person afterwards. The Indian government is presently reviewing the law, to make it more sensitive to victims and penalties on traffickers more severe.

In some countries without legislation specifically referring to safe return and social inclusion, NGOs mention other provisions that have been made to deal with the subject. In the Netherlands, the main item is the B9 Circular in which a temporary residence permit is provided for victims of trafficking who press charges, preceded by a three months reflection period. If the woman presses charges, for the duration of the trial she is entitled to accommodation, medical and legal aid, and psychological help. Moreover, B9 describes the co-operation between the police and the Dutch NGO and goes into some detail regarding return of victims to the country of origin (e.g. establishment of contact with an NGO in the country of origin, issuing of legal travel documents, and prohibition of a stamp in the passport relating to the trafficking situation). In Thailand, the victim of trafficking can use the law on witness protection. This law may be used when offences are of sexual nature, or when the victim is without protection.

A National Action Plan on Traffic in Human Beings exists in all countries, and is presently being drafted in Bulgaria and the Netherlands. In all countries, this policy document arranges the facilitation of return of victims, reception, and further support for them, mostly up to

social inclusion into family or society. National Rapporteurs, who monitor the implementation of policies, are appointed in the Netherlands and Nepal.

Working within national and international legislation

When working within the context of national and international legislation, all NGOs agree that changes to this legislation must be made. This does not mean that all NGOs (participating in this research) are simply negative about the existing legislation, but that they are all lobbying for changes to the laws or advocating that new ones are passed.

Half of the participating NGOs mention their support for aspects of the legislation. STV in the Netherlands and Useful for Albanian women expressed their satisfaction with the laws on punishment of traffickers. The Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania as well as STV in the Netherlands share their appreciation of national regulations on support and protection of victims. The Ecumenical Association values that its government is willing to provide physical, legal and social support. However, the relatively new law in Romania has only come into effect with regard to prevention measures, rather than with social assistance to victims. The Cambodian Women and Development Agency and STV in the Netherlands also mention the beneficial effects of decriminalisation of prostitution for ending discrimination against women who work in the sex industry.

All NGOs mention changes or additions to legislation that they would like to see. To be mentioned firstly is the entering into effect of legislation. In Bulgaria for instance a law on safe return and social inclusion exists which could have a positive influence on the every day practice of their organisation. However, as the law exists on paper only, its potential benefits cannot yet be appreciated. Four other countries, Albania, Romania, Nepal, and again the Netherlands, mention that potentially beneficial legislation is not properly in effect, or not in effect at all.

Regarding punishment of traffickers, five countries (India, Nepal, Thailand, Moldova and the Netherlands) argue that provisions should be clearer and prosecution of traffickers should receive higher priority from law enforcement agencies.

Concerning support for the victims of trafficking, the general consensus is that there should be an increase in services provided. The Eastern European countries have been especially vocal about this, as has the Dutch NGO. According to STV and the Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania, both the number of shelters and the duration of stay should be increased. The NGOs in Moldova, Bulgaria and Thailand argue that the state should take on a larger role in providing services such as legal documentation, and financial means to enhance the independence of the victim.

¹The full name of the Palermo Protocol is: 'Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime'.

²Draft Report of the Experts Group of the European Union Commission on Trafficking in Human Beings, Experts Group of the EU Commission on Trafficking in Human Beings, October 2004, page 77-79 and 186-190

Five NGOs (India, Thailand, Cambodia, the Netherlands, and Albania) agree that improvements should be made in the area of victim protection, both during trial and in general. As a witness, the victim should be protected and her privacy should be guaranteed. Without protection the women are often afraid for their lives or the lives of their relatives. Furthermore, the victim should not 'return' unless return is safe, hence a proper risk assessment should be made.

Last, but certainly not least, some countries lack a clear definition on the relationship between the government and the civil society. When a case of trafficking occurs, it is still not clear which steps should be taken, by whom (governmental or non-governmental organisation) and within what timeframe. Bulgaria, Moldova and India would like to see clear state standards for dealing with trafficking. These standards should be differentiated for women and children; at the moment this is not the case in India where women are infantilised according to the Indian NGO Jagori.

2.2 Pre-trafficking situation

Quantitative data

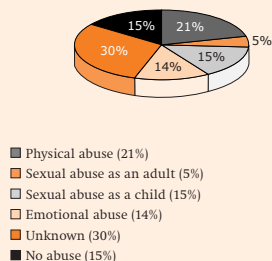
Most of the women involved in the research (51%) were young adults between eighteen and 25 years of age, but a significant number (34%) were minors, some aged 16 or 17 (19%), and some even younger than that (15%). The remaining 15% of the women were older than 25 years of age. The number of underage clients is highest in Asia where all Nepalese and all but one of the Indian cases were younger than eighteen when they were trafficked. The youngest girls, from Nepal and India were sometimes not even twelve years old when they were trafficked. Kavita Sherpa from Nepal, who is described in one of the case studies, was trafficked well before puberty, first as a domestic servant, and later into a brothel. Sabina Khatoon, a Bangladeshi Muslim girl, was forced into prostitution in India by her brother at the age of twelve. Within Central and Eastern Europe also, there is a tendency towards younger clients. In Albania, eleven out of twenty were between sixteen and seventeen years old. In Bulgaria, a case was reported of a fourteen year old girl who was seven months pregnant when she returned to Bulgaria (you can read about 'Milena' in the second case study). It was only among the case studies provided by the Dutch, Cambodian and Thai NGOs, that there were no underage clients. This does not imply that the latter NGOs have no underage clients, but they were not included in this research.

Half of the total number of women came from villages. In Asia this amounted to more than 75% and in Central and Eastern Europe almost 40%. Almost all (80%) lived in some kind of family structure, with their parents, a single parent or grandparents. No more than eighteen women (12%) lived alone prior to being trafficked. Most women (69%) had never been married and did not have any children. Still, 34 women (22%) did have children, usually just one under the age of six.

There is a difference in education level between the Asian and Central and Eastern European women. Only 11% of the Eastern European women had hardly any education (less than five years in school), as opposed to half of the Asian women. The same difference shows at the level of secondary school and vocational training: 39% of the Central and Eastern European women were educated on this level, compared to only 21% of the Asian women. Six Eastern European women had been educated to university level, compared to none of the Asian women.

The majority of women (82%) did not have any profession or their professional skills were described as leading to a 'lower income'. Only eight women enjoyed a higher income prior to trafficking, all from Central and Eastern Europe. Not surprisingly, 59% of the women were unemployed, whereas 38 (27%) women did have a job. In the remaining 14%, this was unknown.

Violence prior to trafficking



When asked whether the women had suffered violence prior to the trafficking situation, in 60 cases (41%) physical or sexual abuse is described. If emotional abuse is also included, this number rises to 81 cases or 55%. 22 Women (15%) reported that they were sexually abused as children. In a high number of cases (46 cases or 30%) it is unknown whether violence took place. Also, in many cases there is multiple violence; physical and emotional violence often go hand in hand and a number of women who suffered abuse as children were also abused as adults. For statistical reasons, in the graph only one category of violence – the most serious – is counted for every woman. Sexual abuse as a child is considered the most serious category, followed by sexual abuse as an adult, physical abuse and finally emotional abuse. If a woman was for example abused as a child and later on physically harassed as an adult, only the child abuse has been mentioned. The difference between the women from Central and Eastern Europe and Asia is worth noting. The Eastern European women were almost twice as likely to have been abused before being trafficked than the Asian women: 65 women (61%) as opposed to sixteen Asian women (37%).

Analysis

When looking at the above information, several things require further comment. First of all, the number of underage clients is alarming. The percentage of underage girls is highest in Asia, but partner organizations from Central and Eastern Europe report that they are also confronted with an increasing number of young or very young girls. The Animus Association in Bulgaria, for example, reports that in 2004 no less than 48% of the Bulgarian identified victims were minors.* For Asia, the high percentage may partly be explained by the fact that the Indian NGO, Sanlaap, concentrates in most of its activities on underage girls, but this does not count for the Nepalese NGO WOREC and the Albanian NGO Useful for Albanian Women, both of which also deal with young and very young girls.

The high percentage of violence prior to the trafficking situation is equally disturbing, but corresponds with what NGOs report from daily practice. The Animus Association in Bulgaria argues that different forms of violence are interrelated and that prevention of trafficking starts with prevention of violence in general; it also reflects a patriarchal society, in which abuse against women is often sexualized. Given the taboos surrounding incest and domestic violence, the actual incidence of violence might even be higher. This taboo might also explain why there is such a difference between the Central and Eastern European women and the Asian women in terms of reporting of abuse.

Comparison of educational levels, professional skills, unemployment and experience of violence prior to the trafficking situation demonstrates that victims of trafficking come from vulnerable backgrounds. This, together with their sometimes very young age, makes them easy prey for traffickers.

2.3 Recruitment

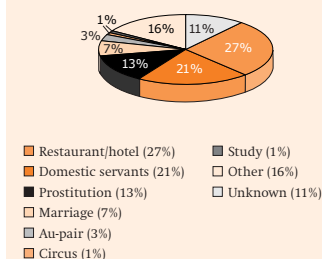
Quantitative data

The majority of women (62%) were recruited through family, friends and acquaintances. Nineteen women (13%) were sold by their own family members, and another 73 women (49%) were lured into being trafficked by friends and acquaintances. There is no big difference between the Asian and Eastern European women. Very few women were recruited through job ads (5%) or marriage (9%, mostly Albanian). Six women (4%) were brutally kidnapped, mostly from Romania. In 20% of the cases it was unknown how recruitment took place or women were recruited by other means. In this latter group, eight Moldavian women were recruited by people they did not know, mostly foreigners. Debt bondage (when the woman is required to pay back money for visa and travel costs, or job mediation) was used in 61% of the cases, although for a considerable group (19%) this aspect is unknown, so the

real figure might be even higher. Only 20% of the women did not encounter debt bondage. The Eastern European women were more often engaged in debt bondage (64%) than the Asian women (53%).

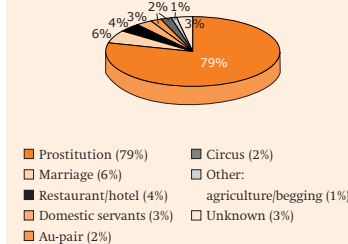
Most women (69%) travelled directly to the country of destination. There were six cases (4%) of internal trafficking, all within India. Many women (40%) crossed the border illegally, 20% did not need a visa and 22% travelled on a tourist visa. Three women from Albania (2%) were given a work visa, and five other Albanian women and a Nepalese girl crossed the borders as brides.

Promises of work



Nineteen women (13%) were promised work in prostitution. These women came mainly from Eastern Europe, with the largest group (7) being from Bulgaria. In India three women were recruited openly for prostitution. Most women were promised work in a hotel (26%), as domestic servants (21%), as an au pair (3%) or they believed they were going to be married (7%). In more than a quarter of cases (28%) the type of work promised was unknown or women were promised something else.

Purpose of trafficking



*According to the report of the Hamburg Institute of International Economics on Trafficking in Women, 2004

The reality was that 79% of women ended up in forced prostitution: 81 out of 107 Eastern European women (76%) and 36 out of 43 Asian women (84%). Other forms of trafficking were comparatively uncommon.

Analysis

The high figure of recruitment through family and friends is shocking but not surprising, since it corresponds with what is known by experts who work in the field. It also explains why it is often so difficult for women to pick up their lives again in their home towns or villages. When you know your traffickers personally and they know you, the fear of reprisal or stigmatisation is very real.

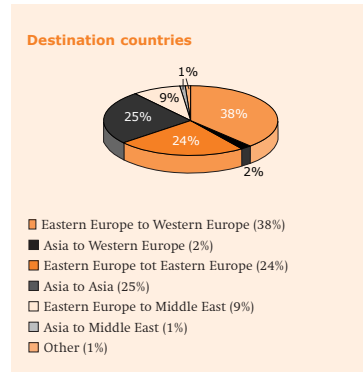
Safe return and social inclusion is further complicated by the high incidence of debt bondage. It is somewhat surprising that it is so common for women from Central and Eastern Europe who are often able to travel by car and are exempt from visa requirements, as compared to women from Asia who require airline travel and a visa to enter Europe

2.4 Trafficking situation

Quantitative data

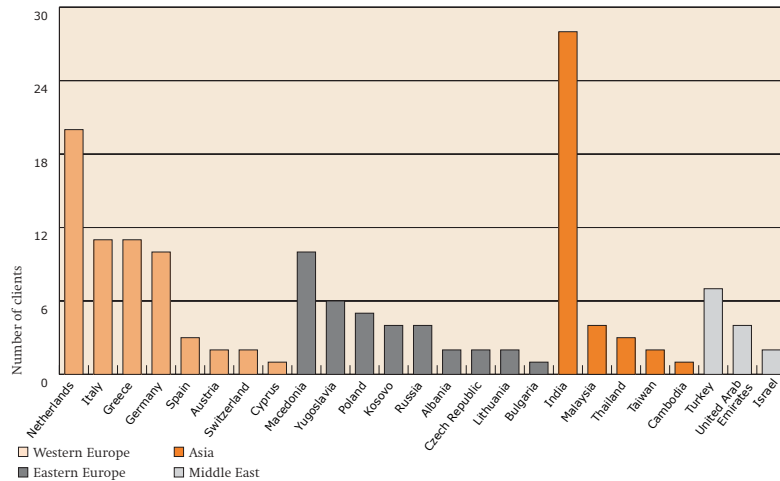
Of all the women described in this inventory, almost half (49%) were trafficked within Central and Eastern Europe or within Asia, and 40% to Western Europe. Another 10%, mostly from Moldova, but also from Belarus and one case from Thailand, were trafficked to the Middle East. Turkey was the most common destination (seven Moldavian cases), followed by the United Arab Emirates (four

Moldavian cases), Israel (two Belarussian cases), and Bahrain (one Thai case). One Thai woman was trafficked to South Africa.



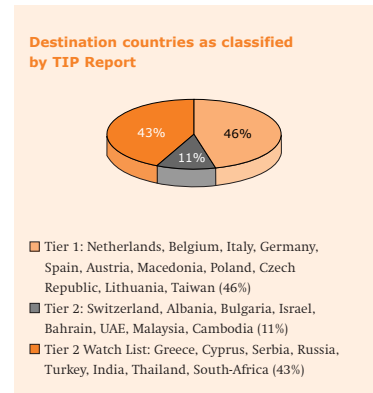
The destination countries for the Eastern European women tended to differ according to the country of origin. Whereas all the Albanian women and most of those from Bulgaria (20 out of 24) were trafficked to Western Europe the picture for the Romanian and Moldavian women is very different. All but one of the Romanian women were trafficked within Central and Eastern Europe. The Moldavian women were trafficked within Central and Eastern Europe (nine cases) or to the Middle East (eleven cases). Five women from Belarus were trafficked within Eastern Europe, seven were sold to Western Europe and the other two to the Middle East (Israel).

Specification of destination countries



In its 2004 volume of the 'Trafficking in Persons Report' (TIP Reports), the United States Department of State divided countries in four tiers, depending on their compliance with the US 'Trafficking Victims Protection Reauthorization Act' of 2003. This Trafficking Act prescribes minimum standards with which countries should comply in fighting trafficking. The Act states that countries should prohibit severe forms of trafficking and punish such acts, and that countries should make serious and sustained efforts to eliminate severe forms of trafficking. Provision of appropriate protection for victims is an important element. If countries fully meet these standards, they are put in Tier 1. If they do not fully meet these standards, but are making significant effort to bring themselves into compliance, they are put in Tier 2. There is also a Tier 2 Watch list that includes countries from Tier 2 where the absolute number of victims of severe forms of trafficking is very significant or is significantly increasing. Countries are also added to the Tier 2 Watch List if they fail to provide evidence of increasing efforts to combat severe forms of trafficking. A last criterion for being included in the Tier 2 Watch List is the determination of a country to commit itself to take additional steps over the next year. Lastly, there is Tier 3 for countries that do not fully comply with the standards and are not making significant efforts to do so.

Taking the TIP Report into consideration, 46% of the clients researched in the inventory were trafficked to Tier 1 countries, and 54% were trafficked to a country on the Tier 2 or Tier 2 Watch List.



Almost half (45%) of the women remained in the trafficking situation for at least six months and some for more than two years. A quarter of women were removed within three months, and a further 23% left the abusive situation between three and six months. Three women (2%) were rescued before they were actually trafficked. In

5% of the cases it was unknown how long the woman had been in the trafficking situation.

During the period of trafficking, most women (55%) remained at their original location, but a considerable number (28%) was moved from town to town or from country to country (11%). More than three quarters of the women (81%) suffered from physical and psychological abuse at the hands of their perpetrators, as well as from restriction of their movements. The majority of women (52%) received threats and 67% lost all their earnings.

Police intervention ended almost half of the trafficking situations (48%), often with the help of NGOs. In 7% of the cases NGOs played the major role in helping women to escape. More than a quarter of the women, 41 in total, managed to escape on their own (24%) or with the help of friends (3%). Customers played an important role in ending 10% of the trafficking situation. In 8% of the cases it was unknown how the women escaped.

Analysis

It is interesting to note that, although Western Europe remains a major destination, a larger amount of trafficking occurs within Central and Eastern Europe and within Asia. Countries of origin are now rapidly becoming countries of destination as well. The majority of the women were trafficked to countries that are on the Tier 2 or Tier 2 Watch List of the TIP Report, meaning that, according to the US government, they do not fully comply with American standards on combating trafficking in human beings and do not offer sufficient protection to the victims.

It is alarming to see that almost half of the women (45%) remained in the trafficking situation for a considerable time, from six months up to more than two years, and that almost all women suffer from abuse.

Interestingly a relatively large number of women escaped by themselves (24%) and in 10% of the cases customers play a role. This might lead to the conclusion that outreach work in brothels and towards customers is of importance, so that women become more aware of their rights and customers become aware of the phenomenon of forced prostitution.

2.5 After escaping the trafficking situation

Quantitative data

Of the 150 women described in this inventory, 99 women (66%) made contact with an NGO after they escaped the trafficking situation, as opposed to 33 women (22%) who did not receive any help in the country of destination. Sixteen women (11%), all from Romania, were given support by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). In two cases (1%) it is unknown whether the women received any help.

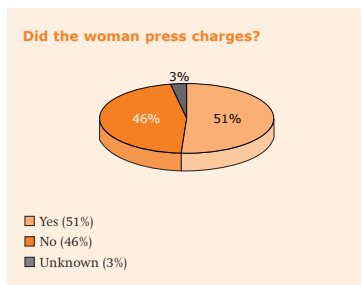
*2004 Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report, United States Department of State, June 2004

After three months, NGOs in the countries of destination were still in contact with 32 women (21%). They lost touch with the other 118 women (79%). In many cases (102 women or 67%) this was because the women returned to their home countries, but some women (16 women or 11%) disappeared from view.

Most of the women were referred to the NGOs by the police (65%), followed by friends, field workers and others (25%) as well as customers (3%). In 7% of cases women initiated contact themselves.

Most women (51%) were initially taken to a shelter after they left the trafficking situation but 44 women (30%), particularly those from Albania, Bulgaria and Cambodia, were imprisoned for various reasons, most of them for a short period of time, but three women remained in prison for longer than three months. Most of these women were accused of trafficking related offences, such as falsification of passports and illegal entry.

Just over half of the women pressed charges against their perpetrators within three months, whereas 46% did not. There are huge differences between the countries. In the Netherlands, eleven out of fourteen women pressed charges within three months. High numbers are also found in Romania (all women pressed charges) when assistance was offered by IOM, and in India, where



seventeen out of twenty women pressed charges within three months. In Thailand, three out of five women pressed charges. On the other hand, none of the Cambodian and Nepalese women pressed charges and in the remaining countries, only a minority pressed charges. Six women made use of a reflection period before deciding whether to press charges or not (4%); three Bulgarian women in the Netherlands and three Albanian women who ended up in Greece. After the reflection period, they decided not to press charges. With the exception of one Indian woman, all women who pressed charges did so within the first three months after escaping the trafficking situation.

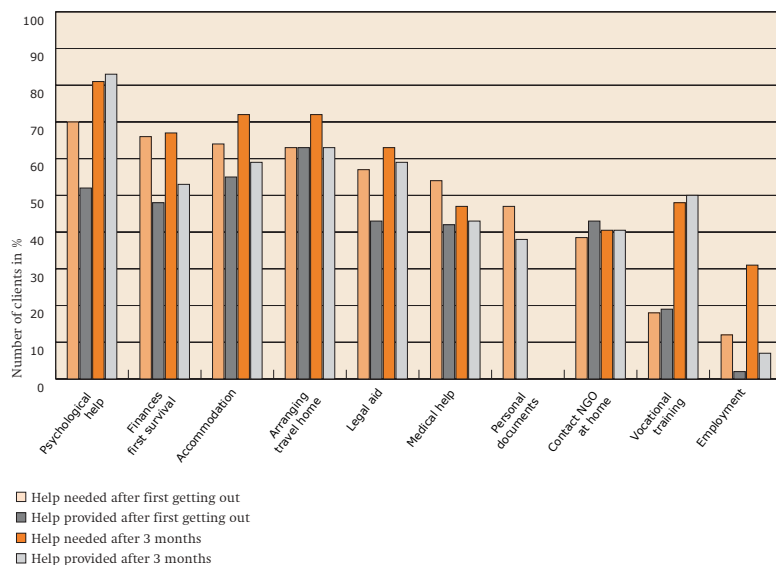
When comparing the support requested by the women with the support actually provided by the NGOs, considerable differences emerge. In almost all respects, NGOs in countries of destination are not able to fully meet the victims' needs, especially in the first three months. During this first period after the woman gets out of the coercive situation, services that are widely recognised as being essential for recovery are largely absent. Women may be offered vocational training, the arrangement of travel back home and the establishment of contact with an NGO in the country of origin, but when it comes to psychological help, finances for first survival, shelter, legal aid, medical help, the issuing of personal documents and the possibilities for employment, NGOs in the countries of destination are seriously limited in what they can offer to survivors of trafficking. For example, only 55% of the women can be admitted to shelters in the first three months, whereas 64% of the women need them. An even bigger gap is between the need of psychological help (69%) and the provision thereof (51%). Employment is only possible for 2% of the women, whereas 12% ask for it. Financial means for first survival can be given to 48% of the women, but was needed by 65%.

Three months after the trafficking situation ends, the situation improves slightly. There is enough psychological help available for the limited number of women who still remain in the country, as well as more appropriate legal and medical aid. Nevertheless, the provision of financial means, shelter and the job opportunities still do not correspond with the needs of the women involved.

IOM also concentrates on women who press charges, since all Romanian women who pressed charges were first sheltered by IOM. Furthermore, information from the Animus Association indicates that in Bulgaria women are only admitted to long-term shelter if they press charges or at least file a report with the police.

The lack of services provided to survivors of trafficking may partly be due to the fact that only 60 women (38%) involved in the research were trafficked to Western Europe, where at least some countries have arranged social assistance for victims. Half of them were trafficked to Italy (11 cases) or the Netherlands (20 cases) who have official policies to protect victims of trafficking, the other half were trafficked to Western European countries without such policies. A larger group was trafficked within Central and Eastern Europe or within Asia (44%) to countries with a very low standard of living. These countries often cannot adequately provide for their own citizens and as a result often totally exclude foreign citizens, including victims of trafficking. Also, a small group (8%) was sold to the Middle East, where NGOs are not well represented. Another explanation for the lack of services may be that 54% of the women were trafficked to Tier 2 or Tier 2 Watch List countries that, according to the American government, offer insufficient protection and assistance to victims of trafficking.

Support needed and provided



Analysis

The percentage of women (66%) who make contact with NGOs after they leave the coercive situation may seem high, but one should take into consideration that according to Dutch figures it is estimated that of all women who become victims of trafficking, only 10% receive any help¹⁰. In other words: the women in this research represent only the 'tip of the iceberg'.

The high percentage of women who are imprisoned (30%) is alarming particularly as the majority of women are imprisoned in Western Europe, despite anti-trafficking policies in Italy, the Netherlands and parts of Germany. In most countries, the period of imprisonment is less than a week and could be explained by the lack of appropriate shelter, but in the Netherlands and in Germany five women were held longer than that.

The high incidence of pressing charges may be explained by the fact that most women were referred to NGOs by the police. The police often only refer those women who press charges, because they rely on the NGOs to provide shelter for the women. Moreover, Western European NGOs such as STV are very limited in what they can do for victims who do not press charges, since this latter category will be considered as illegal immigrants and expelled. Apparently

¹⁰ Trafficking in Human Beings. First report of the Dutch National Rapporteur, Bureau NRM, The Hague, 2002

Kavita

From Nepal to India

Kavita Sherpa is now aged 19, and is a survivor of trafficking. She is a citizen of Nepal and comes from Kharentar, a small village district situated north of Kathmandu, in an area that is widely recognised as being prone to trafficking. Kavita comes from a poor family and lost her father at a very young age. She then lived with her mother and three other siblings until her mother remarried under pressure from her in-laws. Kavita's stepfather was very abusive as well as being an alcoholic and unemployed. The family's poverty meant that Kavita could not attend schools, and instead she helped her mother at home and later worked as a domestic servant in Kathmandu.

Kavita said she was not very happy working in Kathmandu, and when an acquaintance from another village approached her with an offer of better, well-paid work in India as a domestic servant she agreed immediately. Later, she explained the reason for her decision: 'I left home because I could not stand to see the poverty in our family. My stepfather was very abusive both to my mother and me. So for a better livelihood, I left for India.'

At the time, Kavita was very young (having not even reached puberty), but headed for India despite not knowing her destination city. As movement of Nepali citizens to India is open, there was no trouble crossing the border. Initially, Kavita worked as a domestic servant in Chaklabazar before moving on to similar work in Sonagachi, Calcutta (Kolkata).

Later, two men took her from Calcutta to Mumbai with promises that they would take her back home to Nepal. However, they sold her to one of the brothels in Mumbai for 30,000 rupees (around 530 Euro). From there she was sold on by the owner to a brothel in Bhandup, one of the red-light districts in Mumbai. Kavita stayed in Mumbai for around five years during which time her mobility was restricted. Whenever she wanted to visit the city, she was escorted. After a while, she accepted that she had to work as a sex worker and tried to save some money. She was not allowed to keep the money with her but had to give it to the brothel owner to hold for her. Kavita said that after she had been at the brothel for some time, she was not physically forced to work, however when she did refuse to continue the owners would persuade her to take on the work for an eventual better livelihood.

Some time later, Kavita was arrested during a police raid on the district. This was the second time that she had faced the police during raids in brothels. After the first

raid the brothel keeper had bribed the police and Kavita was taken back. This time she was referred to the Kasturba Observation Home, a local-government run shelter. Kavita later related that she felt very bad when she had to face the police and wondered how she would "show her face" to other people, particularly those in her local community in Nepal if it became known that she had been caught working as a prostitute in India, although it was against her will.

While she was at the shelter, the person responsible for Kavita made considerable effort to send her back home. During her stay, Kavita was approached by her mother, who claimed that she had come all the way to Mumbai to take her daughter back home. An investigation concluded that although the woman actually was Kavita's mother, she had been sent by the brothel keeper to remove Kavita from the shelter home, and take her back to the brothel in Bhandup. The person in charge of the Kasturba Observation Home ensured that Kavita was taken good care of. She was provided with accommodation, supported in deciding whether to press charges against the brothel keeper or not, and given psychological support. Efforts were made to put Kavita into contact with NGOs back in Nepal for her repatriation, and through these she established contact with the Women's Rehabilitation Centre of Nepal (WOREC) and was provided with some vocational training.

After meeting Kavita, the WOREC team assured her that she would be repatriated. Repatriation was not an easy task however as Kavita had no legal identification documents and these had to be prepared. She stayed in the Indian shelter for around three to six months, during which time a risk assessment took place. Kavita was not to return home by road, as there was a high chance that she could have been re-trafficked. She returned safely to Kathmandu by air.

When Kavita was back in Nepal she was sent to a shelter home run by WOREC. Kavita really wanted to be back with her family and make her own living, but there was a chance that she could be re-trafficked if she was sent back home. WOREC responded to Kavita's situation and needs and decided that she should undertake intensive counselling. This taught Kavita about the concept of trafficking and how it takes place, and if such circumstances were to occur again, how she could manage the whole situation and prevent being re-trafficked. It was clarified that although she was free to go back home and stay with her mother, this would not mean that her contact with the organization would be closed. She would always be welcomed by WOREC ever she felt her environment unsafe. Kavita was sent back home,

accompanied by one of the staff of WOREC. Police involvement in the process of reuniting Kavita with her family was not desired due to fear of being stigmatized and discriminated against in the community.

As Kavita had been given the option of returning home when she preferred, close follow-ups on her progress at home were made by WOREC to ensure that she was neither stigmatized nor re-victimized. After some months, she came back to WOREC, as she wanted to have some vocational training through which she could make her own living and take care of her mother as well. Kavita is now employed full time in a catering service. She has been living with WOREC for the past year, as it is felt that Kavita needs support because of the chance that she may be re-trafficked from her village near Kathmandu. Ongoing support and counselling are provided to develop her confidence. Kavita makes frequent visits to her family and friends, mainly during the festivals.



Photo: Pauke van den Heuvel

3

Chapter 3 • **Safe Return and Social Inclusion**

Safe Return and Social Inclusion

3.1 Return

Policies and laws: identification of victims

The efforts of NGOs for safe return and social inclusion are dependent on the identification of victims. The police free most women from the coercive situation and then often act as the intermediary between the victim and the support organisation. For this reason the participating NGOs were asked what criteria are commonly used by the police to identify victims of trafficking.

In India the police are active in the field of identification. They raid brothels and red light districts where they look for minors. At the borders police stop young women and 'suspicious' looking persons, and have recently started to perform arbitrary control checks. In Moldova, the situation is quite different as the police do not work in the field of identification. Occasionally, victims themselves contact the police or the police receive a request from the victim's relatives to find and release her from the place of exploitation. The identification efforts of the police in the other countries lie somewhere in between.

The most common method of identification used by the police in five countries (Romania, Bulgaria, Nepal, India, Thailand and Cambodia), is to look for young women crossing the borders. The police rely mostly on a sense of 'suspiciousness' to identify victims of trafficking, and look for women that seem lost or unsure where they are going. In the Eastern European countries police may regard young women at borders as possible victims of trafficking as well; in these countries however, the possession of legal documents is more important. Lack of proper legal documents, illegally staying in the country of destination, or expulsion from an EU country is taken as an indication that a person may be a victim of trafficking.

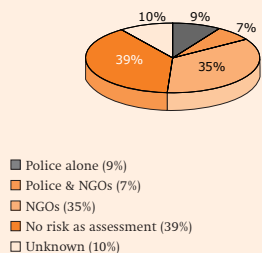
In the Netherlands the Procurators-General have set up guidelines relating to the investigation and prosecution of traffic in human beings. These include a list of indicators

of trafficking such as the person not having paid for the journey herself, not carrying her own travel documents, having to give up the majority of money earned, having to work under all circumstances and for disproportionately long hours, blackmail or threats made to the family in the country of origin, and the threat or use of violence. The Dutch police drew up a supplementary list of indicators after the ban on brothels was lifted, including working under the authority of a third party, earnings that are far below market values, and a combination of other factors like citizenship of a non EU country, marriage to a Dutch citizen, working as a prostitute and/or the lack of accommodation in the Netherlands.

Quantitative data

From the results of the research, it appears that most women (67%) returned to the country of origin within three months after leaving the trafficking situation. Another 11% returns between six and 12 months, leading to a number of 118 women (78%) who have returned within a year. After a year, only 22 women (15%) remained in the country of destination. In ten other cases (7%) NGOs indicated that women had returned, but they could not give the precise moment when.

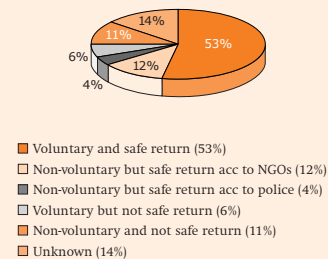
Did a risk assessment take place?



Although some form of risk assessment was implemented in half of the cases (71 women or 51%), the police in the countries of destination were only involved in a small number of cases (23 women or 16%). Risk assessments were implemented by the police in India (six cases), Italy (4 cases), Greece and Germany (both three cases), Poland and Lithuania (both two cases) and Russia, Bulgaria and Turkey (all one case).

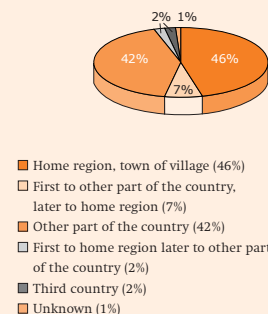
More often, (in 48 cases or 35%) risk assessments were carried out by NGOs with those in Albania, Bulgaria, Moldova and India being actively involved in this. In 53 cases (39%), no risk assessment whatsoever was carried out and in fourteen cases (10%) this aspect remains unknown.

Was return voluntary and considered safe?



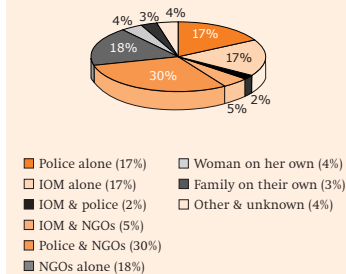
In 73 cases (53%), return was considered safe by the police, the IOM, NGOs and the victims themselves. In the other 65 cases (47%), return was not considered safe (23 cases or 17%), was considered doubtful (23 cases or 17%) or it was unknown whether a risk assessment took place (19 cases or 13%).

Where did the woman return to?



Of those who returned, 97% returned to their home country, whereas only 2% went to a third country. Almost half of them (46%) did not return to their own towns and villages, but settled down in another part of the country or went abroad. The other half of the women returned to the same town, village or region (53%) that they came from originally. Some did so immediately and some after a period of time.

Who were involved in return?



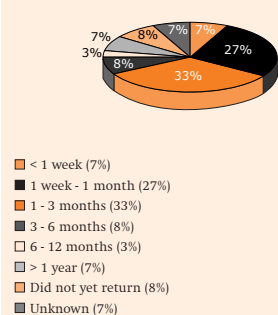
In 36% of the cases, the police and the International Organization for Migration (IOM) did not involve NGOs in the return of victims of trafficking to the country of origin or to a third country. This was mainly the case with clients in the Netherlands, Romania, Moldova and Cambodia. IOM organized the return of all Romanian women without the involvement of NGOs or other parties. NGOs were involved in 53% of the cases, mostly in cooperation with the police or IOM. In Bulgaria, Belarus and Nepal most often women returned directly through NGOs without the involvement of the police or other authorities. In Belarus and Nepal there were cases where a woman organized her own return (4%) or her family took care that she returned home (3%). In 4% of the cases, the path of return was unknown or organized by embassies.

NGOs in the countries of destination assisted women who returned by providing them with different services (see graph on page 30). What is striking here, as before, is the discrepancy between the needs of the women and the services actually provided. The biggest differences are between psychological help requested (59%) and actually provided (43%), making contact with the family back home (asked by 48% of the women, provided in 33% of the cases), the need for finances to cover the cost of basic needs after return (asked by 48% of the women, provided in 36% of the cases) and accommodation before return (asked by 46% of the women, provided to 35% of the women).

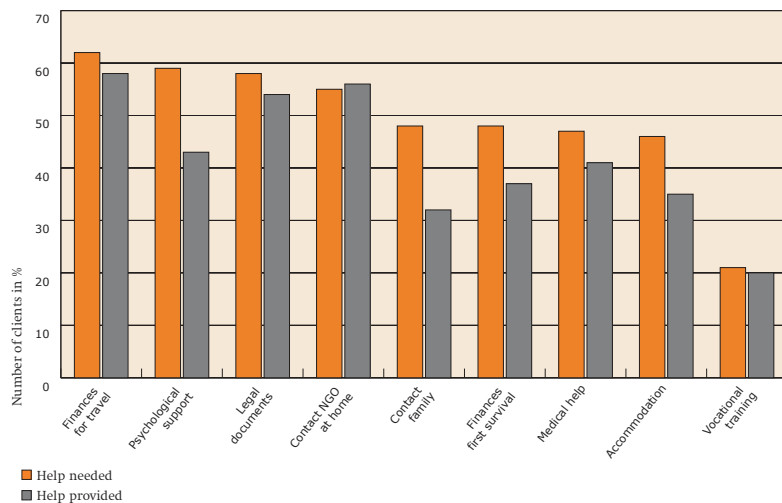
Analysis

Most survivors of trafficking returned within a short period of time. This is a quite remarkable outcome, considering that policy makers often fear that victims of trafficking aim at a long stay in the country of destination, taking advantage of all facilities a country has to offer. It is not so remarkable when one takes into consideration that more than half of the victims described in this survey were trafficked to countries, which, according to the United States government, do not put enough effort into combating trafficking. Most of these countries hardly provide any services to victims of trafficking, which

After how much time did the victim return?



Support needed and provided in preparation of return



almost always prevents a longer stay. Permanent or even temporary residence permits with entitlements to social benefits are a rare exception. This and the poor general economic situation in many of these countries may lead a woman to the conclusion that she is better off in her home country.

Most victims of trafficking intended to migrate temporarily to earn a better living abroad and return with enough money to start a new life in the country of origin. Finding themselves in a trafficking situation, women's dreams of working for a better life are shattered and opportunities to earn money reduced to almost non-existent. Therefore, there is little to keep them in the country of destination. In the light of this the aspect of voluntary return should be considered closely; one may ask how voluntary return really is, if women do not have any other options open to them.

Another explanation for the quick return of the majority of women is that most of them are found by the police in brothels and not identified as victims of trafficking. As a result they are expelled within a very short period of time: 52 women (34%) returned within a month. Furthermore, as is apparent from the identification procedures, or the lack thereof in most countries, identifying victims of trafficking as such is a widespread problem.

The outcomes of the inventory suggest that in half of the cases, return is considered safe, whereas in the other half there is doubt or the circumstances of return are unknown. The percentage of safe return is very high taking into

account what is known about reprisals and violence associated with the trafficking phenomenon. It also seems contradictory to the fact that the majority of the women were trafficked by people they knew. Moreover, it does not correspond with the high figure of women who encounter problems upon arrival in their home countries (an aspect which will be addressed in the next section (3.2)). It may also be a question of definition, meaning that 'safe return' is merely defined as 'lack of mortal danger' to the returning woman. If you look at it from that angle, return could indeed be considered safe. If you take a broader perspective, namely that women should also be able to rebuild their lives in a safe way, it is harder to give a precise answer.

The assumption of a 'safe return' could furthermore be partly explained by the fact that 46% of the women did not return to their home regions. This might be a precaution to avoid contact with the people who trafficked them, as well as a means to reduce the possibility of stigmatisation. Another explanation for the high number of 'safe return' victims may be that the women researched here were the ones who surfaced, the ones who somehow made contact with the police and NGOs. Women who fear reprisal from their traffickers, families or the law may retreat from any contact with the authorities and NGOs. Also, women who return quickly, which applies to the majority of cases as described above, possibly fear fewer reprisals than those who stay longer in the countries of destination and who perhaps play a larger role in the prosecution of the traffickers. In addition, women may feel protected by their contact with the police and NGOs.

In 50% of the cases some form of risk assessment was implemented, but it is alarming that in 39% no investigation whatsoever was carried out before return. Besides, this research does not provide information on the nature, depth and quality of the risk assessments made. In case of a risk assessment carried out by the police, questions remain such as whether or not the police check their files for perpetrators who might take revenge against the victim, and whether or not information is exchanged with embassies abroad. In the case of NGOs carrying out the risk assessment, questions concerning the extent of their means and whether or not they had any information regarding prosecution of the perpetrators need to be asked. It is disappointing that only 7% of the risk assessments are carried out by the police and NGOs together. Besides, neither embassies nor lawyers are involved in any of the cases. The Chief of Police has better access to information concerning the prosecution of perpetrators, and can to a certain extent provide protection to victims. NGOs have more in-depth knowledge about the personal background of women and possible dangers arising from this, whereas lawyers have valuable legal information and embassies have general information regarding the situation in the countries of origin including safety matters at their disposal.

3.2 First three months after return

Policies and laws: social infrastructure for victims of trafficking

In all countries, the NGO sector plays the major role in providing services to victims of trafficking who return to their home countries. Often working in cooperation with each other, NGOs provide psychological help to victims and help establish contacts with family and friends. Medical aid and accommodation are also provided in all countries during the initial stage of return. However, services are limited – a stay in the Crisis Unit of the Animus Association of Bulgaria is limited to three months, as is medical aid from the Foundation for Women in Thailand. Neither Animus nor WOREC in Nepal can provide legal aid upon the arrival of a trafficking victim.

Help with seeking employment and assistance in issuing legal documents also are usually provided on a long-term basis. During the first three months all countries provided financial means to meet victims' basic needs. WOREC in Nepal and the Ecumenical Association in Romania (in cooperation with its partner Adpare) cease to provide financial support after three months. A 'buddy project', which helps to build up the women's social network, exists in the Netherlands, Albania and Cambodia.

The role of governmental institutions in providing support to victims of trafficking is much more limited. The governments of five countries – Albania, Romania, Moldova, India and Thailand – all provide medical, psychological and legal help throughout the first three months after return. Four countries – Albania, Romania, India and Thailand – provide financial support for basic needs,

but only Albania and India offer this service after three months. Accommodation is offered during both phases by Albania, Romania and India, whereas Thailand offers it during the first phase only. Thailand ceases to provide medical help after three months.

Governmental shelters exist in four countries (Albania, Romania, India and Thailand), and are under construction in Bulgaria. In general, their task is to provide temporary shelter combined with social inclusion activities. Each of these homes provides shelter, food, counselling and vocational training. However, as the homes lack space and the conditions are difficult, the differences between shelters and corrective homes are very limited.

It should be noted that, though the quantity of support provided by governmental institutions may appear to be adequate, the quality might not actually be very high. For instance in India, the services are provided in government run shelters where the residents are called 'inmates', as if in prison. The trafficked person is allowed to meet visitors only after they have been scrutinized, and during set hours.

In Moldova, Romania, Bulgaria and Albania the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) plays a role in providing assistance to victims of trafficking. In some cases IOM provides legal documents, establishes contacts with family and provides financial means to meet the basic needs after return. In other cases IOM focuses mainly on provision of vocational training and support for finding employment.

Policies and laws: the role of the police

In all countries, except Nepal, the police have special Anti-Trafficking Units. These Units operate under different names and their tasks and responsibilities differ slightly between countries. All units are responsible for the coordination of the efforts of the other police units involved in combating trafficking, like the border police, the missing persons unit, the unit working against organized crime, and the local police departments. In the Netherlands, the police teams focus on 'Prostitution and Traffic in Human Beings', and are flanked by a special contact person for trafficking in every police force. Furthermore, in the Netherlands the co-operation between the police and STV are regulated by the B9 Circular. In India as well, the police have 'Special Police Officers'. In Thailand exists only one such anti-trafficking Unit, which cooperates with the Crime Suppression Unit.

In Albania, the Netherlands and Bulgaria the police authorities are obliged to make contact with an organisation that can provide support to victims of trafficking, although it does not always occur in practice. In the future, the Bulgarian police will refer victims to government run shelters or licensed shelters like the Animus Association Crisis Unit. At present the police refer victims to Animus more informally, on the basis of agreements with the Border police and the Unit to Combat Organised Crime.

This is in contrast to the Asian countries and Romania where the police do not have this obligation, but nevertheless do contact humanitarian organisations. The Romanian police contact the IOM upon identification of a person as victim of trafficking, but do not get in touch with NGOs. In India, the police summon the victim before court, after which the magistrate usually orders that the victim be placed in a protective home and an NGO be contacted. Moldova is an exception to this rule as the border is protected by militants who do not have a function in criminal prosecution, nor does border control contact a humanitarian organisation. It is planned that the Ministry of the Interior will take on the responsibility of border control in the future.

In Moldova the border police contact the local police in the event that the trafficked person will be prosecuted. In Nepal and Thailand the police contact no party other than NGOs, regardless of whether the trafficked person is to be prosecuted.

In Albania and Bulgaria the police contact the police in the place of residence of the victim. Before doing so, they usually ask for the consent of the victim, unless she is convicted of a crime. This conviction can be for illegal migration or labour, or another criminal offence in the country of destination. In India and Cambodia the police contact the police in the place of residence of a victim without her consent.

Policies and laws: detention and prosecution

In several countries victims of trafficking are detained upon return. In Albania for example victims are regularly detained with women being held for up to a week. In India women may be detained for more than three months, or even indefinitely. In Moldova, when the woman has not committed any other crime, police cannot keep her for more than three hours; those hours are usually used to apply psychological pressure to make the victim testify against her perpetrators. In Nepal the police usually do not detain the trafficked person, but there are cases in which women have been held for up to 24 hours. In all countries, illegal migration or illegal stay is a reason for prosecution. Many women come to destination countries on a tourist visa, but stay after the expiration date. In Albania and Thailand, victims of trafficking may be prosecuted on grounds of falsification of documents. Prostitution or soliciting may lead to prosecution in India and Albania. In Thailand, Nepal and Albania victims of trafficking may even be prosecuted without charges. In Thailand women returning from abroad will not face punishment if they are identified as victims of trafficking. However, identification as a victim often fails and as a result they are often prosecuted for using the false passports that the traffickers arranged for them.

Policies and laws: factors that prevent victims of trafficking to seek help

From the inventory it turned out that in all countries some or more factors exist that prevent victims of trafficking who return home from seeking support.

The main reasons are the fear of stigmatisation, closely followed by fear of prosecution and fear of reprisal by the traffickers. Moreover, NGOs indicate that quite often the offered support does not correspond with the needs of the trafficked person. For instance in Cambodia the victim may need support in the form of employment services, but none of the organisations can provide this. In Thailand, trafficked women would prefer to receive vocational training in heterogeneous groups, instead of in a group of trafficked women only. Moreover, vocational training is often provided far from the local communities and the women do not have much choice in what they are trained in. In Nepal not all organisations offer the same services, and some offer these services on short-term basis only, while others provide them only on the long term.

Another reason for victims not seeking support is the need to report to the police in order to do so. In Bulgaria obtaining support from the IOM requires prior contact with the police, while in Nepal reporting to the police is perceived of as a mere formality: it should be reported that the victim is within the protection and responsibility of the organisation and then there is no further police involvement.

Two other important factors that impact on women seeking support are the lack of information about what support organizations can do, and lack of trust. The lack of trust has many faces. In Bulgaria it shows itself in the form of distrust of institutions in that the victim may not differentiate between state institutions and NGOs. Furthermore, the victim may not trust that the people in the organisation will understand and believe her. In Moldova victims are afraid that the information is not kept confidential, in which case she could be stigmatized or rejected by her relatives or her community. Moreover, she could get into dangerous situations like being blackmailed by her former recruiters or other criminals. In Thailand, India and Bulgaria victims of trafficking have been confronted with some bad media experiences, in which their names and pictures were made public. Fortunately nowadays this rarely happens, but nevertheless it gave NGOs in general a bad name at the time and the effect has not fully worn off.

Lastly, the participating NGOs in most countries mentioned 'other reasons' than those listed above. In Nepal, for example, restriction of movement prevents trafficked persons from seeking support, while in Thailand the victim does not want to disclose bad experiences because she feels ashamed.

Quantitative data

As mentioned in section 3.1, return was considered safe for between 73 and 96 of the 138 women who came back to the country of origin. Nevertheless, 96 out of 138 women (70%) faced one or more problems when they re-entered their home country. Questioning by the police and detention were the main issues.

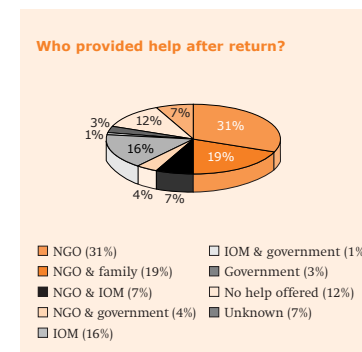
Sixteen women were detained, although only for a short period of time. Twenty women were prosecuted.

One woman (a Bulgarian) was prosecuted for two offences, illegal migration and falsification of documents. Most of the women who were detained or prosecuted had been returned to Albania (ten cases of detention, twelve cases of prosecution).

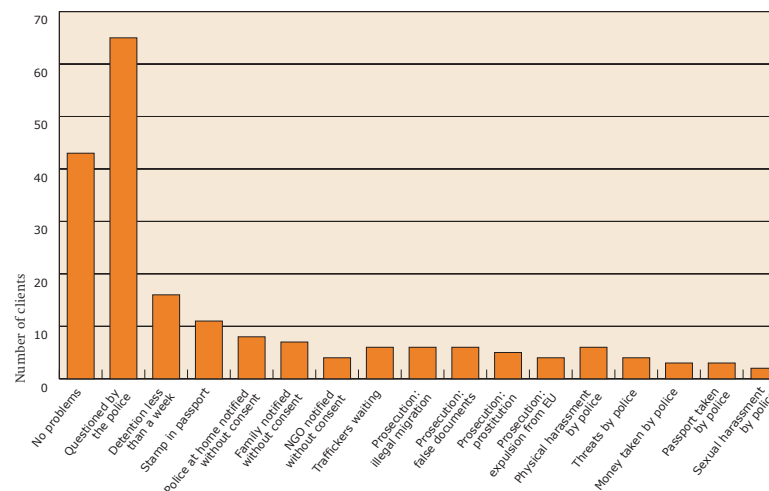
Twelve women were harassed by the police upon arrival in the country of origin. Half of these were returnees to Albania and were physically abused and in two cases sexually assaulted as well. Five women who returned to Moldova were threatened by the police (three cases) and lost their money to the police (two other cases). One of these Moldavian women was returned to Moldova via the Ukrainian maritime port in Odessa. She was questioned and then had to pay money for her 'release' to the Ukrainian border police. A Cambodian woman was threatened by the police and was robbed of her money as well.

In six cases traffickers were waiting for the women to return. Two Albanian women were very unlucky. Not only did their traffickers meet them, but they were also prosecuted and physically abused by the police (and one of them also sexually). In four other cases, traffickers were waiting for Belarussian women.

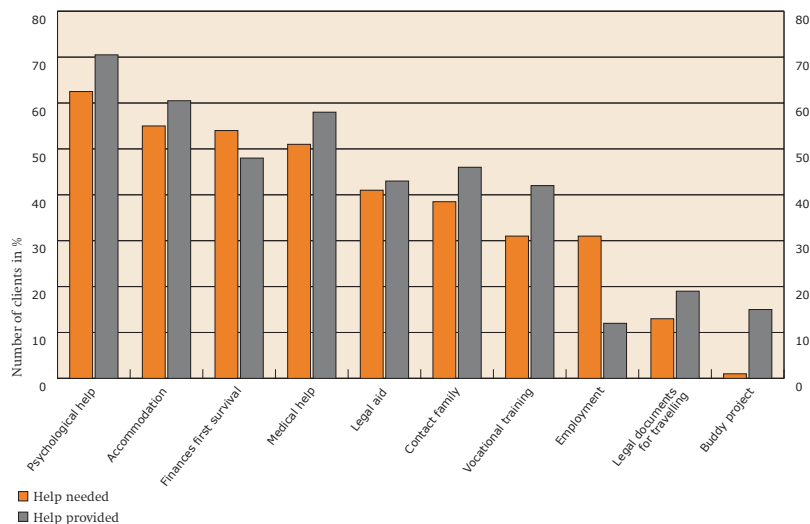
In three cases, in Albania, Moldova and Cambodia, the police confiscated the woman's passport. In the cases of seventeen women, the police contacted the police in the home region of the woman, her family or an NGO without her consent. In seven cases the family was approached, even though two of these women were trafficked by this same family. Two of them were also confronted with the police of their home towns and villages because these had been notified by their colleagues at the entry port. This happened to eight other women as well. In four cases, NGOs were informed about women without consent.



Problems upon arrival in country of origin



Support needed and provided upon arrival



Support upon arrival in the home country was offered by NGOs in 61% of the cases, most of them providing help from the moment the woman returned to her home country. In Thailand, the five returning women did not receive any help at all upon arrival, but were contacted shortly afterwards. In Romania, initial support was offered by IOM. In Moldova half of the cases were dealt with by NGOs alone, while the other half was done in cooperation with IOM. Close cooperation with the family was common practice in India and Albania and occurred quite often in Albania and Bulgaria. Government support was offered in India, Belarus, Bulgaria and Cambodia.

The contact between the NGOs and their clients most often lasted the whole period of first return (64%). In 10% of the cases contact with clients was ended within a week and another 17% of the women received short-term help, which did not last longer than one month. In 9% no quantitative data were available on this issue. Almost half of the contact (48%) was intensive in nature, where the woman met with the NGO several times a week. In a quarter of the cases, the frequency was slightly less intensive, with an average of once a week up to once a month. With the remaining 18% of the women contact was more sporadic or unknown (9%).

In all countries, there is a wide range of services provided by NGOs to survivors of trafficking. In the first three months after return, their services match the needs of the women in most cases. In almost all cases women receive more services than they originally asked for, with the exception of the need for employment and finances for the first basic needs. This is a different situation from the

one in the countries of destination, where in most cases NGOs were not able to meet the victims' needs.

Analysis

Apparently 'safe return' is relative, since 70% of the women encounter problems upon arrival in their home country.

A positive sign is that the police hardly ever contacted other parties, such as the family, police in the hometown region or an NGO without the woman's consent. Harassment by the police is also not widespread with the exception of Albania and Moldova. In Nepal and Belarus, where most women returned without the involvement of the police, nothing can be said about police behaviour.

It is notable that governmental institutions are hardly ever involved in support upon arrival (8% of the cases). This does not correspond with the efforts some countries (for example in Bulgaria, Romania and Moldova) make to provide social assistance to victims of trafficking. In Romania and Moldova it appears that governments leave it up to the IOM to take their place.

As is the case in the countries of destination, the lack of financial means for the first basic needs and the absence of employment opportunities remain the biggest problems women encounter upon return.

At first glance, the fact that NGOs in the countries of origin are able to meet the needs of the women in most cases is remarkable as the same NGOs indicated a lack of means to do so. Also in comparison to the services offered

in the countries of destination, NGOs in the countries of origin show a more favourable picture. A few remarks should be made on this topic. First, also in the countries of origin the most crucial needs such as finances for first survival and sustainable employment are not met sufficiently. Secondly, as indicated in the Introduction, one of the selection criteria for the cases was that they should provide insight into the best practices of NGOs. The objective of this survey is not to demonstrate the lack of means and funding of the participating NGOs, but to give insight into what happens to survivors of trafficking. Thirdly, another criterion for selection was the availability of information on each case. As a result, cases for which enough information was available and which show best practices of the NGOs concerned are also often the cases in which a number of services were provided. This does not mean that NGOs were able to provide these services to all of their clients. Neither does it give insight into the number of clients that had to be turned down due to lack of capacity of the NGOs. The Animus Association in Bulgaria, for example, observes that the majority of their clients are women who are only in touch with the NGO for a couple of days before they move on, therefore it is very hard to provide long term support for victims of trafficking. These experiences are largely confirmed by the other NGOs involved in this research.

Another explanation can be found in how survivors of trafficking who come into contact with NGOs perceived their own needs. Upon return most women are not able to formulate a comprehensive range of needs when their basic needs have not even been met. Only after physical safety, clothes, accommodation, food and finances for the

first basic needs are secured, can other needs such as the need for vocational training, medical help, legal aid and employment be expressed. Finally, many women are not aware of the services NGOs can provide.

3.3 Long term assistance (more than three months after return)

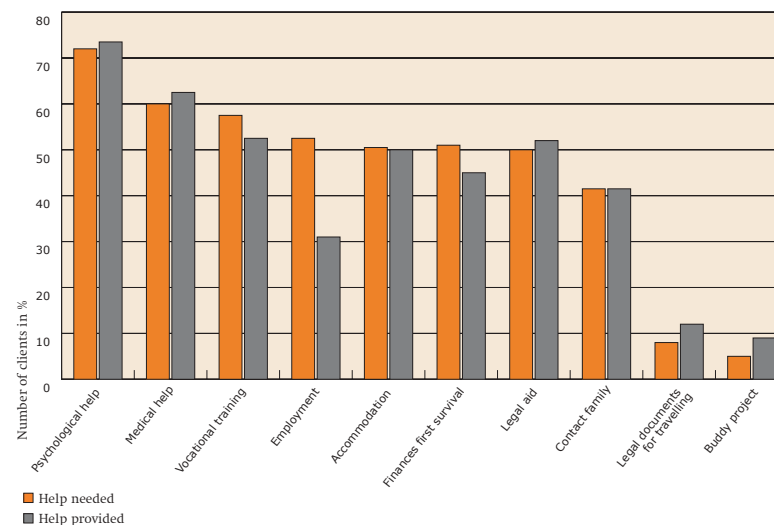
Quantitative data

Three months after the women had returned to their home countries, 86 out of 138 (62%) were still in contact with the NGOs with Asian women staying in touch longer than those from Central and Eastern Europe. Whereas 56 out of 107 (52%) Central and Eastern European women stayed in touch, in Asia 30 out of 43 women (70%) did not lose contact with the NGOs.

In 27% of all cases, contact lasted for between three and six months, whereas in 45 cases (52%) the woman remained in touch with the NGO for up to a year. In fourteen cases (16%) contact was maintained for over a year. In 4% of the cases there were no quantitative data available.

According to this research, most of the contact between women and NGOs was long-term. The frequency of long-term contact tended to be similar to that of contact sustained during the first three months. Intensive contact (several times a week) was maintained by 37% of women, and moderate (between once a week and once a month) by 28%.

Long term support needed and provided



The balance between services required and services provided shows the same picture as in the first three months after return. Most of the need for services is met by the NGOs, with the exception of the need for financial means for basic survival, employment and vocational training.

When asked about the nature of the relationship with family and friends, 37 women (43%) said that contact had been re-established and she is satisfied with the nature of the relationship. In 21% of cases the relationship is re-established, but the women suffered from stigmatisation. In 36% of the cases (31 women), there was no contact with family and friends or not anymore. Of these women, twelve tried initially to rebuild the relationship, but it later disintegrated.

There is a difference between the Asian and the Eastern European women regarding the re-establishment of the relationship with their family and friends. Of the Asian women 50% were satisfied with this relationship as opposed to 39% of women from Central and Eastern Europe. The Asian women on the other hand suffered more from stigmatisation after reunion with their family and friends than women from Central and Eastern Europe: 27% compared to 18%. Finally, over twice as many Eastern European women (43%) broke off contact with their family and friends in comparison to Asian women (20%).

More than three months after return, 43% of the women were involved in some kind of vocational training, but 47% were not. Finding employment was still difficult; only 40% of the women had found jobs whereas 50% remained unemployed (data lack on 10% of the cases). Strikingly, more Asian than Eastern European women found employment (57% as opposed to 30%).

In most cases, contact with the NGO ends over time. Out of 138 women, it is known that 87 (64%) picked up their lives again in their own countries. Some of them did so

within their home regions (39 women or 28%), some started a new life elsewhere in the country (41 women or 31%). Seven women (5%) still received intensive guidance from the NGOs at the moment of conclusion of the inventory.

Seven women (5%) migrated again of their own free will. Three women moved to a third country (two from Cambodia and one from India). Seven other women (5%) fell back into the hands of traffickers. In 28 cases (20%) it is unknown what happened after contact ended.

Taking a closer look at those women who were trafficked again, migrated again or about whom it is not known what happened, a few things stand out. The women who were trafficked again came from three countries only: Albania (4 cases), Romania (2 cases) and Moldova (1 case). The first time they were trafficked, three of them were trafficked for marriage; one of them was sold by her family, two by friends or acquaintances and one by a foreigner. After they returned to their home countries, these women did not build up contact with their family and friends, or it is not known whether they did.

The women who migrated again came from Albania (2 cases), Moldova (2 cases) and Romania (3 cases). They had either no contact with family and friends after return or were stigmatised. In only one case the family relationship was described as good.

In 20 of the 28 "unknown" cases, it is not known whether the women resumed relationships with their families and friends. In the remaining eight cases two women maintained happy relationships with their families, whereas the other six did not, or suffered stigmatisation. Four women had been trafficked by their own families and were not in touch with them or suffered stigma.

Finally, among the group that came back to the country of origin and tried to pick up their lives again were seventeen women who had been sold by their own family members. The majority of these did not return to their home region. At first, thirteen of them (77%) returned to another part of the country, and four returned to their home towns and villages. After a certain period of time, another four did return to their home region. One of these was re-trafficked. However if the women returned home they hardly ever restored their family relationships, and even if they did, they were plagued by stigmatisation and other problems.

Analysis

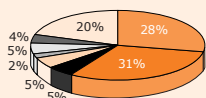
What is most striking in this paragraph is that the majority of returned victims of trafficking who received long term support maintained dysfunctional relationships with their families and friends, or had no contact with them at all in the long term. The fact that the Eastern European women perceive their relationships in a negative way more often than the women from Asia do might be explained by the more individually-focused societies in Central and Eastern Europe, where women are

not so dependent on their families. A dysfunctional family relationship does not necessarily prevent an Eastern European woman from successful social inclusion, whereas in Asia good family ties might be essential to survive. This could also explain why Asian women suffer more stigmatisation: whereas women in Eastern Europe might break off contact in such cases, Asian women might not be at liberty to do so. Moreover, stigmatisation comes from the whole society, not from the family only. Most times fear of social stigmatisation is what prevents families from accepting the woman back.

Although understandable in many cases, it seems that the lack of contact with family and friends renders a woman more vulnerable. Cases of re-trafficking, or in which a woman's fate is unknown are almost always accompanied by a breaking of family ties. Special attention should be paid to women who are trafficked by their own families, since they seem most vulnerable of all and disappear from the NGOs' view most often.

Finally, although it is positive that up to 71% of the women involved in the survey were able to build up their lives again to some extent, there were also cases of re-trafficking and, importantly, in 20% of the cases the woman's fate remains unknown.

What happens after contact with the NGO has ended?



- Woman moves back home (28%)
- Woman sets up life elsewhere (31%)
- Contact not ended (5%)
- Woman migrates again of her own free will (5%)
- Woman has moved to third country (2%)
- Woman falls back into hands of traffickers (5%)
- Other (4%)
- Unknown (20%)

Nadezhda

From Bulgaria to Belgium and the Netherlands

Nadezhda is 19 years old. At the beginning of July 2003 she was referred to the "Animus Association" Foundation (AAF) by the Head of the Regional Police Department in town P., who was very concerned that Nadezhda was at a high risk of being trafficked. Nadezhda was found during a police raid on a hotel suspected of being a base for organised criminal activity involving the trafficking of women. She explained to the police officers that she had been forced into prostitution and was willing to escape from the pimps but had no relatives to support her and no place to go. The Head of the Regional Police Department in P. used his own resources to organise a trip to Sofia and Nadezhda was accommodated at the Crisis Unit of AAF.

At the time of counselling received at the Crisis Unit, Nadezhda told the social worker that her problems started early in her childhood. Nadezhda's parents were denied parental rights over her and her siblings due to constant neglect, and her paternal grandmother and her grandmother's sister received custody. They took good care of Nadezhda for some time but after their deaths their relatives expelled her from the house. Nadezhda was 18 at the time she was left alone on the street and all she owned was a suitcase with some clothes and 5 levs (approximately 2.5 Euro). As she had nowhere to go she moved in with a friend but later he forced her to work as a prostitute and then sold her to a pimp. She was sold and resold to different pimps, first in the country and then abroad in the Netherlands and in Belgium.

In Belgium Nadezhda was arrested by local police and was not recognised as a trafficking victim but identified as an illegal immigrant and expelled. Back in Bulgaria she was on the streets again. Nadezhda sought help from her parents but her mother refused to take her in. Her father, who was an alcoholic and suffered from a psychiatric disorder, offered her accommodation, but due to his ongoing attempts to abuse her sexually she could not stay there and so she left. Homeless again, Nadezhda soon fell into the same cycle of forced prostitution, beating and humiliation. At the time the police found her in P., Nadezhda had serious suspicions that she was going to be sold into prostitution abroad again and sought protection by the police.

There were several reasons why Nadezhda's situation after her arrival in Sofia was considered very difficult. Firstly, the social worker assessed that there was a considerable risk that Nadezhda would be found and kidnapped by the traffickers, as they were permanently living in Sofia. Secondly, Nadezhda had very limited resources – she had no money about her and no relatives to support her. She

explained that she had graduated from high school but the pimps took her certificate. She had never had a job before. Also, as there are no shelters in Bulgaria that provide long-term accommodation to survivors of trafficking, she had no place to go after the seven-day period of her stay at the Crisis Unit expired. It also turned out that Nadezhda had a very serious problem with her vision, – her eyesight was getting worse every day and she could barely see at all.

Immediately after her arrival Nadezhda was referred to the National Service for Combating Organised Crime (NSCOC) and agreed to give testimony. Police officers were invited at the Crisis Unit to have an interview with her. Animus and the NSCOC agreed to actively cooperate on Nadezhda's case and maintain ongoing communication. Contacts were also established with the Regional Police Department responsible for the area where the Crisis Unit is located and information was provided about a high-risk trafficking case.

Nadezhda's case manager organised a new graduation certificate to be issued for her, and the State Agency for Social Support agreed to initiate an emergency procedure to place Nadezhda in a home offering temporary accommodation. Nadezhda received five 'empowerment consultations' focused on her professional realisation as well as financing for a one-month vocational course in order to facilitate the process of finding employment.

As well as receiving social support, Nadezhda joined a counselling programme at the Crisis Unit that revealed the exceptionally destructive effects of her being forced into prostitution, which were further aggravated by her early childhood trauma. She was very self-destructive and had serious difficulties adapting to a new independent lifestyle. Nadezhda was in need of long-term psychological counselling that would also help her to benefit more from the social support that was given to her and to regain control over her life.

After a two-month stay at the Crisis Unit Nadezhda went out one day and never came back. So far we have no information about what has happened to her.

Chapter 4 • Conclusions and Recommendations

4



Conclusions and Recommendations

In general

This survey intended to provide insight into the lives of 150 victims of trafficking in women from different parts in Central and Eastern Europe and South and South-East Asia, as well as offer insight into the effects of legislation and policies on the process of safe return and social inclusion from a human rights perspective. These insights should lead to recommendations for policy makers and support organizations, resulting in new initiatives to improve protection of and services available to victims of trafficking.

First of all, it is necessary to state that 'rock solid' answers on issues related to safe return and social inclusion are hard to give on the basis of these 150 cases as the number of clients and the duration of the research were too limited. Nonetheless, we do believe that trends can be indicated, conclusions can be drawn and recommendations can be made from this inventory based on the joint expertise of the NGOs participating in this research, the geographic range of the inventory and the considerable amount of data which was available.

A remark should be made about the differences and similarities between victims of trafficking from Central and Eastern Europe and those from South and South-East Asia. In three aspects there are clear differences: education, violence prior to trafficking, and contact with family and friends. On average, the women from Central and Eastern Europe had a higher level of education than the women from Asia. However, they tended to discontinue contact with family and friends more often, and suffered violence twice as much compared to the women in Asia. On other matters no significant differences have been found, leading to the conclusion that most often women suffer the same consequences as a result of their ordeal, whether they are born in Moldova or in Cambodia.

Policies and laws

Based on the outcomes of the inventory it can be concluded that most countries involved in the research lack specific policies and laws on safe return and social inclusion. In a few countries such laws are under construction (Moldova, the Netherlands) or have not yet come into full force (Bulgaria, Romania). If services for trafficked women are provided they are mostly short-term; support provided for longer than three months is limited.

Lack of perspective for victims of trafficking

It can be concluded that for most victims of trafficking there is a lack of perspective in their home countries. Prior to the trafficking situation most of them lived in family structures, but a large group is confronted with sexual, physical and/or emotional abuse, earns low wages or is unemployed. This lack of perspective is reinforced by the fact that the majority of women is recruited by family, friends or other people they knew, and the high percentage of women working under debt bondage.

Young victims

There is a tendency towards a decrease in the age of victims of trafficking. A third of the clients described in this

inventory were children aged from twelve (in some cases even younger) up to sixteen or seventeen years old. This group should receive special attention from state authorities and support organizations, and new partnerships should be built.

Changes in the flow of victims

Looking at the trafficking situation itself, it can be concluded that there is a shift in the trafficking flows. This survey shows that a minority of women is sold to Western Europe whereas the majority is trafficked within Central and Eastern Europe or within South or South-East-Asia. We recommend that this shift should lead to policy changes in countries that were formerly countries of origin only. These countries should not only provide services to victims of trafficking who return to their home countries, but should also attend to foreign nationals who have been trafficked into their country. Social assistance programmes should be adjusted accordingly.

Special attention should be paid to trafficking in women to the Middle East, a destination for Eastern European as well as Asian women. It is recommended that NGOs in Eastern Europe and Asia join hands in new initiatives towards combating trafficking to these countries, especially since the NGO structure in some countries in the Middle East is not yet firmly established.

Identification of victims

At the same time the survey shows that many police officers do not know what signs to look for that may indicate that a woman is a victim of trafficking. Besides, almost half of the women remain in the trafficking situation for a period longer than six months, during which most endure physical and other forms of violence. After women escape the trafficking situation, around 30% are detained for up to a month, and a small minority is held longer than three months. The reason for imprisonment is often that the women are not identified as victims of trafficking. This should not be allowed to happen. Gaining trust from the victims, increasing the number of identified victims and ending the trafficking situation earlier require that police be trained. The role of NGOs is essential here given their expertise regarding social assistance to victims of trafficking. It is therefore recommended that the training of police be done in conjunction with NGOs, specifically on identification procedures and approaches that minimise the chance of victims being stigmatised.

Risk assessments

In nearly half of the cases in this inventory either no risk assessment was carried out (39%) before return of the women to the country of origin or this aspect remained unknown (10%). NGOs carried out risk assessments in 33% of the cases, whereas the police only implemented them in 16% of the cases. Unfortunately, there was hardly any information available on the components and quality of the risk assessments that were carried out; and there was very little co-operation between the police and NGOs. Given the specific expertise of the police, NGOs and other organizations, we therefore recommend that risk

assessments should always be carried out by multiple organizations. Furthermore, we recommend that the procedures that will be followed in implementation of risk assessments will be clear and unambiguous, and that an agreement is reached concerning the elements that a risk assessment should encompass.

Voluntary and safe return programmes

Two-thirds of the survivors of trafficking researched for this report return within three months and three-quarters go back within a year. In slightly more than half (53%) of the cases return was considered voluntary and safe; in the remainder (47%) of cases, return was not considered safe (17%), considered doubtful (17%), or the circumstances of return were unknown (13%). The concept of 'voluntary' return should bear in mind the lack of perspective in the countries of destination.

These outcomes lead to the conclusion that countries of destination should offer better protection and social assistance to victims of trafficking, enabling women to make a start with the process of recovery. This should lead to them being able to make a well-balanced decision whether to return or to stay, and humanitarian residence permits should be granted to those for whom return is considered unsafe. NGOs providing services to victims of trafficking in the countries of destination should be adequately financed. At the same time, special programmes focusing on safe return and social inclusion are of the utmost importance. Such programmes should be preceded by individual needs and risk assessments connected to the safe return of the women concerned. We recommend that these assessments take place a considerable time prior to return, in order to give organizations in the countries of destination and origin time to develop individual tailor-made programmes which could already be set in motion while the woman is still in the country of destination.

Women who do not return to their home regions

Almost half of the women do not return to their home regions, but try to build up their lives elsewhere in their country of origin. This is of importance to NGOs and state authorities in terms of adjustment of their services, since it makes these women on one hand safer from reprisals, but on the other hand more vulnerable due to lack of means and social networks. We recommend therefore that states ensure a minimum social safety net to support these women (as well as the women who return to their home regions) and that NGOs ensure support by establishing local branches in more remote areas or at least by forming regional networks with other organizations, keeping pace with already existing best practices of some of the NGOs.

Women who sever ties with their family and friends

A point of special concern is the group of women who sever ties with their families and friends. The survey shows that in the cases of re-trafficking or when an NGO does not have information on the whereabouts and well being of its clients, the women concerned have often broken off

contact with their family and friends. Although often forced by circumstances, this results in greater isolation of these women and a greater risk of being re-trafficked. We recommend therefore that NGOs pay special attention to these groups and support them in building new social networks. This can be done through the "buddy projects", mentioned previously, but also through psychotherapy and intensive counselling from the very beginning.

Role of the government and NGOs

It can also be concluded that in most countries governmental organizations play a limited role in providing services to victims of trafficking. Nonetheless, states are responsible for their citizens and have therefore an obligation for the protection and social inclusion of victims of trafficking. NGOs play an essential role since they are in direct contact with the victims and due to their independent status, can gain the confidence of victims of trafficking. Therefore, we recommend that specific policies and laws on safe return and social inclusion be incorporated in national legislation, and that states co-operate with NGOs regarding the provision of social assistance to victims of trafficking. Ideally, this co-operation should be formalised by quality standards and/or protocols in which the procedures, roles and competence of the different parties are described.

Role of the police

The police play a major role in the issue of trafficking. For many victims of trafficking police officers are the first and only contact with the outside world. From the survey it appears that the police end the trafficking situation in almost half of the cases, and almost two-thirds of the clients who make contact with NGOs are referred by the police. The police are involved in the return of half of the women and question the majority of women upon arrival in the countries of origin. At the same time, the report showed that contacts between NGOs and the police are often strained and almost never formalized, with the exception of the Netherlands. At best, contact between the two is established on the basis of individual relations and good will. Given the importance of the role of the police in the trafficking cycle, we recommend that NGOs and the police seek co-operation where possible, and that a mechanism for doing so be formalised.

Co-operation between NGOs in countries of destination and origin

The report shows that in the countries of destination there is a big gap between the identified needs and the services actually provided in terms of financial help, accommodation, legal aid, medical, psychological help and employment. In the long term, finances, shelter and employment remain the biggest problems. In the countries of origin there are no big differences between the needs expressed by the women and the services provided, although it should be noted that long-term support can only be offered in a limited number of cases. Moreover, the most crucial needs such as finances for first survival and sustainable employment are not met sufficiently, neither in the countries of destination nor origin.

In our opinion the above observations do not mean that NGOs in the countries of origin are better able to meet their clients' needs in comparison with NGOs in the countries of destination, but do illustrate the lack of perspective for victims of trafficking in the countries of destination due to lack of legislation and policies.

We recommend that firm relationships be established between NGOs in countries of destination and origin, in order to provide optimal services to victims of trafficking. In case of return, this contact should be established a considerable time beforehand and should be maintained a considerable period after return. This will allow close observation of the victim after return, and drawing on previous experience when providing support to new clients. We furthermore recommend new initiatives by NGOs from countries of destination and origin in forming partnerships which involve exchange of expertise. This might, for example, lead to mutual traineeships and selection of legal migrants in countries of destination in co-operation with countries of origin to train them on the provision of services to victims of trafficking.

Three main conclusions

Summarizing, we would like to emphasize three conclusions in this report which we believe are essential. Firstly, there is the need for proper identification of victims, and this should lead to more victims receiving help. Secondly, there is the need for clear and unambiguous procedures for risk assessments carried out by multiple organisations, which should precede voluntary and safe return of victims. Thirdly, there is the need for a special focus on victims who have severed family ties and lack a good social network. A focus on these areas should strengthen the process of recovery and prevent the risk of re-trafficking.

Case study

Sabina Khatoon

From Bangladesh to India

Sabina Khatoon is a Muslim girl who is 12 years old and who was trafficked from Bangladesh to Mumbai. She is from a poor family; she has three brothers and four sisters, and her parents are not engaged in any economic activity. One of Sabina's brothers was engaged in trading contraband sugar, rice and salt across the West Bengal-Bangladesh border, and because of the family's poor socio-economic situation, Sabina assisted him. Eventually the police began to suspect them, and they decided to leave Bangladesh for India, as their business had connections in Kolkata (Calcutta). One of these suggested that they go to Mumbai, as there are more opportunities to make money.

Sabina and her brother left for Mumbai, where her brother realized that the most profitable business was selling girls who are then forced into prostitution. Sabina was the first victim of her brother's criminal activity, and she was sold to a brothel for Rs 30,000 (around 530 Euro). This inspired her brother to lure more girls and sell them into the sex industry.

Sabina remained at the brothel for one year, and during this time was exposed to a lot of violence. Her madam always kept her under lock and key and Sabina was not even given the freedom of deciding on the number of customers she would attend in a day. She attended to ten customers per day on average; as a result she became ill and when she refused to further attend customers on any particular day she was severely beaten up by her madam and was completely bedridden for two days. The same thing happened when she tried to run away. She was forced to have oral and anal sex according to customers' wishes but all of the money she earned went to her madam. Her brother visited her once a month and collected his percentage of Sabina's earnings from the madam. During her stay at the brothel Sabina became pregnant and was forced to abort the child with the help of a backyard abortionist.

The number of minors who are found and rescued is small in comparison to the number that goes missing. Sabina was one of the 10% of minors who are rescued and was referred to Sanlaap (an advocacy organisation for victims of trafficking) for repatriation after a police raid on the brothel. As Sabina was a minor she was given a summons to appear before court. Sabina explained her entire story and the Mumbai court passed an order to transfer her to Sanlaap for her repatriation. When she was rescued, she had neither a single penny nor any goods in her pocket.

As a Bangladeshi National, Sabina's name was given to the Bangladeshi Embassy for repatriation. She does not want to go back to Bangladesh however as she is afraid that her brother might try to re-traffic her. She wants her traffickers to be brought to justice, but no case has been brought before the court yet. She is not able to remain at the Sanlaap shelter home because she has been declared a foreign national, although she is still staying there and is attending vocational training. Her future is very uncertain.

Kalpana

From Nepal to India

Kalpana Dhakal comes from a small village situated in the eastern part of Nepal and the district near the border with India. Now aged 20, she was trafficked at about 13 years of age. As the family was very poor, Kalpana dropped out of school and started working to make ends meet. Her mother had died when very young; her father had remarried but neither he nor his wife worked. As the second child in the family, Kalpana became the sole breadwinner when her elder sister married, despite being still a child.

Kalpana's father sent her to the circus in India with the help of a fraternal uncle. Although reluctant, Kalpana agreed to go out of frustration with her family's attitude toward her, thinking that leaving home to work somewhere else away from family members would be better for her. She felt that her father had no feelings for her as a daughter, and, despite not expecting anything from her stepmother, Kalpana still suffered abuse from her.

Kalpana went to India with her uncle and was left in a circus in Gudgaon, although she was not exactly sure in which part of India this was. As she was travelling with a relative, there was no suspicion that she was being trafficked. Her uncle told her that she would have a good time playing with acrobats and other actors, that she would be well fed and visit a lot of nice places in India with the circus. Kalpana thought this to be a good opportunity for herself.

When Kalpana arrived at the circus it was very difficult for her. Her mobility was restricted, and she could not go anywhere else. She was not given her earnings and later she found that her uncle had taken money for her before he left her in the circus. She was forced to work hard to pay off the "debt" she owed for being brought to the circus. She, along with others was not treated well. If they made any mistakes they were brutally beaten, either with ropes or heavy sticks. If they fell ill, they were still forced to work without any break. Kalpana later described her days in the circus as "a total nightmare". She was effectively held prisoner there for six consecutive years.

Eventually, Kalpana returned back home on her own, the owner of the circus having let her go. In six years she had earned nothing but loneliness, pain and suffering. When she returned home she did not want to stay with her parents as they were the real traffickers and she feared that they might send her somewhere else again, for their own benefit.

As a high-risk case for being re-trafficked by her own family, Kalpana was referred to a shelter home run by the Women's Rehabilitation Centre Nepal (WOREC). There, she was able to tell people that she really wanted to do something worthwhile with her life, in particular to continue her education and make enough money to be independent.

During her stay with WOREC, Kalpana was given all necessary support, including psychological help, medical care and accommodation. She has also taken up some vocational training as she is very interested in studying and does not intend to return to her family. As WOREC's main objective is for social reintegration, it was required that Kalpana learn something through which she could make an independent living. She was referred to another NGO for driving lessons and is currently learning to drive a tuk tuk, which is a local three-wheeled vehicle. With this new skill, she will be able to earn her own living as a taxi driver.

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Photo: Roel Burrier

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List of abbreviations

Adpare	Romanian shelter connected to the Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania
AIDRom	Ecumenical Association of Churches in Romania
Animus	Animus Association Foundation/La Strada Bulgaria
CWDA	Cambodian Women and Development Agency
FFW	Foundation for Women Thailand
GAATW	Global Alliance against Trafficking in Women
ICCO	Interkerkelijke Organisatie voor Ontwikkelingssamenwerking, Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation
Jagori	Indian NGO against trafficking in women
Kerkinactie	Global Ministries of the Protestant Church in the Netherlands
La Strada Belarus	Young Women's Christian Association of Belarus/La Strada Belarus
La Strada Moldova	International Women's Rights Protection and Promotion Center 'La Strada' Moldova
Palermo Protocol	United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress, and Punish Trafficking in persons, Especially Women and Children, supplementing the United Nations Convention Against Transnational Organized Crime
SANLAAP	Indian NGO against trafficking in women
STV	Stichting tegen Vrouwenhandel, Dutch Foundation against Trafficking in Women
UAW	Useful for Albanian Women
WOREC	Women's Rehabilitation Centre Nepal

'If our skirt is torn, do not show anyone else but try to sew it up'.

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The portrayed women and people in the photographs in this report do not have any connection with the content of the report.

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