

**GOOD PRACTICES ON
(RE)INTEGRATION OF VICTIMS OF
TRAFFICKING IN HUMAN BEINGS IN SIX
EUROPEAN COUNTRIES**

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PREFACE

The underlying report is the second product of the project “Good practices in the (re)integration of victims of trafficking in human beings from an empowerment perspective”. This project, financed by the Daphne-initiative of the European Union, was carried out by the Programme Bonded Labour in the Netherlands (BLinN) of Novib/Oxfam Netherlands and Humanitas in the Netherlands, together with Change and Oxfam-GB in the United Kingdom¹.

The report continues and elaborates on the work done by Aika van der Kleij about legal provisions for victims of trafficking in human beings in six European countries². With this information on legal provisions in mind, the researchers visited organisations in the six countries to identify good practices in the field of the integration and reintegration of victims of trafficking in human beings. They looked at the real and practical work of organisations, on issues like health, housing, education, vocational training, employment and reintegration. A first draft of this report formed the input for an international seminar with 20 representatives from the organisations visited, held in April 2003, during which the discussion about good practices was developed further and some concrete recommendations were formulated.

We hope that the underlying report contributes to the international debate on the support for victims of trafficking in human beings. We are of the opinion that the exchange of information between organisations in different countries on this issue is a tool of fundamental importance for improving the situation of these women and for promoting their independence and empowerment.

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¹ This document is a reflection of the author's vision. The European Union is not liable for any use of this document, stemming from this vision.

² See the publication “Provisions for Victims of Trafficking in Bonded Sexual Labour, i.e. Prostitution in 6 European Countries (Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom), Aika van der Kleij, BLinN, 2003.

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INTRODUCTION

Trafficked people arrive anywhere in Europe in a variety of ways. The ways they are actually treated, recognised as victims of criminal organisations, get opportunities for redress within the legal systems, get access to assistance and are inserted into networks for assistance in housing, health, protection, or get deported to their home-countries, do differ quite a lot.

The need to protect and support victims of trafficking is essential as law enforcement and the judiciary aim to secure their collaboration in the investigation and prosecution of traffickers. There is greater awareness of victim protection and a general agreement that activities and services for victims of trafficking must be geared towards enabling a 'recovery' from their experiences and facilitating their (re)integration into society.

This report focuses on services provided to women who have been victims of trafficking for commercial sexual exploitation. It aims to provide an outline of the activities carried out by Non-Governmental Organisations to facilitate either a) the integration process in the host countries or b) the reintegration process in the countries of origin. It also lists services and activities of Non Governmental and Inter-Governmental Organisations working to address the social exclusion of victims of trafficking in society. It considers the factors that must be taken into account in developing future services and activities from an empowerment perspective.

This research carries on from another report entitled 'Provisions for Victims of Trafficking in Bonded Sexual Labour, i.e. Prostitution – in six European Countries (Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom)³. The aim is to compare services and assistance proposed in existing legal provisions with the kind of assistance and services available in practice.

Existing national legal possibilities are often not considered seriously enough by political and police forces. While immigration policies in Europe are hardening, it happens only too often that growing repressive actions by police forces against prostitution do not apply the legal possibilities as put down in special laws on trafficking. Authorities do see arrested women, victims of trafficking, too easily as 'just' illegal prostitutes. Women are often not provided with sufficient explanation about the legal possibilities for pressing charges and about participating in humanitarian social programmes, or victim protection. It happens that women are deported to their countries of origin without further consideration about the possible consequences for them. And, after being deported, many of the women return back to the countries they had already once been deported from. In this way they often double their debts, and then nothing gets resolved. On the contrary much gets worse.

In most of the six countries visited legal possibilities for protection programmes and residence permits are in the first place connected to a willingness to press charges against the trafficker, and therefore to criminal law procedures and the recognition of victims as witnesses to a crime. Although investigation and action against these criminals is absolutely necessary, more can be done to guarantee the independence of victims. Irrespective of whether or not women decide to press charges, they must have both the legal grounds and the possibilities to be able to make their own lives and (re)integrate into society. Residence and working permits, medical (mental) and social care, housing and education as well as vocational training are the necessary basic tools. Only from a

³ Aika van der Kleij, 2003, Bonded Labour in Netherlands, BLinN, joint programme of Novib and Humanitas

positive future perspective can a trafficked woman (or man) be in a position to decide relatively freely to press charges against the perpetrator. Frequently it was said that if safety comes first, in a later stage victims do want to press charges.

Many efforts are undertaken to assist trafficked women, as a lot of attention internationally is focused on the phenomenon of human trafficking and forced prostitution. Good practices do exist, but they also need further strengthening, in national and international legislation, in expanding the capacity of structures to shelter women and to offer them opportunities to make a living, and in provided means.

Women victims of trafficking and their access to services

In most destination countries where legislation against trafficking and victim protection is in place, the services available to victims will differ according to whether or not the person agrees to become a witness and/or assist the authorities with their investigations. Current practice in the European Union shows that the services and activities provided to victims of trafficking are different for:

a. Victims who collaborate with the authorities

A short-term residency permit is issued.⁴ Usually this residency permit enables the person to access most public services, including education and vocational training programmes, housing, long-term medical assistance and employment opportunities.

b. Victims who do not collaborate with the authorities

Emergency services such as temporary shelter, medical follow-up, and assistance for repatriation and/or reintegration are provided. In some countries of origin short-term shelter and follow-up is provided to returnees, but services are still limited in scope in many countries of origin.

c. Victims of trafficking who are country nationals

Women who are country nationals are often not considered victims of trafficking per se, and yet there is evidence to suggest that these women too are forced into prostitution and moved from city to city and from one country to another. Current services and activities provided to trafficking victims target migrant women exploited in the sex industry. Fewer opportunities exist for country nationals to enter existing victim protection programmes and access specialised assistance.

Services provided by Non-Government Organisations (NGOs)

In many countries of origin, transit and destination NGOs working with women victims of trafficking have amended their mandates from previous work related to domestic violence, prostitution, asylum and refugee issues. They have expanded and adjusted their services to meet the specific needs of trafficked women and bring to this work a considerable amount of experience and good practice.

Organisations working with women victims of trafficking provide shelter, administrative support, legal and psychosocial assistance, with the aim of facilitating the integration of a woman into society or her reintegration in the case of a voluntary return to the country of origin. These services entail:

- Administrative support (processing applications for residence permits and work permits, initiating family reunification procedures),
- Legal assistance (support during prosecution and legal representation) and
- Psychosocial support (aimed to help women overcome the trauma of their experience and develop a personal project for the future).

⁴ In many of the European states this temporary residency permit will last for the duration of criminal proceedings, making the process of integration particularly precarious.

- Social support can include an orientation in other social structures for education, training, housing, health, and employment.

Many work in co-operation with other organisations to provide these services, often orienting clients to existing structures in the public/private and non-government sectors that also provide services.

Presentation and aims of the Good Practice Guide

This document was put together by CHANGE, OXFAM-GB in the UK, Novib/Oxfam Netherlands and Humanitas in the Netherlands. It defines good practice in the field of integration and reintegration based on an in-depth analysis of the activities of over 30 organisations working with women victims of trafficking in the European Union, including Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the UK.

This report is divided into three sections. The first covers activities and services provided to promote the integration in destination countries to which women were trafficked. The second section looks at current practices for integration in the six European countries visited, particularly in the area of health, housing, education, vocational training, employment and reintegration. The third and final part lists services and activities to facilitate reintegration in the countries of origin.

This document has three purposes. a) To identify and promote good practices of existing projects and programmes focusing on the integration and reintegration of trafficked women. b) To identify and analyse obstacles to these processes. And c) to analyse these services from an empowerment perspective, bearing in mind the options available to women who are provided assistance.

1. Methodology

1.1. Developing the list of activities and services for integration and reintegration

Over three hundred organisations world-wide were identified from the CHANGE directory as providers of direct assistance to women victims of trafficking. An initial survey was carried out among these service providers in origin, transit and destination countries asking them for further details on their activities for integration and reintegration of women victims of trafficking.

Overall, more than one hundred organisations replied to the request for further information. However many of the organisations were working with different target groups such as trafficked children or did not work directly on the trafficking issue but provided services that could be accessed by victims of trafficking, e.g. outreach work and the provision of information to sex workers. Further correspondence was, therefore, only continued with some sixty organisations.

From the results of this survey it was possible to see that the majority of service providers working with victims of trafficking, were also working with different target groups, including victims of domestic violence, migrants, trafficked children, refugees, asylum seekers and sex workers. Their activities centred mainly on health prevention, the provision of shelter, facilitating access to vocational training, access to employment, administrative assistance, legal counselling, medical and psychological follow-up, as well as awareness raising and prevention.

Whilst some NGOs defined the provision of short term services, such as emergency shelter, as a (re)integration activity, others believed that these activities were essentially long-term and would last for several months or even years. We came to the conclusion that reintegration services should include short-term or emergency measures to be provided to women in the initial stages of integrating in the host countries or reintegrating in the countries of origin.

Services and activities for integration

In June 2002 a meeting was organised in the Netherlands between Change, Novib/Oxfam Netherlands and Humanitas, to agree on a methodology for collecting data and to define the scope of the research on integration services for trafficked women.

It was agreed that the focus of the research regarding 'integration' would in principle cover: a) *services accessed by trafficked women with residence permits* for host countries, since real integration requires that the person's status is recognised, and b) *services provided prior to women obtaining a legal status* to facilitate access to integration services and eventually leading to the regularisation process.⁵

The research focus would be on direct services provided to victims of trafficking, in the areas of health, housing, education, vocational training, and employment. The information would be gathered from NGOs that had replied to the initial survey and updated with information gathered from organisations taking part in the country studies for Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom (see section 2.2.).

⁵ For women who were currently not undergoing integration and reintegration programmes we also wanted to see what kind of information was available to them about their options to become regularised and about remaining in the host countries or returning to their origin countries.

Services and activities for reintegration

With regards to 'reintegration', we aimed to cover services and activities for repatriation, reception and reintegration of victims of trafficking in their countries of origin. Taking into account that services to facilitate the return of women would be initiated by NGOs and intergovernmental organisations in the host countries.

Because direct field research could not be done in the countries of origin, the services and activities provided for reintegration were documented on the basis of the initial survey carried out at the beginning of the project. The research would not only cover direct assistance to victims of trafficking but also those activities aimed at improving the quality of services provision, such as, training of professionals working with trafficked women.

1.2. Country analysis on integration

The European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) proved to be an invaluable source of information on integration issues. The ECRE good practice guides on the integration of refugees in the European Union provided us with guidelines and definitions which we could use to define the scope of the research in integration activities. As many trafficked women are migrants themselves, they would face similar if not identical processes in their integration as refugees and asylum seekers do.

From the information collected by the initial survey of service providers, a number of NGOs in the European Union were identified for further in-depth research in integration. They were selected to reflect the widest range of services and activities possible that targeted victims of trafficking. Whilst some service providers concentrated on the provision of specific services such as counselling and psychological support, others provided services for housing and health, or vocational training and employment.

The situation in Italy was analysed more in-depth, as the existing protection programme there differs a lot from the other countries. A considerable number of non-government organisations and local government institutions dealing with the phenomenon of trafficked women and forced prostitution were visited, in different regions of Italy. Also, some trafficked women themselves were interviewed about their opinion on the protection programme.

Questionnaires and Interviews

Six thematic questionnaires were developed to cover services provided by NGOs: for housing, health, education, vocational training, employment and reintegration. The questionnaires were based on studies developed by the ECRE task force into the integration of refugees in Europe⁶ and adapted to the specific situation of trafficked women going through a process of integration in the host country. The questionnaires were used in an interview situation and took about 45 minutes to one hour to complete.

Field research in the European Union was carried out by one researcher from CHANGE (Spain, Belgium, Germany, UK) and one researcher from Novib/Oxfam Netherlands (Italy and the Netherlands) from the month of July through to October 2002.

In Belgium interviews took place with three organisations that work with victims of trafficking and providing assistance for integration. The organisations are *Pag-Asa* in Brussels, *Payoke* in Antwerp and *Sūrya* in Liege.

In Germany interviews took place with four organisations. *Solwodi* in Mainz and *Agisra* in Cologne. They provide specific counselling services and psychological assistance to

⁶ Henry Martenson of the British Council for Refugees and Exiles, was extremely helpful in providing us with material as well as the model of a questionnaire on education used by ECRE to gather in-depth information on services provided to refugees and asylum seekers in the European Union.

women victims of trafficking. *Solwodi* in Boppard works with reintegration issues and runs a programme to facilitate women's economic reintegration in their countries of origin. The *Dortmunder Mitternachtmission* does outreach work with women in prostitution and has an extensive shelter programme for victims of trafficking, as well as providing assistance to women wanting to leave prostitution.

In Italy interviews took place with several NGOs, local authorities, judges, and investigative police. Among the organisations visited that directly support victims of trafficking are: *Caritas Diocesana* and *Cgil National Labour Union* in Rome; *Comitato per i Diritti Civili delle Prostituite* in Pordenone; *Città e Prostitutione* in Venice; *Lila - Onlus / Lule* and *Priscilla - Unità di Strada* in Milan; *Gruppo Abele, Tampep, Provincia di Torino, Confcoop*, and some shelters for trafficked women, all in Turin; *Progetto Sally, Associazione Donne in Movimento, Progetto Strada* in Pisa; *Coop. Soc. Compagni di Strada* in Trani and Bari; *Regina Pacis*, San Foca.

In the Netherlands information was gathered from *TAMPEP International Foundation*, the *Foundation Against Trafficking in Women (STV)*, *BLinN (Humanitas/Novib)*, *Christian Aid and Resources Foundation (CARF)*, the care-co-ordinator for Amsterdam *Esther Korteweg*, and the women's shelter *Blijf van m'n Lijf IJmond* in Beverwijk. Furthermore, information was exchanged with Ruth Hopkins, researcher of the organisation *De Rode Draad (The Red Thread)*, who was analysing the Dutch situation on trafficking in the same period.

In Spain interviews took place with seven organisations in Madrid. *APRAMP* and *Proyecto Esperanza* have developed shelter facilities and services targeting victims of trafficking.⁷ *VOMADE* and *COMRADE* work with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers and have experience in working with trafficked women. *Hermanas Oblatas* runs a vocational training and employment scheme for women coming out of prostitution, and provide shelter to migrant women and their children in Madrid. The *IOM* mission in Madrid works with NGOs to provide assistance in the repatriation of trafficked women.

Interviews with women victims of trafficking

A separate questionnaire was developed for victims of trafficking in host countries. It contained open-ended questions to allow women to talk about integration and to prioritise their own feelings and experiences. The questionnaire, used in an interview situation, was developed to gain an insight into the way that women personally experience the process of integration and to identify any problems that do not necessarily stem from their experience of trafficking.⁸

The whole process of integration and reintegration is for that person about becoming economically and socially independent in the long run. To elaborate the questions for the women as 'victims of trafficking' would be to undermine their efforts to move on with their lives as members of the wider community.

Shortcomings with the research

Due to funding constraints it was only possible to carry out a research of organisations based in the European Union. As a result, the issue of reintegration in the countries of origin was not thoroughly researched.⁹ This leaves an important gap in the study. It is

⁷ APRAMP also carries out outreach work with sex workers in Madrid.

⁸ Although their experiences as trafficked women undoubtedly have a direct impact on their lives, it was generally felt that it would be better for the interview to focus on their lives outside of that framework, in order to better evaluate their general situation. However, the open questions ensured that the respondents could talk about their experiences as victims of trafficking if they believed it had an impact on the process of integration. This could be an interesting way of pinpointing particular obstacles that women may face as a result of having been victims of trafficking.

⁹ Some research was carried out to determine how reintegration was organised from the host countries. Activities and services in the countries of origin were also documented.

essential for data to be collected on the kind of services that are available to facilitate the reintegration of women returning to their countries of origin.

2. Integration

The process of integration, as such, begins when an individual has settled or decides to settle in a host country. It requires that people benefit from a legal status in order to facilitate the process and access to public and private services. For women victims of trafficking it is often a long and difficult process, which may not be possible in the long run, given the precarious nature of their status under existing provisions for complementary protection.¹⁰

In effect, the right of trafficked women to remain in the host country is often subject to their willingness to collaborate with the authorities in investigations and to act as witnesses in the prosecution of traffickers. Once the authorities have completed their investigations and /or prosecution, the victim's situation in the host country is reviewed. Based on an analysis of their integration into the host community and an assessment of potential dangers to her if she were to return to her country of origin, long-term residence may be exceptionally granted.

In cases where integration is possible women victims of trafficking will be required to make a decision as to whether or not they wish to remain and settle in the host country. In some countries a rest period is granted to women before they have to make their intentions known to the authorities.

In this period the women will be informed about their rights and responsibilities and the options that are available to them should they decide to remain in the host country or return to their countries of origin. These may include possibilities for assisted return, employment education and vocational training, housing, administrative assistance, financial assistance, legal assistance, medical assistance and counselling.

2.1. Defining the process of integration

Essentially, integration is concerned with a long-term process undertaken by people who have settled or intend to settle in a host country; in the case of trafficked persons this is uncertain.¹¹ According to the European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE), integration is a process that is:

“ a) Dynamic and two-way: it places demands on both receiving societies and the individuals and/or the communities concerned. From a refugee perspective, integration requires a preparedness to adapt to the lifestyle of the host society without having to lose one's own cultural identity. From the point of view of the host society, it requires a willingness to adapt public institutions to changes in the population profile, accept refugees as part of the national community, and take action to facilitate access to resources and decision-making processes.

b) Long term: from a psychological perspective, it often starts at the time of arrival in the country of final destination and is concluded when a refugee becomes an active member of that society from a legal, social, economic, educational and cultural perspective.

c) Multi-dimensional: it relates both to the conditions for and actual participation in all aspects of the economic, social, cultural, civil, and political life of the country of durable

¹⁰ Complementary protection is generally given as a temporary residence permit and may or may not grant the permit holder with the right to work. Complementary protection differs among Member States of the EU and includes permits on Humanitarian grounds (Spain, Belgium, Germany), Exceptional Leave to Remain (UK), Temporary Protection etc.

¹¹ They are only given complementary forms of protection for a pre-determined period of time i.e.. the duration of court cases against traffickers

asylum as well as to refugees' own perception of acceptance by and membership in the host society."

The definition applies specifically to refugees and asylum seekers. According to ECRE the same definition is to be applied to persons benefiting from complementary protection¹², thereby including women victims of trafficking.

Empowerment

Talk about empowerment often conjures up images of persons who are powerless. However this is not the case for many women that are victims of trafficking. Those who originally choose to migrate are searching for better economic opportunities for themselves and their families; they have proved to have the incentive and motivation to become the primary actors of change. Before coming into contact with organisations that provide assistance, many are able to use their own resources and personal capacities to find solutions to their own problems. They must be encouraged to continue to do so.

Empowerment is, therefore, a very subjective notion but can generally be described as '*a process through which an individual can develop his/her ability to stand independently, make his/her own decisions and show control over his/her life*'¹³

For the empowerment of women victims of trafficking the conditions have to exist for them to become economically and psychologically independent. This is subject to a) opportunities for work, education and training, access to physical and mental health services in the host country, and b) the way in which service providers work with victims (women must be encouraged to become active participants in the integration process).

It is important to bear in mind that empowerment is a process rather than an end in itself. NGOs can assist the women, but must involve them in making the decisions that affect their lives and above all not treat them as passive victims.

2.2 Factors influencing the process of integration

The process of integration is determined by the relationship between the individual, the community, civil society and the host-state. Factors influencing integration include:

The host state

The political context of host countries is of paramount importance. Political will can be a major driving force behind initiatives to deal with the trafficking problem and to protect victims of trafficking. The manner in which a host government defines the problem, addresses the issue and implements action will have a direct impact on the status of victims in the host country and the treatment they receive from the authorities (be it as victims or offenders).

Unfortunately, over the last few years a climate of intolerance and xenophobia has been rising in Europe, as migration from the poorer countries and war-affected zones to the West has intensified. The issue of trafficking has come to the forefront as the driving force behind the rising numbers of economic migrants trying to enter European countries illegally. Political leaders have begun to talk of 'bogus asylum seekers' 'clandestine migration' and 'economic migrants using trafficking networks'. This has had a negative impact on public opinion, much to the detriment of foreign nationals residing in host countries and in particular victims of trafficking. There is less talk of the need for more labour or the need to protect the human rights of persons fleeing persecution or those exploited by trafficking networks.

¹² Existing EU provisions on immigration and asylum do not cover victims of trafficking, although they do come under the category of those persons who can benefit from complementary protection.

¹³ ECRE, notes

In the current climate governments want to be seen to take action against what they perceive is the scourge of economic migrants and particularly that of migrant women in the sex industry. One example of this can be seen in France. Under new measures on internal security, the French government has recently begun a campaign to 'clean up' the streets of its cities by arresting and deporting migrant sex workers, with little concern for the fact that some may well be victims of trafficking.

*'Community-based health organisations will find that their work on prevention is constrained, and see years of work wiped out. No longer will there be talk of protecting and supporting victims of trafficking; rather, authorities will be preoccupied with the fight against clandestine immigration and the law against foreign prostitutes (1)... At the same time no distinction will be made between prostitution and trafficking. These measures are discriminatory and racist... without regard for the most fundamental human rights or public health.'*¹⁴

Legal provisions for victims of trafficking

To date most European countries have developed national legislative frameworks to address trafficking in human beings, and especially to combat the activities in this area of organised criminal networks. However much legislation has been developed from a law enforcement perspective, and there is little attention given to the issue of assistance to victims and to their future long-term perspectives.

In most EU Member States, with the exception of Italy, victims of trafficking are required to collaborate with the authorities¹⁵ to obtain a residency permit in the host country.¹⁶ Residence permits are necessary measures that will allow victims of trafficking to find security, recover confidence and a sense of perspective for their future. They enable them to become autonomous, giving them the possibility to work and access to education, employment and housing.

Legislative measures to assist victims of trafficking in host countries stipulate that once the legal procedure comes to an end, women have to return to their home countries. In Germany, this legislation is strictly enforced, regardless of whether or not the person has succeeded in integrating into society. In other countries, such as Belgium, people can apply for a residence permit to remain indefinitely if they have resided in the country for two years and can prove that a certain level of integration has been achieved, e.g. when the person speaks the language, studies or works in the country and can prove that she is economically independent it is generally assumed that she is integrating.¹⁷

In countries where legal provisions for victims of trafficking do not exist, the only option open to them is to claim asylum, and even so, the process is long and extremely difficult. The existence of restrictive migrant laws in these countries means that women who are victims of trafficking are often deported should the authorities intercept them. Shelters and specialised services for this target group are almost non-existent and there are no means by which they can obtain social assistance from the state.

Discrimination

A prerequisite to integration is the existence of a society that is tolerant and inclusive of foreign nationals. The attitude of society to foreigners depends very much on its historical, cultural and political make-up. *'European societies differ considerably in the*

¹⁴ Cabiria International Press Release, Stop the wave of repression and the Municipal Orders Against Prostitutes!' 29 July 2002.

¹⁵ This puts their lives and the lives of their families at risk

¹⁶ The EU Council Framework Decision on combating in trafficking in human beings adopted on 19 July 2002¹⁶ set out EU proposals to give temporary permits to women who collaborate with the authorities.

¹⁷ GEN folder 12, Payoke, Belgium, Email received 20 May 2002

*degree to which they embrace cultural diversity and the ways they deal with refugees and foreigners in general.*¹⁸

Civil society groups throughout Europe have complained that recent debates about immigration, economic migrants and trafficking have resulted in more discrimination against immigrants in host countries. This has affected the opportunities that women have in society, especially as regards their access to work and housing where they face more discrimination on the whole. In theory immigrants should have equal access to housing and health facilities and the same opportunities for education, work and training. In practice, NGOs working with migrant populations (including victims of trafficking) claim that there is still much discrimination in all of these areas.¹⁹

Civil society organisations

Non-governmental and religious organisations play an important role in providing information and services to trafficked women in host countries. Many work in co-ordination with regional and local public services to facilitate access to employment, housing, health, education and training. They provide orientation and advice as well as a long-term follow-up in the integration process of women.

In countries where legal provisions for victims of trafficking are insufficient or do not exist, these organisations replace public sector and government activities, since structures have not been put in place to provide for the needs of women. In those countries where a legal framework is in place and services are provided by public structures, NGOs generally tend to supplement public sector activities.

The presence or absence of public sector services will have repercussions on the relationship that develops between NGOs and their clients. This in turn affects the process of empowerment. Where it is not possible to mainstream women into other existing public and private structures for seeing to their needs, the natural tendency is for women to develop a very close and dependent relationship with the organisation providing assistance. This will be exacerbated when they have limited opportunities to work and cannot become economically independent.

In cases where women are provided with opportunities to work and study and are able to access other service providers (employment agencies and vocational training schools), integration from an empowerment perspective will be facilitated. *'During the process of empowerment, 'victims' become participants to the process and search for personal or collective solutions which lead them to take charge of changes in their lives.'*²⁰

All in all, most NGOs work towards empowerment by encouraging women to take on new rolls in support of themselves and their families through education and employment.

The media

Media coverage on the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation has had both good and bad effects. On the one hand trafficking for sexual exploitation has been portrayed as a violation of women's human rights and has succeeded in rallying support and sympathy for victims. Awareness of the problem has resulted in new initiatives by NGOs to create networks of assistance and protection and the development of specialised services to meet the needs of this target group.

¹⁸ ECRE, ' Good Practice Guide on the Integration of Refugees in the European Union', p.45

¹⁹ The principle of non-discrimination on the grounds of nationality outlined in article 12 of the EC Treaty, outlaws racist and xenophobic practices and ensures equal treatment of people irrespective of ethnic origin, religion or beliefs.

²⁰ GEN folder 23, Fanny Polanía, IOM Colombia, Email received 2 May 2002

On the other hand, the prevalence of certain nationalities of victims in the press has given rise to prejudice and stereotypical conceptions of women from those countries. One NGO in Spain complained that Colombian women were often discriminated against (in the labour market) because of media reports on Colombian trafficking networks and the strong association people make between them, prostitution and the trafficking of drugs. The same problems reportedly arise for Nigerian women in Italy. The problem of trafficked women is more than obvious in Turin, it is nearly impossible to walk the streets of the city, see African women, and not think that they will be trafficked women or in any case women working in prostitution.

The individual

Although the environment plays an important role in creating the conditions for integration, it is the individual that will determine how the process develops. This depends on personal characteristics and social background, personality, age, education, religion and culture as well as the motivation to stabilise the situation. Past history and conditions of living, experiences and the length of time spent in the host country will also influence the way an individual integrates. It is important to also take into account a person's family situation, especially since some women may have had children in the host country. Their role as carers gives women less time to work or study, especially when they cannot access childcare facilities.

2.3 Services and activities provided for integration

A. Pre-integration (First contact, information and orientation for women working in the sex industry)

Trafficked women exploited in the sex industry are extremely vulnerable and isolated. They are often migrant women who do not speak the language of the host country; it is difficult for them to communicate with service providers and/or other local women working in the sex industry. Many are physically isolated, working in massage parlours, escort agencies, clubs, bars and brothels. They do not know about their rights or about their legal status in the host countries.

Traffickers and pimps keep women in prostitution by creating a system of co-dependency, as well as through the use and the threat of violence. They prevent women from applying to health centres or speaking to other organisations that may be able to provide assistance, in order to retain total control over them. The same tactics are used for women victims of trafficking who are country nationals.

Outreach or 'Street' work

Outreach work plays an important role in informing and orientating women that have been trafficked. Outreach workers are often a first contact for women working in the sex industry and inevitably for trafficked women forced into prostitution. Much outreach work consists of information and prevention in the area of health (safe sex, sexually transmitted diseases, and substance abuse). It is a) proactive, aiming to reduce health risks for women working in the sex industry and; b) reactive, aiming to provide information and advice on legal and social issues.

Outreach workers provide a confidential and impartial service that often helps to gain the confidence of women working in the sex industry. From this point, it is possible to address different demands and detect women's needs, provide information on legal issues, protection, and assistance for those who wish to stop working in prostitution.

Peer education

Women working in the sex industry are trained to carry out educational work as women peers and pass on information on health, sexuality, gender, and citizenship. Peer education aims to empower migrant sex workers by providing them with skills such as negotiating prices and conditions with clients, protecting themselves against STDs, and providing them with information on their rights. These kinds of activities are developed by the TAMPEP network in Europe and by other organisations.²¹

Cultural mediation

NGOs such as Lefö in Austria and Amnesty for Women in Germany work with cultural mediators who originate from the same geographical and linguistic area as the trafficked women. Cultural mediators may be used for outreach work and/or to provide specialised counselling services in organisations working with migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. Consultations and information on health, legal and social issues are given in the women's native language.²² Services are offered through migrant women that often comprise teams of different nationalities, depending on the origin of women working in the local sex industry. They are often able to speak two or more languages such as Thai, Polish, Russian, Spanish and English and are trained in the area of social intervention.²³

Drop-in Centres

Drop-in Centres are meeting points where women working in the sex industry can discuss their problems with social workers and mediators. They are also safe places where women can rest, take a shower, wash their clothes and get medical assistance and advice. These centres are often run by organisations that do outreach work. At the same time, the centres organise out information workshops on diverse issues, including hygiene, employment, human rights and assistance for leaving prostitution.

Certain drop-in centres provide services for mothers and children.²⁴ Whilst the mothers attend the workshops, the centres organise recreational activities for their children under the supervision of minders and teachers. They also organise activities and outings for mothers and their children with the aim to encourage family bonding.

Translation services

Translation and interpretation can be costly, especially when a language is rarely spoken in the host country. Certain NGOs specialise in Slavic, Arabic or Sub-Saharan languages. Interpretation services in the field of social mediation aim to facilitate contact with service providers. Translation services are needed for the purpose of documentation in order to access public institutions and especially for the regularisation process, where documents such as marriage and birth certificates may have to be provided. Organisations such as COMRADE in Spain offer specialised translation services for migrants.²⁵

B. Health services

Trafficked women are exposed to manifest risks and hazards resulting from forced and unprotected sex and consequently exposed to sexually transmitted diseases (STDs), unwanted pregnancies and forced abortions. Many have also developed dependencies on drugs and alcohol. Professionals in this field have long been advocating for greater attention to be given to the problems of prostitution, in particular forced prostitution, and health that are all closely related.

²¹ GEN folder 15, Amnesty for Women, Email received 17 May 2002.

²² GEN folder7, Lefö, Austria, Email received 29 May 2002

²³ GEN folder 15, Amnesty for Women, Germany Email received 17 may 2002

²⁴ GEN folder 20, Puerta Abierta Recreando, Argentina, Email received 15 June 2002

²⁵ SETI, Comrade, Spain.

According to experts, the psychological and physical effects of trafficking and of sexual exploitation are numerous, with each phase of the trafficking process impacting on the physical and mental health of women. They are covered below:²⁶

- *Physical violence and punishment*: coercion and abuse such as torture, beatings, whippings, burning, confinement can lead to malnutrition, starvation and psychiatric disorders.

- *Sexual abuse*: the consequences of forced sex for prostitution, forced sex without a condom, and forced abortions, can result in STDs, HIV / AIDS, botched abortions and infertility.

- *Psychological abuse*: including threats against her or her family, threats to tell the family and friends about a woman's involvement in prostitution can lead to psychiatric disorders such as anxiety, depression, sleep disorders, enduring personality change, self-harm and disassociative disorders.

- *Substance abuse*: resulting from the coerced or forced introduction to addictive substances can lead to addiction and needles can introduce an HIV infection.

- *Debt bondage and control over finances*: confiscating all or most of earned income and accepting a large number of clients, taking sexual risks, working long hours, can lead to an inability to afford or access basic hygiene, nutrition and housing, as well as medical treatment and contraception.

- *Confinement and isolation*: resulting from regular relocation and control over the women's movements can result in poor access to health information, an inability to establish relationships, distrust, social withdrawal and difficulties in integrating.

It would appear to date that an integrated approach to health focusing on the victim's specific care and needs resulting from their experiences of trafficking has not been developed in a formalised way. Health assistance, in present tends, tends to be reactive rather than proactive. As yet no formal protocol has been established to specifically address the needs of victims during the process of integration and reintegration (although GAATW has drawn up a manual relating to the physical and mental health of trafficked women).²⁷

Health services for women in prostitution

Current health projects providing services to women that are involved in prostitution aim to reduce harm. Free testing on STDs, HIV, Hepatitis C/B and free consultations with gynaecologists, dermatovenerologists and psychologists are available. Even after leaving prostitution many NGOs refer trafficked women to these services because of the health risks to which they were exposed in the sex industry. Here clients are taught the basics of hygiene and safe sex. Targeted information for sex workers, instructing them on the proper use of condoms and teaching them negotiating skills is also supplemented by direct fieldwork (outreach work).²⁸ Currently, projects are being implemented by organisations such as Medicos del Mundo in Madrid.

Basic health services

Victims of trafficking may not have had access to medical attention and treatment over a long period of time, due to their isolation. Some women have had health problems prior to leaving their countries or origin that remain untreated. The trafficking experience and

²⁶ Cathy Zimmerman, 'Responding to the health needs of trafficked women, Fieldwork preparation workshop report, 2-4 August 2001' London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, London.

²⁷ Interview with Cathy Zimmerman, London School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, 13 May, 2002

²⁸ Social Ailments Consultation Centre "Demetra", Lithuania, Email received 30 April 2002

exposure to violence by traffickers and clients may also generate new health problems. NGOs working with victims of trafficking often collaborate with networks of doctors, dentists and opticians who provide basic check-ups to the women and can refer them to specialised medical services and treatment when needed.

Drug rehabilitation programmes

These are often costly long-term programmes. Waiting lists are long and victims of trafficking cannot easily access these services. Drug programmes generally accept men and women who have voluntarily applied for detoxification. The duration of treatment can be anything between 12 to 14 months. Each patient is treated according to individual therapy and rehabilitation programmes, individual and group psychotherapy methods are applied. The staff may consist of psychotherapists, psychologists, ex-drug-users and volunteers who help the drug-users to regain physical and mental strength. The principles followed are voluntary and conscious attendance.²⁹

Sex Education

Several NGOs organise workshops on sex education. 'STDs and questions regarding sex are taboo in many of the women's countries of origin. They don't talk about this and this contributes to ignorance of such subjects.'³⁰ With regards to health and sex education, it is important to understand what the individual actually knows about sexual health e.g. Herpes (in case it is a reoccurring incident) and that information is made available to her on STDs. Having a sense of one's own body and how it works makes women feel in control. Many women do not know about their menstrual cycles and about what time of the month they are most likely to conceive especially when sex education was not available in their countries of origin. Giving them simple biological information on how their bodies work is a form of empowerment, as well as a form of preventive health care.

³¹ Currently, projects are implemented by organisations such as the Dortmunder Mitternachtsmission in Germany and APRAMP in Spain.

Family planning

Because of their work in the sex industry and as a result of unprotected sex, many women arrive at the shelters already pregnant. Some women are not aware of this fact because they were unable to read the signs announcing a pregnancy. This can be due to a) a lack of knowledge on reproductive systems and/or b) the stress of sex work that can lead to women missing their menstruation cycles. Most NGOs provide information on contraception, abortion, pregnancy, and childcare and will inform women on the assistance available to mothers. Workshops are often organised by NGOs on family planning issues and women are referred to other specialised services such as family planning clinics for follow-up.

Crisis support

In the first weeks after a woman leaves prostitution, assistance focuses on her immediate needs (clothing, housing, medical attention) psychological support, and posttraumatic assistance.³² It is important that the practical and immediate needs of victims of trafficking are first met in order to stabilise their situation and to enable them to recover from their experiences.³³ This will mean ensuring their physical and material security, enabling contact with their families in the countries of origin, providing information about the host country, facilitating access to work or education. Overall, the services that exist to facilitate the process of integration will have an enormous impact on women's mental health, psychological stability and general wellbeing.

²⁹ Drug-Users' Social Rehabilitation Community, Lithuania Aids Centre, Lithuania

³⁰ Interview with Andrea Hitzke, Dortmund Mitternachtsmission, Germany, 26 August, 2002

³¹ Interview with Cathy Zimmerman from London School of Tropical Medicine and Hygiene, 13 May 2002

³² GEN folder 21, IOM Colombia, Email received 2 May 2002

³³ It is important to remember that therapy can only work if the woman asks for this type of help, it cannot be imposed.

Workshops for self esteem and empowerment

Work shops and focus groups on self-esteem and self-help usually revolve around different themes such as, the prevention of violence towards women, developing knowledge of human and civil rights, caring for one's health, as well as other gender related issues. The aim of these groups is also to include the active participation of women that were victims of trafficking in developing activities and services and to empower them by: *'working on training, changing of attitudes, values and making decisions. You work under this concept to break established preconceptions as to what it means to be a victim, how this is perceived, the treatment given and the produced effect.'*³⁴

Psychological assistance during the legal process

Service providers have reported that when women are witnesses in court cases their psychological and physical condition deteriorates as the trial approaches. According to the NGO Agisra in Cologne, it is not uncommon for women to develop psychosomatic tendencies such as stomach pains and blackouts.³⁵ This is due to a) the stress of being key witnesses in legal proceedings against traffickers and the dangers they face in the host countries and those of origin as a result, and b) the fear that they will be repatriated once the court case is over and that there will be no one to protect them. *'Having a legal status and the possibility to remain in Germany is a great factor in the psychological stability of the women. If the situation is unstable and they fear returning to their countries the mental health remains bad irrespective of the support provided by the NGOs.'*³⁶ Consequently psychological assistance tends to focus on support of the women during and immediately after the legal process.

Support groups

Many victims of trafficking are reluctant to undertake long-term counselling or therapy due to the widely held belief that psychological follow-up is for 'unstable' or 'crazy' people. Faced with this obstacle service providers organise weekly support groups where women can discuss different themes of interest to them. Qualified counsellors or psychologists often run the meetings and encourage women to share their problems, pose questions and drop ideas about different subjects. This regular contact and the relationship that develops between women and counsellors helps them overcome personal barriers and preconceptions about counselling and facilitates access to longer-term psychotherapy on a one-to-one basis.³⁷

Counselling

Rehabilitation from the trafficking experience can take a long time. Counselling (or psychotherapy) is needed to address the stigmatisation that victims feel because of their involvement in prostitution and to deal with the consequences of traumas stemming from their experiences. Mental health professionals provide this service on a one-to-one basis. In some cases cultural mediators are also trained counsellors -this is an advantage since it is preferable for counselling to be provided in a woman's mother tongue. On occasion, a third individual is needed to interpret between the therapist and the client, but the presence of another person can also be a barrier to communication. It is preferable for the persons providing these services to a) be female, since trafficked women have difficulties in speaking to men about their experiences, and b) have previous experience in working with victims of trafficking or gender based violence, since they are more sensitive to the women's situation. Shelters for victims of trafficking often also have psychologists working there, i.e. Payoke in Belgium and Proyecto Esperanza in Spain.

³⁴ Fanny Polanía

³⁵ Interview with Solwodi in Mainz, 'see Thematic questionnaire on Health'

³⁶ Interview with Agisra in Cologne, see 'Thematic questionnaire on health' 27 August 2002.

³⁷ Interview with Bruno Moens, Payoke, Belgium, 20 August 2002.

C. Housing services

Shelter is one of the first basic needs of women upon leaving prostitution. It is essential to provide safe accommodation to women that are threatened by trafficking networks and pimps, to guarantee their security and give them time to recover from their experiences.

NGOs working with victims of trafficking will often work with a number of emergency shelters, host families, private partners such as hotels and guest houses and social services structures that can be accessed when a woman is threatened by trafficking networks.³⁸ Other NGOs run their own shelters for victims of trafficking.

One of the main conditions to accessing the services of a shelter is that women do not continue in prostitution and that they break all links with the environment that previously exploited them. This is a security measure to protect both the individual and other members of the shelter. There have been numerous reports of women disappearing from shelters and of traffickers and pimps waiting outside shelters to take them away. This also places other vulnerable people at risk of violence or targeting by traffickers.

Decentralised housing programmes

Decentralised housing is a system of rotation using secret housing locations. There is no designated shelter where trafficked women are accommodated. Instead NGOs depend on a number of public and private structures (at local, regional and national levels) to hide the women from traffickers. Decentralised housing can incorporate host families, shelters for women victims of violence, private apartments, hotels and hostels. This system is currently applied in Germany. In the Netherlands a nation-wide system of women's shelters is used to accommodate them, and many of them have secret addresses.

This is considered to be one of the most effective methods to protect women from traffickers and pimps, especially when they are witnesses in legal cases. NGOs operating this system of housing claim that designated shelters for victims of trafficking are dangerous and often known to traffickers. This is because in the long run women cannot be prevented from contacting their families or friends. Traffickers often know the women's relatives or acquaintances and can easily obtain information on their whereabouts. From the moment a shelter becomes known to a trafficker (and the criminal networks) it is no longer a safe place for women and should not be used in future.

Emergency shelters

Temporary accommodation and short-term crisis intervention is provided by most emergency shelters. These shelters generally provide accommodation for a period of one week to one month. Women may arrive at these shelters independently, or through referral by the authorities or other NGOs.

On arrival women will be given food, clothing, hygienic products, telephone cards, transport tickets, and a small amount of money for spending on their own needs. Crisis intervention at the shelters may also include medical treatment, legal counselling and psychological support.

Emergency shelters often provide accommodation to other target groups such as women victims of violence, refugees and asylum seekers, the homeless and families with children. Often, women who have been victims of trafficking in the sex industry will be advised not to discuss their experiences with other persons living with them, so as to avoid stigmatisation and/or rejection by other members of the shelter.

³⁸ GEN folder 8, Cabiria, France, Email received 27 May 2002

These shelters are sometimes used to hide women from traffickers and pimps or as a temporary solution to shortages in accommodation. Women are later oriented towards longer-term specialised shelters or more independent forms of housing.

Specialised shelters for victims of trafficking

These shelters often provide integrated services for victims of trafficking, including legal, administrative, social assistance and psychological support. Specialised shelters exist in Belgium and Italy. Some shelters house both men and women, whilst others provide housing for women only. Generally, after the person arrives at the shelter the regularisation process is initiated and her 'integration' begins (depending on whether the woman will collaborate with the authorities). Alternatively, should a woman decide not to remain in the host country arrangements are made for her repatriation and reintegration in her country of origin.³⁹

Most shelters only have a limited number of places available and can accommodate five to fifteen people at any one given time. Usually there is a communal kitchen, bathroom and living room, with a minimum of two or three persons to a bedroom. The shelters are often run by one or two social workers with the help of volunteers to ensure a 24-hour service and maximum security.

There are differences in the kind of services provided in shelters and some distinctions can be made between 'first care' and 'second care' shelters:

- First care shelters provide accommodation for 3 to 9 months. They provide integrated services for newcomers that are very similar to those provided at emergency shelters. On arrival women are informed about their rights and the options available to them, as well as about the services they can access. Some time is given to women to recover from their experiences and think about what they want to do. Generally, at this point in time women may be confused and disoriented and may not speak the language. It is a period during which they learn to manoeuvre in the host society, i.e. learn how to use public transport, access public services, and use the post office. Pagasa in Belgium runs this kind of shelter.
- Second care shelters provide accommodation for six to twelve months. They are for those who have decided to remain in the host country. Generally, the social follow-up in these shelters focuses more on the long-term needs of women in the process of integration. Services and orientation of other structures is provided to facilitate cultural integration, labour insertion, vocational training and long-term housing.

Transit apartments

Transit apartments may be shared or individual. It is a more independent and decentralised form of housing where women can live whilst they are waiting to find their own accommodation. In order to access this type of housing NGOs usually take into account a woman's personal and emotional stability and try to assess whether she is capable of living on her own. Women can access this type of housing when they prove to be autonomous, work or study and have some form of income to cover their living expenses (state benefits or salary).

Transit apartments are usually sublet to women by NGOs that run the shelters (either free of charge or at a very low rent) for a period of nine to twelve months. Generally, the women will have to pay fixed charges on electricity, gas and telephone bills. During their time in the transit apartment women will be required to put money aside for a deposit and one or two months' rent to cover their costs when they get their own apartments.

³⁹ This can be a lengthy process taking up to six months in some cases and a woman will probably remain in that shelter.

The advantages for women living in transit apartments are that they learn to function without being assisted, get used to living alone, and learn how to pay for the rent and bills and how to budget their expenses.

Host families

On occasion women are placed in private homes with host families for short periods of time. Host families may be couples with or without children or single people who have volunteered to provide housing. They usually provide a room to the women, food and assistance in getting around the town of residence. This is usually a very supportive environment for women, where they can have some time to rest and think about what they want to do. In certain situations, it may not be a suitable option for women who require time alone without house rules being imposed on them. Host families are very rarely used but can be useful for hiding women and to provide more personalised attention. In Germany, the Dortmund Mitternachtsmission can also pay families for accommodation.

Facilitating access to independent housing

Partnerships have been developed with private and public structures to facilitate clients' access to independent accommodation and social housing. Public structures, such as social letting agencies, can provide information on available accommodation (low cost apartments and rooms). Other structures are subsidised by the government and directly sublet apartments to their clients. Such services exist in Belgium. Generally NGOs will provide assistance in searching for independent accommodation (specialised magazines, internet) but they will encourage women to search for and visit apartments themselves, sometimes orientating and mainstreaming them into existing public structures that provide assistance with housing. In order to access private housing women have to provide proof of income (salaries or social benefits), pay for a deposit equivalent to two or three months rent, and show residence permits. NGOs will mediate with landlords when the women have difficulties with expressing themselves in the language or when they have to provide information about their residence permits. Informal partnerships have also been created with private landlords, who allow women to pay large entry deposits in monthly instalments.

D. Services to facilitate integration

Victims of trafficking must be encouraged to take control of their lives and function as autonomously as possible in the host country. This is not only important for their empowerment but also to help reduce the risk of social exclusion.

Services to facilitate integration aim to give women the tools, skills and knowledge with which to navigate in their new environment. Comprehensive integration programmes aim to develop women's understanding of their environment and to enable them to become active participants in the host society. NGOs, public and private structures often provide language tuition, as well as information on the host country (its labour market, culture, history, geography, current political, economic and social issues).

Integration courses

Integration courses aim to widen the individual's understanding of the host country and increase the possibilities of functioning in society, whilst promoting respect for cultural diversity. These programmes target newly arrived migrants that are at least eighteen years of age and are in a regular situation. Most courses are free of charge and run for up to eighteen months (with group and individual tuition for up to twelve hours a week). Generally, an integration course will cover:

- a) Intensive language courses
- b) A course of social orientation: information on the city or town of residence, transport, how to access housing, employment, education, social security, health care, public services.
- c) Information on rights and obligations
- d) Orientation towards a job: training towards employment and mainstreaming into vocational training schemes, enrolment in local or national employment agencies. Follow-up is provided on an individual basis.

E. Education

NGOs carry out an evaluation of clients' educational background and achievements and try to identify their educational needs. Information is also given on bridging qualifications and further education at universities and colleges. Most often the services provided are a) language training and literacy classes b) orientation and mainstreaming to higher education structures b) specific courses to develop knowledge in a particular field and c) career planning. It is still very difficult for women to access further education at colleges and universities, due to funding problems. However, in countries such as Belgium, the state can provide grants to women who want to continue their education. Financial assistance is more likely to be given to students that are between eighteen and twenty-four years of age, but not so much to mature students.

Literacy classes

Some women have not received a primary education and may not be able to read or write. In host countries illiteracy will limit women's opportunities in the labour market. Even for lower qualified jobs, such as domestic work, employers expect women to be literate. In cases where women cannot read and write NGOs will orient them to specialised structures that run literacy classes or provide direct assistance through volunteers.

Language courses

Being able to speak the language of the host country is essential, especially if women want to find work. Most NGOs provide basic language tuition in the regional as well as national tongues with the help of volunteer teachers. Some NGOs orient women to public structures such as schools and colleges for more in-depth courses that aim to develop language proficiency (making enquiries, improving telephone skills, expressing opinions). Specialised language training programmes also exist to develop communication skills and techniques in a professional context (organising meetings, negotiating, making presentations). These courses tend to be private and can be expensive.

F. Vocational Training

Vocational training should be seen as a tool leading to the employment of women rather than an end in itself. Services for vocational training include a) orientation of public and private training schemes b) basic on the job training and work experience placements and c) support in finding employment.

Vocational training is similar to an apprenticeship in that it usually involves a period of study to learn the theory of the job (two-six months) and a period of practical work experience (two-six months). Vocational training schemes can build confidence and provide women with the opportunity to learn about the working environment in the host country. They are generally certified courses that help women gain qualifications in a given field. The advantage of vocational training schemes is that they can help trainees meet potential employers.

Most schemes are full-time and remunerated. Generally, training schemes are paid for by the state or by the NGOs. If the NGO covers the expenses they tend to give a small amount of money ranging from 150 to 200 Euro a month (including housing and expenses). Should a woman be eligible for welfare benefits she can get around 550 to 700 Euro a month but will have to cover her own housing expenses.

Current vocational training schemes for migrant women focus on nursing, care for the elderly and handicapped, catering, and to a lesser extent information technology and secretarial work

On the job training

This scheme is based on a practical approach to work, involving minimal or no theory. It involves training and work experience in a company for a period of two to six months, depending on the person's personal capacity. During this time the trainee has the possibility to gather experience in the working environment. A psychologist working for the NGO and a tutor from the company supports her. An agreement signed by the NGO and the company regulates training conditions. Insurance costs and payments to the trainee are covered by the NGO. At the end of the training period the company is required to assess the possibility of employing the woman. Generally there are excellent chances of success for integration when the person obtains work in this manner.⁴⁰ The Italian association On the Road currently offers on the job training.

Vocational training schemes that target women

Projects are developed with the participation of women and based on the concept of gender mainstreaming. They aim to empower women that have been out of employment for a long period of time and that have to overcome the hurdle of re-entering the labour market. These programmes aim to address the lack of confidence and low self-esteem stemming from having been off the formal labour market, give women qualifications and help them develop new skills (interpersonal communication, working with new technology, working in a team). Vocational training schemes are organised to meet a woman's specific profile, taking into account her aspirations, past experience and education, as well as professional opportunities in the local labour market. Other services provided by gender sensitive schemes include:

a) Child care facilities

The courses are generally very flexible and include specific services for women with family responsibilities. These schemes offer different models of support for women with children, the cost of which is deducted from the person's income. Services provided for the care of children include external child minders, care at home, orientation to public or private nurseries and supervision of children during holidays.⁴¹

b) Training and language tuition

Vocational training is developed with language courses for migrants. This enables trainees to acquire basic skills in the language of the host country and to learn the professional jargon used in specific working environments. For example, a training course for nursing will include a language course on medical terminology.

G. Access to Employment

Employment is perhaps the most important factor in the process of integration, enabling women to become financially independent and self-sufficient in the long-term. NGOs give initial employment advice and information on the local labour market, give assistance with

⁴⁰ GEN folder 14, Association On the Road, Italy, Email received 21 May 2002

⁴¹ Verein zur Förderung von Frauenerwerbstätigkeit im Revier, Germany, <http://www.vffr.de/>

job searching (curriculum vitae, Internet searches) and provide a list of vacancies at private companies, Non-Government Organisations and national employment agencies.

The NGOs are also involved in a) providing career advice and orientation to public structures b) sensitising private and public companies to the needs of clients c) negotiating working conditions with potential employers and d) providing a follow-up on the job. Some NGOs also advise women to join a trade union in order to learn about labour legislation, their rights and responsibilities in the working environment of the host country.

Work pools

Migrant women face considerable difficulties in obtaining work because of language barriers, lack of job searching skills, insufficient qualifications and discrimination in the labour market.

In order to address these problems NGOs have created work pools of potential employers and developed services that are adapted to the needs of migrants.

A work pool is a non-profit entity that co-ordinates social-labour insertion and functions like a recruitment agency.⁴² Social workers and lawyers that provide legal advice and information about labour legislation and contracts run the service. They also help clients to write up curriculum vitae, orient them in their search for a job taking into account their professional and personal achievements. Work pools are often used in Spain. The aim of the work pool is to put clients in contact with suitable employers. They also give employers information on potential employees and negotiate the terms of work contracts. Follow-up on the job is provided for two years and in cases where problems arise at work the social worker can provide mediation between employers and clients.

The work pool sensitises employers through advertisements in the printed press, on radio, and in the yellow pages. They are also represented at trade fairs and conferences. Project managers contact private companies to promote the work pool and to negotiate training periods and jobs for their clients. Consequently when employers contact the service they know that they will be working with migrant women and are generally more sensitive to the problems they may have in adapting to a new working environment.

Information for employers

In some European countries women who are victims of trafficking are able to get temporary work permits on the condition of first finding employment. Obtaining work permits often involves long and difficult administrative procedures for employers (and then may have to be renewed every three or six months). This acts as a deterrent for potential employers that are dissuaded by the precariousness of the women's legal situation. NGOs working with victims of trafficking inform employers on the steps involved in applying for a work permit and provide administrative assistance to facilitate the process. They also provide legal and practical information to employers on short-term working permits and act as 'moral references' for clients.⁴³

Providing training to women about setting up co-operatives

Many women end up working as independents in domestic work or as cleaners in the services industry. These are difficult sectors to regulate and it is not uncommon for women to end up in exploitative situations, e.g. some may have temporary contracts that do not meet legal requirements. Others are employed on a part-time basis, but are in fact working longer hours and days than those stipulated in their contracts. Women remain vulnerable to exploitation due to their lack of knowledge about labour legislation, but also

⁴² Interview with Hermanas Oblatas, Madrid, July 2002 'Coordinadora per la inserció sociolaboral' organised by Caritas; Oblatas; Guarderia Quatre Vents (SAIF), Joan Salvador Gavina. Madrid, Spain

⁴³ Interview with Pagasa, Belgium, 19 August 2002.

because of their dependency on employers for working permits. As individuals it is often difficult for them to negotiate working conditions and claim their rights.

In light of this situation NGOs such as VOMADE and Proyecto Esperanza in Spain provide training⁴⁴ to assist women set up their own self-regulating co-operatives. These are autonomous associations that can be established by a group of women working in a specific sector of employment, e.g., domestic work. The groups based on the principle of shared responsibility and democratic management. Because members themselves set the co-operative's objectives they are better able to meet the needs of workers and to negotiate good quality and stable jobs.

Knowing how to set up a co-operative helps women to learn about a specific sector of work and develop personal management skills. It can also be useful for women returning to their countries of origin to create alternatives to unemployment and is therefore a strong tool for empowerment.

⁴⁴ Legal and administrative support, as well as information on government subsidies.

3. Integration and reintegration practices in the European Union

The following chapter looks at existing services and activities to facilitate the integration of women victims of trafficking in Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom. It also looks at current initiatives in host countries to facilitate the return and reintegration of victims to their countries of origin. The focus is on the provision of services in the areas of health, housing, education, vocational training, employment and reintegration. It draws on the work and experience of service providers working for this target group and considers the problems to be addressed in each area. During the interviews NGOs were also asked to provide details of services and activities that they thought to have a good practice, these are included at the end of each separate section.

3.1. Belgium

In Belgium, the 1995 Law on Trafficking prohibits trafficking in people. Prostitution is allowed. A 45-days “order to leave the territory” is granted to the victim that leaves the environment that led to her exploitation and a specialised centre assists her. This period allows the victim to decide whether he or she will file a complaint against the traffickers. The victim that files a complaint within the 45-day period is entitled to receiving a declaration of arrival for a three-month period, which later can be extended to six months. The victim is under the obligation of being assisted by a specialised centre over the whole period of her stay. The victim can apply for a residence permit of unlimited duration from the foreigners department when her complaint or statement has resulted in court summons, or when the complaint was significant for the whole process. There are three specialised centres providing assistance to victims of trafficking in Belgium. These are Pagasa, Payoke and Sürya.

A. Health

From the moment that a woman arrives at one of the three national reception centres she can access basic health services, including doctors, opticians and dentists. On receiving a temporary residence permit she gets a right to free medical care in the host country for the duration of her stay.⁴⁵

At the reception centres social workers assess the mental and physical conditions of their clients and orient them to existing public health centres, for general check-ups and specialised gynaecological attention. NGOs work closely with a number of doctors and clinics that have experience of dealing with victims of trafficking and are sensitive to the women’s needs.

In cases where women suffer from alcohol and/or drug addiction they can access drug rehabilitation programmes or enrol in methadone programmes offered by specialised services such as Free Clinic, De Sleutel and ADIC.

The centres provide information on physical health issues (hygiene) and sexual health, in particular STDs, contraception and reproductive systems. Certain NGOs also directly provide contraception. In cases of unwanted pregnancies the organisations refer women to specialised services for abortion. Abortions are not covered by social security and the NGOs have to cover the costs.

⁴⁵ Payoke, ‘Thematic questionnaire on health’ 19 August 2002.

Most women manage to resolve or prevent health problems as a result of the services provided by NGOs. Last year (2002) 80% of the women that arrived at Payoke's shelter had diseases for which they received treatment and from which they were cured. Another 20% had the HIV virus and is still undergoing treatment.

Psychological follow-up is available on an individual basis and through support groups. NGOs providing this service work with cultural mediators and psychologists who speak the women's mother tongues. However, this specialised service is not readily available and locally based psychologists are reticent to give therapy due to the language barriers.

Good Practice

The Consulentenbureau in Antwerp is a counselling service providing direct psychological assistance to migrants. It currently works with Payoke to sensitise women on mental health issues, with the aim of tackling cultural barriers and prejudices to therapy and facilitating access to psychological assistance. The NGO organises weekly discussions⁴⁶ with women at the shelter, where they become acquainted with the psychologists and the concept of therapy. As the women learn about what is involved they are more able to ask for individual help should they need it. This has been a particularly successful approach in introducing women to counselling; since the project started more women have shown an interest in accessing these services.

B. Housing

There are three specialised shelters providing medium (three-six months) and long-term (nine-twelve months) housing facilities for victims of trafficking. They are run by the NGOs Pag-Asa from Brussels, Payoke from Antwerp and Sürya from Liege.

On arrival at the NGOs the women are placed in one of the three shelters or when there is no room they will be oriented to crisis shelters or alternative accommodation that caters for women and children. The shelters generally provide a wide range of services including material, social and psychological support. They are also given advice on legal, educational and employment matters.

During their stay in Belgium victims of trafficking can receive financial support from the state through the Minimex, which is equivalent to 580 Euro a month. From this allowance the costs of accommodation, food, transport, are deducted and laundry services are provided at the shelter. All in all, the women will receive 15 to 20 Euro a week to spend as they wish.

In order to find long-term alternatives to housing after the shelter the NGOs are involved in a) identifying independent accommodation for clients b) providing information on housing facilities and c) mainstreaming clients into existing public services to access social housing.

Generally, NGOs collaborate with local Social Letting Offices⁴⁷ and liaise with organisations that sublet accommodation to people with minimal resources, such as the Letting Office (Antwerps Sociaal Verhuurkantoor = Antwerp Social Letting office) in Antwerp and Baita in Brussels. These projects are subsidised by the government to enable people from less-favoured backgrounds to access housing facilities. In Brussels the NGO Pag-Asa runs a similar project with seven transit apartments that it sublets to

⁴⁶ Weekly topics are chosen by the group

⁴⁷ The social renting offices provide information on available low cost rooms and apartments

victims of trafficking at a reduced price. The transit apartments enable women to become autonomous and save for a deposit on their future accommodation.⁴⁸

When looking for individual apartments, women are provided with follow-up and advice, including mediation when they have difficulty speaking the language or when they need to explain their situation to landlords who enquire about their residency permits.⁴⁹ As a result of the services provided by the NGOs or because of changes in their personal situations i.e. because women have found partners, one hundred percent of clients has found independent accommodation on leaving the shelters.

Good Practice

Payoke works in partnership with a private landlord in Antwerp who owns over 200 properties in the region and who prioritises on the housing needs of clients referred to him by the NGO. Housing is a problem in most cities and this collaboration has greatly facilitated women's access to housing.

NGOs mainstream women into existing public structures to involve them in the search for housing facilities. On their first visits to housing associations social workers can accompany them to put them on track and explain the procedures. After that they must take steps on their own, the NGO will only intervene when clients require assistance with administrative papers or mediation in case of problems. This approach teaches women to use and develop their own resources.

C. Education

The activities of NGOs focus on providing clients with language and literacy skills; in order to facilitate women's integration into society and help them access new training and work possibilities. Different organisations provide language tuition in Dutch and French. In cases where women cannot read and write they will be oriented to organisations running special literacy programmes for adults.

About 75% of women at the NGO Payoke is mainstreamed into integration or orientation programmes for refugees and newly arrived migrants. The programmes provide language tuition at basic, intermediate and advanced levels. For women who have enrolled in the orientation programmes social benefits are linked to their attendance. To encourage clients to attend the courses a small remuneration of 1 Euro is given for every hour attended. Integration programmes are run by Pina (Project Integration Newcomers Antwerp), Compas, Open School and Instant A in Antwerp and Compas and Trace in Brussels.

At a more general level, NGOs carry out an evaluation of the educational needs of women. For women that already have a profession they provide guidance on how to bridge gaps between qualifications obtained in the country of origin and the host country's requirements. For those who want to further their education they inform them on courses and training opportunities at colleges and universities. Victims of trafficking can have access to the adult education system on the same terms as country nationals. However, they must be able to provide certificates to prove their qualifications and pass a language proficiency test to determine whether or not they will be able to follow the course.

⁴⁸ There is an obligatory sum of 75 Euro that has to be saved every month.

⁴⁹ According to the NGOs women are most often interested in renting small independent studios, since the Minimex is reduced if the person lives in shared accommodation.

It has been known for women to obtain financial support (through the CPAS (OCMW is the Flemish counterpart Public Commission for Social Welfare)) whilst studying for a university degree, but this is the exception rather than the rule.⁵⁰ The costs of university courses are 500 Euro as entry fees and 500 Euro for study materials and textbooks every year, without mentioning the costs of accommodation and living expenses. As a result of the work of NGOs around ten percent of clients moves on to further education (Payoke).

Good practice

The orientation courses also provide information on the host society: its culture, history, geography, labour market, and its political and economic make-up. They are said to be extremely useful in that they immediately give migrants an idea of the country in which they live and provide essential information on access to services.

D. Vocational Training

NGOs evaluate clients' personal and professional skills and identify training needs. They provide information on job opportunities in local labour markets and orient clients to public structures and NGOs that provide vocational training.

Women wanting to access vocational training opportunities in public structures must have a three-month residence permit (a residence document for a duration of a minimum three months) and be able to communicate in Dutch or French. During the training period they can receive financial support from the welfare office and are entitled to the MINIMEX.

Training schemes are organised by different regional organisations, including the VDAB (Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling) for the Flemish region, the BGDA –ORBEM in Brussels Capital and the FOREM for the Walloon area. All three projects are structured in a similar way. The Office Communautaire et Regional de la Formation et de l'Emploi (FOREM) in particular provides courses adapted to the needs of migrants, with a special focus on developing language skills and proficiency.

Generally the courses include a six-month training period and two-month practical work experience in a specific economic sector.⁵¹ As a result, women are able to use up to date equipment and learn about current practices in the working environment. Vocational training structures run a number of courses ranging from carpentry, catering, printing, sewing, office work and business management to information technology. Individual follow-up of clients is provided to ensure that training is adapted to the needs of women and takes into account their personal aptitudes, skills and rhythm. At the end of training they will receive a certificate of achievement.

NGOs at the national level also play a central role in providing vocational training opportunities for specific populations including refugees and migrants. The CIRE is one organisation that is particularly active. In Liege the local NGO CRENEAU targets its vocational training to women, and gives basic qualification courses such as setting up small businesses, business management, cookery and baking.

According to the NGO Sūrya women benefit from these courses in that they learn a new trade and are able to update and refresh their skills. It generally increases their self-esteem and provides them with the opportunity to meet new people outside the NGO.

⁵⁰ A scholarship of 2500 – 3000 Euro may be available on individual assessment and evaluation of the person, but generally these are not accessible to mature students (from 25 onwards). Payoke, 20 August 02

⁵¹ On the whole private enterprise companies do not participate in these schemes and training is in fact carried out in collaboration with organisations from specific economic sectors.

Most victims of trafficking have access to vocational training in Belgium, and as a result about 25% of women has been able to find employment.

Good Practice

To facilitate access to training for women with children, FOREM provides childcare facilities from 7 am till 6.30 pm. The costs of childcare are added to each person's income and transport expenses to and from the office and to the companies are reimbursed. This is of particular support to mothers who would otherwise not be able to afford childcare or have the time to access the courses.

E. Employment

NGOs give career advice and vocational guidance as well as information about job vacancies at national employment agencies. They also work with clients to develop their job search skills, provide help with writing CVs and refining interview techniques. Generally, NGOs orient women to public structures such as the regional employment agencies and the Centre Public d'Aide Sociale (CPAS) or Centre for Public Welfare, which runs an employment service for migrants.

Occasionally, NGOs receive job offers for the women and will negotiate a contract and working conditions with employers. Most of the time, however, it is the woman who find work independently and in these cases the NGOs provide information to employers about the administrative procedure for obtaining work permits and assist in filling out documents, organising medical visits and obtaining a social security number. They can also provide personal references for women to vouch for their integrity.

In the Flemish region the organisation Vlaamse Dienst voor Arbeidsbemiddeling (VDAB), which is the Flemish Service for Labour Mediation, works with migrants with limited professional experience or education and provides advice and assistance. It collaborates with integration projects such as PINA to assist women in labour insertion. Once she has attained a certain level of proficiency in the language the VDAB will approach the woman and carry out an assessment of her professional and education background. It will also talk about the kind of work that she would like to do and try to fit this in with current opportunities in the labour market. The VDAB will then initiate a training period at a private company where the woman can obtain the necessary experience for her insertion into the labour market. When training is completed the VDAB will assist the woman in finding a job in that sector.

In general most women are unable to find work a) because of administrative difficulties in obtaining work permits, and b) because of the short-term nature of residence permits. This puts them in a precarious situation and often dissuades potential employers from giving them work. In 2001 only five percent (35 out of 600) of victims of trafficking was able to find work.

When women are able to find work the NGOs provide follow-up to the person on the job to ensure that her contract, hours, pay are in order. Women are often able to find work as waitresses, as cooks or as cleaners. This is because it is less qualified work and quite low paid. On rare occasions women have been able to get work as secretaries, but this still remains difficult because of the educational level required and because of problems in speaking or writing the language.

Good Practice

Currently Payoke is working to sensitise local and national employment agencies to facilitate women's access to their services and provides assistance and orientation in finding work. Everyone unemployed for more than one year gets a state unemployment card from the VDAB. This card exempts employers from paying taxes for these employees and can act as an incentive for potential employers.

F. Repatriation / Reintegration

When a woman wishes to return to her country of origin NGOs will carry out an initial interview in order to evaluate her needs and provide information on the services available on returning to her country of origin.

Based on an analysis of the risks involved in her return service providers will establish contact with NGOs in the country of origin to arrange reception at the airport. In cases where women do not have a passport they will arrange for the necessary travel documents to be issued by the relevant embassies or consulates in Belgium. In some cases the NGOs will collaborate with the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) to cover travel expenses and supervise the reintegration process of the woman in the country of origin.

As long as the woman remains in Belgium NGOs will continue to provide shelter, financial support, medical care and psychological assistance as well as legal and administrative follow-up.

In practical terms, it is difficult to determine how many women actually manage to reintegrate back into their communities, since a follow-up is only possible when women remain in touch with the NGOs abroad. In principle, NGOs in Belgium maintain contact with the support network to ensure that the person has arrived safely and/or that she has been escorted back to her hometown. In some cases, the woman herself establishes contact with the social workers in Belgium to let them know of her situation.

Good practice

The NGO Payoke collaborates internationally with an extensive network of NGOs to provide return and reintegration assistance to victims of trafficking.

3.2. Germany

The German Criminal Code prohibits trafficking in human beings, article 180b, and serious trafficking in human beings, article 181. Prostitution is not prohibited in Germany but work permits may not be issued for this purpose. Germany is a federal republic divided into sixteen so-called *Länder*. Laws and especially law enforcement and the discretionary practices of authorities differ from region to region. Most, but not all, of the *Länder* make use of the possibility to enact official guidelines on how to deal with trafficking in human beings. Possible victims of trafficking get a four-week reflection period. The obligation to leave the country is temporarily suspended for people needed as witnesses in criminal proceedings dealing with the offence of human trafficking or who temporarily co-operate with the German authorities in the investigation of crimes. They benefit from a temporary suspension of deportation for as long as they are involved in the criminal proceedings. This does not mean that they are given a right of residence, but the execution of the order to leave the country is temporarily suspended. This is often for

short periods and has to be extended repeatedly. In a few exceptional cases, in fact only two to three per cent of witnesses, women get a permanent residence permit on humanitarian grounds.

A. Health

On receiving a residency permit women are entitled to free medical care. However, the administrative procedure can take some weeks and basic health services have to be paid for during the period of time it takes for the women's situation to become regularised.

Some NGOs depend on a small network of volunteer doctors that provide services free of charge. Other NGOs have to cover medical expenses and will not receive reimbursement when a woman does not get a residence permit. This is an expense that most NGOs are unable to afford because they do not get funding for providing this kind of assistance. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that in some *Länder* women cannot access free medical care at public health centres.⁵²

NGOs identify the mental and physical health needs of their clients and provide orientation to specialised health centres, NGOs providing medical care for migrants (Caritas and Migrantzentrum) and/or private doctors. They also give information on a case-by-case basis about mental health (stress, worry, sleep disorders) and physical health issues (malnutrition, infectious diseases, injuries).

The Dortmunder Mitternachtmission in particular carries out preventive action in the area of health through its outreach work. It provides information on HIV and other STDs, contraception, safe sex techniques and safe drug use.

Municipal Health Offices, known as the Gesundheitsamt, generally provide free HIV and Hepatitis examinations, but check-ups for other STDs have to be paid for in some cities (20 Euro for one examination in Dortmund) and the tests are not always anonymous. In cases where women request assistance with alcohol and/or drugs problems they will be referred to specialised clinics for detoxification programmes.

Psychological support is provided by NGOs that work with victims of trafficking. Some organisations, such as Agisra, do this work through cultural mediators that are also trained psychologists. The mediators are usually migrant women from the same geographical area as the victims of trafficking. They have a good understanding of the background of clients and a greater personal awareness of the difficulties and problems faced by the women as migrants in the host country. This makes it easier for the counsellors and the women to relate to one another and facilitates communication.

In cases where women are referred to independent external psychologists they are required to pay up to 50 Euro per hour (the costs are usually covered by NGOs).⁵³ Some psychologists and doctors from public structures are not trained to work with victims of trafficking and they sometimes lack sensitivity with clients. In order to address this problem Agisra provides mediation and advice to health specialists on how to work with victims of trafficking.

Most women manage to resolve or prevent health problems as a result of the services provided by NGOs and the public services. Currently there is a high success rate ranging between eighty to a hundred percent in the area of health care provision.

⁵² In West Germany, only two existing health projects run by the NGOs Caritas and the Migrantzentrum in Cologne provide medical care for women whilst they are in an irregular situation.

⁵³ The social security can cover this cost when a woman provides a medical certificate to say that she needs treatment.

Good Practice

The Gesundheitsamt in Cologne has developed a project using cultural mediators in the provision of health care to migrant women. Consultations, testing and treatment are free and anonymous, irrespective of the patient's legal status. Mediators also do outreach work with migrant women working in the sex industry and they have reportedly been successful in reducing health risks of this target group.⁵⁴ This was hailed as a model of good practices, especially since these centres do not exist all over Germany.

B. Housing

There are two different systems of housing in place for victims of trafficking in Germany. The first of these is about individual specialised shelters run by religious organisations such as Solwodi. The second and most common system of housing is decentralised accommodation that is provided by a number of NGOs throughout the country. It is also important to note that the German government mainly funds the decentralised system of housing and has in the past refused funding to specialised NGOs to create their own shelters on the grounds that these were not safe.

The Dortmunder Mitternachtsmission, in particular, co-ordinates a project that provides emergency, medium and long-term accommodation to eighty women during the legal process. This system is perhaps one of the most effective ways of hiding women from traffickers and pimps. Service providers co-ordinate housing activities with partner NGOs at the national level and in some cases have been known to arrange the relocation of women to other countries in order to protect them from the trafficking networks.

Generally, on arrival at the NGOs social workers do an evaluation of clients' housing needs and give an orientation to existing housing facilities, including host families, crisis centres, shelters for women (and children), hotels and independent apartments. For security reasons the NGOs request the women to not give out their addresses to friends or families or re-establish contact with persons from the environment in which they were formerly exploited.

When women prefer to live in independent accommodation they can receive financial assistance of 200 Euro a month from the social welfare department, as well as funding for an apartment of up to 30m². In these cases NGOs inform women about available accommodation and provide administrative assistance. Some NGOs directly rent apartments from landlords that they then sublet to the women. In these cases the women themselves are not directly involved in the search for housing facilities.

Other NGOs that have no funding for housing facilities encourage women to use their own resources in finding accommodation. Negotiating apartments with landlords can be difficult for women, given the uncertainty of their stay in Germany.⁵⁵ Faced with this problem NGOs try to mediate with landlords about the situation of clients and their housing needs.

⁵⁴ Interview with Dortmunder Mitternachtsmission, 26 August 2002.

⁵⁵ Victims of trafficking that do not have a right of residence in the country are required to leave Germany once the court case is over

Good practice

The decentralised system is extremely flexible and takes into account a woman's needs and personal requirements. The NGOs try to find the best solution for clients, e.g. some women prefer to live alone, whilst others may want to live in shelters in order to feel less isolated. It is also extremely efficient in hiding women from trafficking networks.

C. Education

NGOs build up a profile of a woman's educational background and achievements to date and identify her educational needs. Initially, service providers arrange for women to undertake language training and in some cases literacy courses to facilitate their integration into German society. Being able to communicate in the host country's language increases women's self-esteem and helps them to make new social contacts with people outside the organisation. They also feel more confident about their chances of obtaining work.

NGOs mainstream clients into existing education programmes such as the Volkshochschule (Adult Education Schemes) that are organised by local government institutions. The Volkshochschule offers a wide variety of qualified courses for women wishing to update or develop new skills. There are also possibilities for them to sit exams to bridge gaps between the qualifications from their countries of origin and the requirements for further education or employment in Germany.

In most cases where education, language tuition or training is involved the NGOs have to finance the individual projects of women (free language tuition is only available to women who have refugee status).⁵⁶ At the Volkshochschulen the costs range between 144 to 250 Euro for a twenty-week language course (four hours a week). If women are not able to begin the course in September they are referred to private intensive language courses and the price rises to 300 Euro a month (four hours a day). Generally the costs depend on the subject studied and the intensity of the course.

Most women are interested in accessing language, computer and nursing courses. Nursing is perhaps one of the sectors of employment with the most work opportunities for migrant women.

Victims of trafficking share the same access to the education system as country nationals, but are not entitled to state grants or other financial assistance for this purpose. Those wanting to continue in further education will be required to provide evidence of their educational background and pass an entry exam. When women want to go to university they also need a permanent residence permit, which instantaneously disqualifies many victims of trafficking from being able to embark on long-term educational projects. The number of women that are able to access further education courses is generally very low, and is only about four percent in cities such as Dortmund.

Good practice

The Dortmund Mitternachtsmission has sensitised schools to the situation of victims of trafficking and has managed to secure free language tuition for its clients at one school. Free tuition is not normally provided and most NGOs working with migrant women have to pay for the lessons.

⁵⁶ http://www.refugeenet.org/education/grids_provision.html

D. Vocational Training

NGOs working with victims of trafficking initially do an evaluation of the women's educational and professional backgrounds and oriente them to vocational training programmes provided by other NGOs.

In order to access training possibilities women must undergo a preliminary evaluation to determine their linguistic proficiency and academic/professional experience. They must also have a work permit in order to participate in any vocational schemes provided by public and private structures, but this can disqualify victims of trafficking who can only obtain work permits when they have found employers.⁵⁷

Vocational training is mainly organised by the Non-Government sector that has developed partnerships with private companies to provide practical work experience for clients. The organisation Verein Förderung Frauenerwerbstätigkeit in Revier (VVFR) in particular has developed a programme to facilitate women's access to training opportunities. Focusing on gender mainstreaming the organisation aims to create equal opportunities for women in the labour market. It especially targets women who have been out of work over a long period of time, or who have difficulties in accessing training facilities because of family responsibilities. For this purpose the organisation also provides childcare facilities.

In working out an individual training plan professionals will take into account career opportunities in the place of residence, the trainee's current situation and her professional and educational background. For migrant women a special programme has been developed that hands out information about the labour market and professions, teaches new working methods, gives applied training in a working environment and provides lessons in German as a foreign language. The main sectors that are covered by the scheme are information technology, business management, nursing, the services sector and trade and handicraft.

The courses claim to have a seventy-percent success rate for women going on to further training or finding work. However, as mentioned above, to date many victims of trafficking have not been able to access vocational training schemes. The Dortmunder Mitternachtsmission reports that only four percent of its clients has been able to go on to vocational training and to secure employment.

Good Practice

The VVFR has specially worked out programmes designed to meet the needs of migrant women. It combines language tuition with vocational training and provides guidance on different working environments in Germany. It is also sensitive to the women's situation and closely monitors the training process at a company. It provides individual follow-up and orientation in the process of labour insertion after the training period.

E. Employment

New legislation allows victims of trafficking to work whilst they are living in Germany. Work permits are granted according to the actual situation of the labour market and limited in time to the duration of the job, this can be at most for the duration of the residence permit (three-six months) and only for a specific job in a specific firm.

⁵⁷ The work permits are granted according to the actual situation of the labour market and limited in time to the duration of the job: this can be at the most one year and only for a specific profession in a specific firm.

NGOs provide information on job vacancies at the regional employment agencies by accessing a centralised database on the internet but are mainly involved in seeking job opportunities through a network of personal and NGO contacts. Initially, women are not referred to existing public services for employment, because they can only get work permits once they have found an employer. As a result, NGOs have organised work pools where they can advertise vacancies for informal work, especially for cleaners and domestic workers. They arrange meetings between employers and clients and negotiate working conditions and contracts. The NGOs also provide supervision on the job and mediation in cases where problems arise at work.

Once the women are better able to communicate in German NGOs provide assistance with job search skills, including writing up a CV and developing interview techniques. They also orient them to vocational training schemes provided by NGOs such as Arbeit Und Leben, which run a one-year nursing course to care for the elderly and disabled. This NGO organise practical work experience in hospitals and specialised homes where after the training period women are often able to gain employment.⁵⁸

NGOs also encourage victims of trafficking to join trade unions such as the Deutscher Gewerkschaftsbund (DGB) so that they can learn about labour legislation, contracts, and overtime hours and obtain guidance in dealing with potential problems with employers.

Overall, women victims of trafficking are able to get jobs in the services and catering industries as cleaners, as kitchen assistants and waitresses. The success rate for women being able to obtain work seems to differ; some NGOs have sixty percent (Solwodi) of their clients in employment whilst others only have four percent (Dortmunder Mitternachtsmission). It is difficult for women to obtain work because of the uncertainty of their stay in Germany.

Good Practice

The vocational training courses provided in nursing were especially developed to meet local labour opportunities. Because there is a shortage of professionals in this area women that get the necessary qualifications and work experience can easily find work when they have completed their training.

F. Repatriation / Reintegration

For women who have to return to their countries of origin NGOs do an initial evaluation of needs and try to assess the risks involved in the repatriation and reintegration process. They try to prepare women for their return by discussing what this process involves, giving them practical advice in dealing with family and community issues and providing a list of contact organisations in the countries of origin that can assist.

They arrange necessary travel documents through embassies and consulates and collaborate with the IOM for covering travel expenses. The IOM can also provide additional financial assistance to pay transport for women returning to remote places, that ranges between 90 and 225 Euro, depending on the country.

In Germany victims of trafficking can access a specific programme run by the NGO Solwodi for their return and economic reintegration. Over 250 women consult Solwodi's

⁵⁸ However, demand for access to such courses remains extremely high and it is not easy for women to get placed in these programmes.

reintegration team every year and up to fifteen get direct assistance⁵⁹. The reintegration team holds individual counselling sessions with the women, where the needs of the respective clients are assessed and perspectives for the individual's economic reintegration are developed. The team looks at the different options available to a woman until they find one that is suitable for her. The project gives several options for economic reintegration including:

a) Vocational training

Solwodi funds a woman's training for up to one year. It covers the expenses of 5,000 Euro and includes a small living allowance. Vocational training courses exist in computer science, hairdressing, cosmetics, tailoring, secretarial work, language tuition, accounting, etc. Training can take place in Germany or in a woman's country of origin, depending on her legal status and on her level of qualifications. The stipend includes the course costs, books, transportation and living costs. This assistance does not have to be paid back.

b) Small scale business loans:

A lump sum of up to 7,500 Euro is provided for setting up a small business in the country of origin. This is an interest free loan, of which only seventy percent has to be paid back, the remaining thirty percent is a grant. Before the loan is extended a business plan must be worked out, including a calculation of a woman's salary, her fixed costs and expected income. Commercial knowledge is essential for admission to the loan scheme and Solwodi also finances the necessary educational courses to build up skills in this area (up to three months).

In the country of origin the money is administered by a local NGO that is also responsible for supervising the business's progress. It has a direct interest in ensuring the success of a woman's projects since it is entitled to hold on to the loan repayments. In this manner Solwodi provides support to local NGOs. In the business plan a woman can also include relatives, thereby providing an opportunity for family members to work too.

It is possible for women who have benefited from the vocational training scheme to access the business loans afterwards.

c) On the job training:

Employers get a subsidy on a woman's salary for up to one year. The model is based on the existing ABM scheme run by the public employment agency in Germany. In all, Solwodi pays seventy percent of a salary for six months, sixty percent for three months and fifty percent for the final three months.

Partners of the programme in Germany include the World University Service (WUS) that focuses on the labour insertion of professional migrants such as teachers, professors and students in their home countries. The AGEF⁶⁰ runs special programmes to assist refugees in their professional labour insertion in Bosnia-Herzegovina and gives grants for returnees to buy their own equipment, e.g. to medical researchers. And finally, there is the German Employment Agency (Zentralstelle Arbeitsvermittlung). Although these organisations do not provide direct services to victims of trafficking Solwodi can access the network to find employment opportunities in the countries of origin and give a follow-up to returning women.

Other partner organisations in the countries of origin include NGOs such as COIN in the Dominican Republic, Caritas in Ecuador and Colombia and BATIS in the Philippines. These organisations provide long-term counselling as well as a follow-up on personal projects. As a result of this service seventy to eighty percent of women manage to reintegrate.

⁵⁹ Only single women are able to access this service, irrespective of whether or not they have children. They must have a sincere intention to remain permanently in the respective home country and must be interested in economic reintegration.

⁶⁰ Arbeits Gruppe Entwicklung und Fachkrafte

Good practice

The Solwodi reintegration project provides opportunities for women to return home with something to show for their stay in Europe. Because their migration was originally motivated by economic factors their return is facilitated through a successful economic reintegration. The fact that they do not go back empty handed is very important for their self-esteem and the way in which their families and their communities perceive them. In the countries of origin they were not eligible for credits and loans because of their socio-economic background, since many came from poor rural areas and often had little education or formal training.

3.3. Italy

The phenomenon of immigration to Italy was ignored by the institutions until December 1986. The only formal activities since the middle of the last century until the middle of the nineteen-eighties, consisted of administrative circulars that underlined more controls and limitations on the presence of immigrants. Before this Italy itself was more of a country that exported people. It was only in 1986 that the status of immigrants began to change, to be signed into law after some modifications as the immigration law of 1998.⁶¹ This law has article 18 (Gov. Decree no. 286/98) that has allowed for the implementation and practice of social protection programmes in favour of the exploited, measures that are aimed at legalising and integrating victims.⁶² Although the immigration law of 1998 was severely amended in 2002 (Bossi-Fini) article 18 was not touched and has remained as it was.

Prostitution has changed in Italy. Today ninety-five percent of sex workers come from abroad (mainly Nigeria, Albania and Rumania) and five percent of them are minors. Contradictions in policies on the issue are becoming more evident, since the Berlusconi-government, in league with other European governments, has declared 'war' on street prostitution. As a consequence of these policies women work more in closed off places like apartments with the result that they are less reachable for NGOs. These places are then discovered and rounded up in police investigations, which means that not 'care' or 'harm-reduction' is no longer the starting point, but penal law is.

But where women still work the streets the Street Units of several NGOs contact them with informative flyers -in various languages- and, e.g., condoms and soap. The Street Units possess a long experience, because many of them began years ago as projects for drug-addicts. Through health information the Street Units can make first contact with the girls, with information about addresses where they can get gynaecological check-ups or other things. Once they decide to go to one of these health services they are provided with information about article 18 of the immigration law and about the possibilities of escaping traffickers by filing charges or following the social route, also provided for by article 18. Because of the presence of Street Units, the phenomenon is constantly observed, and that has created much knowledge about it.

⁶¹ Caritas Diocesana di Roma: Il diritto alla salute degli immigrati - Scenario nazionale e politiche locali di Salvatore Geraci e Barbara Martinelli - July 2002

⁶² CNCA (Coordinamento Nazionale delle Comunità di Accoglienza) - An Italian Experience in social protection. (2002)

A. Health

With the 1998 immigration law Italy made progress in making health services accessible to all immigrants. The law foresees in their full inclusion, also when irregular or illegal. Immigrants are not only guaranteed urgent treatment, but also essential cures, continuous cures, and preventive medical programmes.⁶³ Health is widely considered to be the best way to get in touch with women victims of trafficking. It is mainly through the NGOs that work with Street Units that women are contacted and made aware of health care facilities and other rights. By supplying information about a national free telephone number the 'Numero Verde' in flyers the women can decide to get in touch with help organisations.

In Turin co-operation amongst NGOs and the Ufficio Stranieri e Nomadi of the local authorities with health services and certain hospitals is extensive. Sometimes they jointly develop an assistance plan for an individual trafficked woman.

Good practice

The service 'Città e Prostituzione' in Venice aims in the first place to provide health care through Street Units and street educators with the first purpose to limit the spread of HIV, STD, and abortions among street prostitutes. They provide health care for free and without the need for documents. They also organise meetings at their office in Mestre of groups from six to twelve people, divided along ethnical backgrounds, and with the mediation of a cultural worker. Furthermore they organise workshops where they help women with their own safety and tell them about the opportunities for filing charges, which the organisation can then take to the police, so that they do not have to make their identity known.⁶⁴ 'Città e Prostituzione' was able, with financing from the Department for Equal Opportunities, to establish 1,300 contacts with women through the Street Units, to coach 800 women to the health services, and to activate fifty social protection programmes in the year 2000. In 2001 they gave advice to the target group 3,964 times, about various issues. Because the target group is mainly made up of trafficked women, illegally present in Italy, they give the special advice to join them to the local health agency where identity papers are not needed, to also be able to combat illegal health practices.⁶⁵

B. Housing

Through the NGO networks women can be sheltered in a series of housing projects all over the country. The main types of shelters offered by NGOs in Italy within article 18 projects are:

- Flight and emergency shelters (for a first stay in which motivations are verified and a first draft of the personal programme is worked out)
- First care shelters (a two-three months' stay in which the programme is carried out and all steps for regularisation are undertaken)
- Second care shelters (a two-three months' stay in which the project is developed to an advanced phase)
- Autonomy houses (when women are beginning a job and wait for a house of their own)
- Minors are often placed in families

⁶³ Caritas Roma - Immigrazione, Dossier Statistico 2000, chapter: Immigrazione e salute.

⁶⁴ Interview with Loris Zampieri, Mestre 10/07/02

⁶⁵ Report 2000, Assessorato alle Politiche Sociali Servizio Città e Prostituzione, Comune di Venezia - Free Woman Project, Venice/Mestre, and received questionnaire

- Non-residential programme (supports the person at different levels, legally, psychologically etc, but she enjoys an autonomous accommodation usually shared with significant others such as partners, family members or friends)⁶⁶

However, Gruppo Abele states that there is a shortage of shelter places, which makes it necessary for women to wait quite long before they can be accommodated.

Good practice

The project Stella Polare of the Comitato Per I Diritti Civili delle Prostitute manages an integrated programme on housing in Trieste. Through a hotline it enters in contact with victims of trafficking and informs them about the social protection programme. It can make use of an emergency structure and runs a shelter with five beds. It is self-managed by the women and they have a contract with the NGO for a stay of up to one year. After that the women receive support in their search for independent housing.

C. Education

Organisations involved in the implementation of the social protection programme place the women in low-profile education programmes, starting with Italian language lessons, after which a scholarship can be given for various types of educational courses. Gruppo Abele states that the educational level of victims of trafficking is very diverse, from some illiterate women, to women with a university career. Therefore, the education offer has to be diverse as well.

Good practice

The LiFe-project in Turin, an initiative of a large number of organisations, does an integrated methodological programme for women victims of trafficking. It has: initial contact, health, psychological and legal assistance, accommodation, and skill assessment, training courses and work induction. Different education and training courses are offered as part of this long-term intervention model, based on the personal skills and expectations of women.

D. Vocational Training

The On The Road Association says that many Italian organisations involved with the social protection programme offer interventions in the field of vocational training and guidance.⁶⁷ The offer is very diverse and based on the personal skills of each woman. This training process is considered important for achieving full autonomy and a new future for the women.

Good practice

The 'Sally project' in Pisa organises vocational training of six-month periods, after which women mostly find work as hairstylists, waitresses and domestics, secretary jobs.

⁶⁶ Italy Report, (Draft), Associazione on the Road - July 2002

⁶⁷ Italy Report, (Draft), Associazione on the Road - July 2002

E. Employment

In Italy victims of trafficking that participate in the social protection programme of article 18 are allowed to work. This means that during the first six months or one year of her special permit a woman can look for a paid job. And if she has found a job in this period she can obtain a permit for work purposes. With that permit she can stay and work in Italy.

Work stands for the clear borderline between inclusion and exclusion in society. It is a crucial factor for the women involved in creating freedom or dependence. Although Italian legislation provides possibilities for women, for many it is not easy to find a job. Especially African women face discrimination and stigmatisation and are only offered low qualified and low paid jobs.

In Turin Gruppo Abele is trying to sensitise enterprises. It is aware of the fact that there are also differences of work approaches between Italy and, e.g., African countries that influence the success rate in labour integration of African women. In its sensitisation Gruppo Abele pays attention to this specific issue. A lot of work is still needed in this field. Employment should be seen as a tool and a driving force for the promotion of individual resources which then allows the target group to be seen as a resource and not only as a 'social problem'.

In general there are many article 18 projects that offer vocational guidance and integration into the labour market, all over Italy.⁶⁸

Good Practice

The On The Road Association has formulated a specific intervention model for victims of trafficking in the field of access to the labour market. It is called 'Formazione Pratica in Impresa' (Practical Training within Enterprises) and aims to place women, through individualised methodologies and training programmes, in enterprises for variable periods depending on her skills (from two to six months). In this period she will get the support of a psychologist and a tutor working for the Association and one working for the enterprise. Both parties formally sign a specific convention that regulates training. Fifty-four out of a total of eighty women have attained full professional inclusion as part of article 18's opportunities for social assistance and integration. Most of these jobs are in the sectors: hotel industry (30%), services (11,3%), the textiles and garment industry (11,3%) and shoe industry (7,5%). Sometimes recruitment fails despite the availability of some companies; because of delays of police stations in providing residence permits without which it is not possible to apply for a tax code and work papers.⁶⁹

F. Repatriation / reintegration

As Italian legislation offers the possibility for regular residence and work permits to victims of trafficking the issue of repatriation and reintegration seems not so important for the different organisations.

However, during raids by authorities in street prostitution areas many migrant sex workers are arrested and often immediately deported to their home countries. They are not always informed about the social protection programme, but placed in detention centres for a few days and then deported.

⁶⁸ Italy Report, (Draft), Associazione on the Road – July 2002

⁶⁹ Italy Report, (Draft), Associazione on the Road - July 2002

Good practice

Tampep in Turin started a project on reintegration of Nigerian women. Together with Nigerian organisations they focus on the reintegration in the labour market, through training courses in the field of (self) employment and micro-credits. As they have just started, no results are known until now, but it seems an important initiative.

3.4. The Netherlands

Although many people work on a daily basis on harm-reduction, direct support in shelters and researching into the phenomenon is done from different angles, the judicial one or the basic human rights one, it remains difficult to find ways within the legal provisions. The opportunities offered by Dutch law are laid down in the B-9 legislation on trafficked people. This offers a residence permit to victims for the duration of the trial, but once the trial has finished they must leave the country. Residence permits on humanitarian grounds are a possibility, but in reality very difficult to get. One can conclude that some victims of trafficking, confronted with what they regard as insignificant guarantees, decide not to press charges. The figures of law enforcement and support organisations show that only five to ten percent of victims of trafficking decide to press charges.

Furthermore, knowledge among public prosecutors on the subject is limited. Training should be organised for them about actual legislation and about the correct treatment of victims. Attention should also be paid to other research methods that are not necessarily based on the testimony of victims. And opportunities should be identified for women to testify to a judge without needing to be present in court, so as to improve her security.

The Foundation against Trafficking in Women (STV) co-ordinates the registration of victims of trafficking in the Netherlands, both women with and without the B-9 status. They mediate to accommodate women. Different Dutch organisations state that the existing legislation is not well implemented. Too often women are not granted the three-month reflection period and are pushed to press charges.

Furthermore, Dutch legislation offers too little to victims of trafficking in the field of future options. Education and vocational training opportunities are limited and victims of trafficking are excluded from paid labour. This means that during their stay in the Netherlands, they depend on social services and support organisations, which does not contribute to their empowerment and independence.

A. Health

Access to public health services of any kind is available to victims of trafficking that did press charges against their traffickers and have received the temporary B-9 status. They are automatically insured for medical expenses.

When women do not have a residence permit they can only access public health services in case of a life-threatening situation and in special cases, such as pregnancy. In those cases health care providers are obliged by their oath to give medical assistance, irrespective whether a person is legal or not, and insured or not. For all other health problems women themselves have to pay for health services. Only a few health care facilities exist that are free of charge for women in an irregular position.

In the different prostitution areas in the Netherlands several NGO's and municipal health organisations provide health information to sex workers. Many of them do field work in a regular manner, making use of outreach workers and in some cases of cultural mediators to contact women, both nationals and migrants. And in the areas where street prostitution

takes place women can use the services of a doctor, who comes there on certain hours a week. He or she can be consulted on STD's and general health issues.

The Dutch project Bonded Labour in the Netherlands (BLinN), a joint initiative of Novib/Oxfam Netherlands and Humanitas, can in special cases cover medical expenses of victims of human trafficking.

Good practice

Tampep International Foundation works with cultural mediators and peer educators to inform migrant sex workers on health issues combined with information on their rights and possibilities in case they are victims of trafficking.

B. Housing

In the Netherlands a series of women's shelters exist, especially created for the reception of women victims of abuse and violence. It is noticed that increasingly migrant women are accommodated in these shelters, in many cases more than fifty percent of all women. Among them there are also some victims of human trafficking. When women decide to press charges against their traffickers they are granted a temporary B-9 residence permit. With this permit they are entitled to a place in a women's shelter and in some cases they get access to independent housing provided by the municipality. The Foundation against Trafficking in Women (STV) co-ordinates their reception and housing. When trafficked women do not have the B-9 status it is much more difficult to find housing, because not all shelters accept them without a residence permit. In that case they depend on alternative housing opportunities run by NGO's and church-related organisations or they have to find their own housing on the informal market and usually have to pay a lot of money for a place to stay.

There is a general lack of housing for victims of trafficking in the Netherlands. But that is related to a lack of shelters for abused women in general. Most shelters reserve part of their rooms for victims of trafficking. The women's shelter in Beverwijk, for example, has places for a maximum of twelve women, with fifteen up to twenty-two children. There is room for a maximum of three women victims of trafficking with the B-9 status. As an exception this house does place women with an irregular status for a maximum of two weeks.

There are also few possibilities for more independent housing run by some women's shelters. In these houses women have a great deal of autonomy, but with a minimum of care and help. Access to these possibilities too is generally limited to women with the B-9 status. But there is a need for this kind of housing, because it is very important for women to be more independent, and have more freedom and autonomy. The strict rules of some women's shelters are sometimes very difficult to adhere to.

Good practice

In the southeast of Amsterdam the organisation Christian Aid and Resources Foundation (CARF), co-ordinated by the Ghanese pastor Marfo, offers housing to (mainly African) victims of trafficking that are too afraid to press charges. Although they do not have a residence permit for the Netherlands CARF offers them housing, counselling and other support. A housing corporation collaborates with the organisation and offered six apartments to their programme.

C. Education

Access to education is available for victims of trafficking that have a temporary residence permit under the B-9 procedure. In some but not all municipalities women are entitled to state-financed Dutch language courses. A basic knowledge of the Dutch language is fundamental for the women's social inclusion in Dutch society. Through the language she can communicate with the people around her, with the support organisations and during the judicial procedure. Furthermore it is a prerequisite for further education as almost all education and training opportunities in the Netherlands are provided in Dutch. This educational aspect is also very important for a successful reintegration in their countries of origin.

At the moment lobby efforts are being undertaken to get access to state-financed language courses for victims of trafficking in human beings in every Dutch municipality.

In the cities where these courses are not yet accessible and also for victims of trafficking without a residence permit the programme Bonded Labour in the Netherlands (BLinN) mediates for language courses and other education opportunities. Computer courses are organised on a one-to-one basis with voluntary teachers, and women are given a laptop for the duration of the course so that they can practice their skills. A research into the issue of education showed that there is an enormous lack of information about education possibilities for victims of trafficking. Another problem is the financing of education. BLinN tries to support in both aspects, and support is always based on an analysis of a woman's needs and interests.

Good practice

The team of Prostitutie Maatschappelijk Werk of Humanitas in Rotterdam has organised a special Dutch language course for victims of trafficking in human beings. In addition to the aim of learning the language a secondary aim is to empower women through the exchange of information and experiences among each other.

D. Vocational Training

Victims of human trafficking that are granted a temporary residence permit under the B-9 procedure have access to vocational training, provided that they master the Dutch language. There are very few training possibilities in other languages than Dutch, which is an important obstacle for the women. Furthermore, in most cases no financial assistance is granted by the state for such purposes. Only in special cases can women receive support from the municipality where they live for study purposes.

The Programme Bonded Labour in the Netherlands (BLinN) has the specific aim to support victims of human trafficking in the field of education and training. The project evaluates women's personal and professional skills and identifies specific training needs. BLinN has the financial means to support women for specific courses or vocational training, and can help them find suitable training opportunities and/or internships related to the training course.

Good practice

The Tampep International Foundation has organised a peer educators course for migrant sex workers and victims of trafficking. This six-month course included communication skills, health information, personal empowerment, information on rights and legislation and an internship with a Dutch organisation that works in the field of prostitution, trafficking in human beings or related issues. A group of seven women finished this course and are now recognised as peer educators.

E. Employment

Dutch legislation does not allow victims of trafficking to work in paid jobs whilst they are living in the Netherlands. Working as a volunteer, however, is permitted. This kind of unpaid work gives women the opportunity to gain work experience, which is especially important in combination with vocational training, or to build self-esteem and to prevent social isolation.

However, it is a bit difficult to convince women to look for a voluntary job. Their main interest is in a paid job, because they have many debts and obligations to their family back home or still to their traffickers. Furthermore, many of them do not know the culture of voluntary work and do not immediately see how it could be of use to them. But the women that did decide to engage in voluntary activities are very enthusiastic about them. Therefore, it is an important task of support organisations to inform women about the possibility for a voluntary job.

Women who master at least a basic level of the Dutch language can register with the 'Vrijwilligers Centrale' in their municipality. These are local or regional centres that recruit volunteers for a wide range of organisations and activities. The Programme Bonded Labour in the Netherlands (BLinN) can support women in finding an interesting voluntary activity or a more education related internship.

F. Repatriation / Reintegration

Dutch legislation regarding trafficking in human beings only gives victims a temporary residence permit. This means that at the end of the judicial process most women have to return to their countries of origin. There are virtually no possibilities for women to obtain a permanent residency permit after criminal procedures against their trafficker have finished. This means that the women have only two choices: they decide to return to their countries of origin or they will stay in the Netherlands as an irregular immigrant with very few options for support. In the case of returning there are several organisations that provide assistance to migrants and asylum seekers in this return and some are specially to target victims of trafficking in human beings.

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) provides practical assistance for the travel itself. Special projects exist, such as 'Maatwerk bij Terugkeer' (Tailored Return), directed towards asylum seekers, and BLinN, directed towards victims of human trafficking. Both projects try to prepare people to make possible a successful return and reintegration in the country of origin. They are in contact with international networks such as La Strada in Central and Eastern Europe and the more informal network of the Foundation Religious against Trafficking in Women (SRTV). Whenever possible the projects try to provide an integrated support plan, where women can receive education and vocational training during their stay in the Netherlands, as part of preparing for their future in their home countries. If possible they also provide information on job opportunities in the labour markets of these countries, so that the women can adjust their education and vocational training courses to this situation. .

The support is based on an analysis of a woman's need for assistance on arrival. Both projects have, due to the fact that they are joint initiatives of several NGO's, an extensive international network. They establish contact with NGO's in the country of origin to arrange for the necessary assistance. This assistance can vary from reception at the airport, contacting a woman's family, shelter, and psychological or medical attention, to help in finding a job.

In some cases there is very little time to prepare for a return. Generally, migrants are given twenty-eight days by the Dutch authorities to leave the country. In many cases this leaves very little time for preparing and support organisations can only provide a woman with a list of organisations that can be contacted by her on arriving in her country of origin.

In all cases, it has proven to be very difficult in practice to determine how many women manage to reintegrate successfully after leaving the Netherlands, as most women only stay in touch with the local NGO for a limited period of time. After a while, contact is lost.

Good practice

The IOM, BLinN and SRTV have signed a formal agreement of co-operation about the return and reintegration of victims of trafficking. Information and experiences are exchanged on a regular basis and new strategies are worked out. The extension of the co-operation to other organisations in the Netherlands is foreseen.

3.5 Spain

The Penal Code prohibits the act of trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, but does not define trafficking (article. 188). The article regulating trafficking in people in general is article 318 bis. It includes the trafficking in people for the purpose of sexual exploitation. The victim's position is well regulated in article 59 of the new foreigners law. Prostitution is not prohibited. Once a woman is found to be a possible victim of trafficking she does not get any period for reflection. Possible victims get a 'permit for exceptional circumstances' if the victim reports the case to the authorities and collaborates and co-operates with them, offering useful information against the trafficker's network. This permit is valid for one year and renewable irrespective of court proceedings as long as the victim co-operates. Women have been able to apply for a permit to stay and work, the *Permiso de Residencia y Trabajo B-Renovada*⁷⁰, after that first one-year permit.

A. Health

Victims of trafficking can access free and anonymous health services in public structures irrespective of their legal situation, as long as they are registered at an NGO as proof of residence.⁷¹ In order to be registered the women need identity documents. This can be difficult in cases where traffickers have confiscated the women's passports.

In accessing health care NGOs will orient women towards public health centres and specialised women's projects such as the Centro de Salud Logístico para Atención Primaria a la Mujer, and the Centro Montesa for sex workers. The centres provide free

⁷⁰ This permit is issued to asylum seekers after their first permit Permiso B-Inicial. Expectations are that women victim of trafficking will not need this Permiso B-Inicial. The permiso B-Renovada allows the person to apply for family reunion for as long as she earns sufficient money. Telephone conversation with Martha Gonzales of Proyecto Esperanza on 21 March 2002

⁷¹ Shelters providing accommodation to victims of trafficking cannot disclose their location and work with other NGOs such as Cercana to register the women.

and anonymous consultations and are sensitive to the needs of trafficked women. Women can access these services with or without being registered at an organisation. Most NGOs orient women to these centres because of their focus on women's health and integrated gynaecological services.

On receiving a residence permit and social security number victims of trafficking are entitled to basic health care provided by doctors, dentists and opticians. Consultations and treatment as well as hospitalisation are covered by the social welfare system.

Social workers tend to provide information on the health system, how to access existing services and social security, and how it works. For women that are pregnant or have children, advice is given on childcare and development and where to get free baby products such as milk, nappies and clothing.

The work of NGOs focuses on orienting and mainstreaming victims of trafficking into existing public services, providing psychological follow-up and developing preventive information on STDs, HIV, safe sex and sexual health. With regard to prevention, NGOs such as APRAMP do outreach work with cultural mediators and are involved in developing and distributing information to sex workers in Madrid. Other NGOs that provide health services and cultural mediation are Médicos del Mundo and Caritas.

Psychological support is provided by the NGOs at the shelters, but faced by overwhelming demand cases women are in some cases referred to public health structures for this type of assistance. Again, the problem seems to be that psychologists have very little experience of working with victims of trafficking and lack an understanding of the problems that women have. There is an increased tendency to prescribe antidepressants and drugs to women as a way of dealing with trauma, which is not so effective in the long-term.

Good Practice

Proyecto Esperanza orients and mainstreams women into existing health projects. They have identified numerous public, private and non-government health structures that provide services adapted to women and have sensitised service providers to create a network for specialised assistance to victims of trafficking. This has helped to avoid duplicating existing services.

B. Housing

Several NGOs are involved in running specialised shelters for women victims of trafficking. They include: APRAMP that provides emergency and short-term accommodation for up to three months; Proyecto Esperanza that runs two shelters and provides accommodation for six or twelve months and follow-up in transit apartments for twelve months, and finally; the shelter 'Tu Casa' that provides accommodation for women with children for up to two years.

According to APRAMP, the advantage of placing victims of trafficking in a specialised shelter is that the woman does not feel isolated in her experience. It is also an environment where she can receive direct support to stabilise her situation on leaving prostitution and where she is able to see the progression of others who have been through similar situations.

Two of the main housing projects are run by religious organisations such as the Congregación de Adoratrices (Proyecto Esperanza) and Hermanas Oblatas (Tu casa). Although they do get funding from the state for their activities they also have the support

of religious organisations and are, therefore, able to provide longer term housing facilities. The NGOs have established extensive networks with their partners at the national level and can rapidly relocate women to other parts of the country should local traffickers threaten one.

Victims of trafficking do not receive financial support from the state and depend on NGOs for all their needs, including accommodation, transport costs, basic clothing and food. At the shelters social workers and lawyers offer a wide range of services, including psychological, social and legal support. For health, education and employment services they refer the women to external services. In the shelter Tu Casa assistance with childcare is also given.

To facilitate access to independent accommodation NGOs are involved in identifying private housing facilities and orienting women to public services such as Provienda that give information on cheap accommodation.

Fundación Esperanza also provides accommodation in a transit apartment to women that have stabilised their personal situation and are either working or studying. Women can stay in this apartment free of charge for a year, although they will be required to pay for electricity and telephone bills. Whilst in the apartment they learn how to work out a personal budget and are able to save money for deposits that are equivalent to two months' rent for when moving into independent accommodation. The cost of housing in the cities is extremely high (600 Euro a month) in relation to the women's income. For example, in the catering industry people only earn between 650 to 720 Euro a month. For this reason, victims of trafficking are mostly only able to access shared accommodation facilities.

Good practice

Proyecto Esperanza organises training activities among the different members of the Congregation throughout Spain to develop a network of assistance provided to victims of trafficking and to create more shelters.

C. Education

On their arrival at the shelters and reception centres social workers build a profile of clients' educational backgrounds and professional achievements, identify their educational needs and orient them to existing education structures.

Activities on education tend to focus on literacy programmes and language tuition. Caritas, Fundación ESCO, ECUMENE, Ora de Deu, FICAT all run literacy programmes. Whilst free language tuition is widely available and provided by Adult Education Centres, Refugee Centres /CEAR, and NGOs such as COMRADE, CCEM, Vomade, ASTI, Caritas and The Spanish Red Cross. Language training is also available in the regional tongues e.g. Catalan in Barcelona.

To facilitate the integration process Hermanas Oblatas and Proyecto Esperanza also run general courses to help women manoeuvre in the host society (how to use transport, banks, post, public services, legislation and the labour market). Language courses are usually developed to provide information about the host society. Teachers discuss political, economic and social issues.⁷²

For those women that want to update their skills or to bridge gaps between former qualifications and nationally recognised qualifications NGOs provide an orientation to

⁷² Specific workshops are being carried out by Proyecto Esperanza on health, geography, legal issues.

courses provided by municipal authorities. The Woman's Institute in Madrid is currently implementing one such initiative (which is also an example of gender mainstreaming). In order to facilitate women's access to education and employment it has organised over 200 different courses in which women can obtain qualifications and professional training in different fields.

Overall, victims of trafficking can access education opportunities at national schools, colleges and universities, provided they meet academic requirements and are sufficiently proficient in the language to follow the courses. However, they are not entitled to receiving state education grants for this purpose. In order to address this problem the CEAR runs a programme aimed at facilitating refugees' access to universities. This could eventually be accessible to victims of trafficking who have long-term residence permits.

Good Practice

Most NGOs provide language courses once or twice a week, but it is difficult for women to attend them when they are working or otherwise have family responsibilities. In order to facilitate access to language tuition CEAR has organised several courses that take place at different times on a daily basis.

D. Vocational Training

At the NGOs social workers do an evaluation of women's educational and professional backgrounds and identify training needs. The organisations either run their own vocational training programmes (Vomade, Hermanas Oblatas) or orient women into municipal structures and NGOs that run these activities.

Depending on the training programme, the main objective will be to provide practical experience and/or prepare for a certificate or degree. Professional training schemes mainly cover agriculture, the services sector, trade and catering. As long as they meet academic requirements and have a suitable mastery of the language women have the same access to training as country nationals. However, no allowance or financial help is given for such purposes.

Examples of specific vocational training schemes provided by NGOs include courses in geriatric nursing provided by Hermanas Oblatas. This course is combined with a technically oriented language programme in Catalan and Castillian. It offers a three-month training⁷³ and three months of work experience in public and private structures such as homes for the elderly and hospitals. Because the NGO has a special agreement with these structures there are excellent chances of labour insertion on concluding a training course. The programme has a ninety to ninety-five percent success rate in securing work for women and provides follow-up on the job for one year.

The focus has been on nursing assistants because it is a sector in the labour market that women can most easily access. This is especially the case for women with limited academic and professional experience and problems with the language. They are not entitled to state financial support for educational or vocational activities, however the school offers a small remuneration of 138 Euro a month during the training period.

Other NGOs such as APRAMP provide courses for women in textiles decoration, whilst VOMADE gives vocational training in catering, information technology, hairdressing,

⁷³ Training covers issues such as diets for the elderly, medical care and first aid, physiotherapy, working in a home environment and domestic work.

esthetical care,⁷⁴ social and health intervention for dependent people (the disabled and elderly). They also collaborate with private companies to provide practical training to women. About seventy to eighty percent of VOMADE's clients are able to secure employment in one of these sectors, following the training period.

The Instituto Nacional para el Empleo (INEM) also organises vocational training activities, but women must have a work permit and have to be registered as unemployed before they can access these courses. Victims of trafficking may have to wait six to twelve months before they can fulfil these prerequisites or conditions.

Good Practice

Every year Vomade carries out a survey among its members to find out what kind of training they would like to receive. They are then able to develop vocational training courses to address their needs and professional objectives. Following the training activities participants are asked to give back their comments on the activities and the organisation of the course and to provide input into how it could be improved. This enables the organisation to develop and adapt its activities to the specific needs and profiles of its target group. It also enables women to take part in the elaboration of new projects and to realise their personal objectives.

E. Employment

NGOs working with victims of trafficking provide information on work opportunities, career advice and vocational guidance. Although service providers orient women to public structures such as the Instituto Nacional para el Empleo (INEM - National Institute for Employment) to look for work most NGOs collaborate with one another to create pools for employment and provide adapted services for migrants. Information is given to them on labour legislation, contracts, hours and pay.

Hermanas Oblatas in particular works in co-operation with Caritas, the Red Cross and SAIF, in a project called 'Anem per Feina' that aims to facilitate the labour insertion of migrants. This work pool centralises job opportunities and co-ordinates supply and demand of labour in several economic sectors, including catering, the services industry, agriculture and trade. Other NGOs organising work pools are CEAR, Fundación Integra and Fundación ADSIS in Madrid.

Social workers on these projects brief women on available opportunities, their rights and responsibilities. When a work placement has been set up a follow-up on the job is available for two years. Women are encouraged to meet with the co-ordinators of the work pool once every month to give feedback on their work placement. In cases where women or employers are unhappy with the arrangements attempts will be made to solve existing problems and as a last resort another placement will be arranged.

Another initiative to facilitate access to employment is the creation of work co-operatives. In order to assist women to organise, promote and regulate their own sector of activity some NGOs provide training on establishing and managing a co-operatives A legal follow-up is provided, as well as guidance for obtaining government subsidies and administrative follow-up. Members of VOMADE recently set up one co-operative to co-ordinate the activities of women working as hairdressers. The co-operative set up a network to provide services directly to clients at home, and was responsible for centralising and managing the demand and supply of work. It is currently used by the

⁷⁴ Women who have finished the course on hairdressing and beauty can become members of a work co-operative created by members.

organisation to facilitate the labour insertion of newly arrived women seeking employment.

Overall, once the situation of victims of trafficking is regularised most women are able to find work through the work pools or the national employment agencies. The main sectors of employment for women tend to be nursing, catering and domestic service.

Good Practice

The work pools have developed services that are adapted to the needs of migrants, and provide information about the labour market, job opportunities, legislation and rights. They also sensitise employers to the situation of the women, and will ensure that an adequate training period is established in which employers address all of the different aspects involved in the work. Labour mediation between employers and employees helps to develop clear and effective communication about each person's needs and objectives. In particular, labour mediators can address the preconceptions women have about working in Spain.

Proyecto Esperanza has sensitised public structures, in particular local employment agencies, to the situation of trafficked women. As a result of this work, women are now able to receive a national unemployment card whilst waiting for their residence documents to come through, (which can take between six and eight months). This enables women to enrol in vocational training courses and develop job-searching skills, in spite of the length of time it takes women to obtain residency papers.

F. Repatriation / Reintegration

Organisations such as APRAMP, Proyecto Esperanza and Vomade all provide assistance to victims of trafficking in returning to their countries of origin. Initially, when a woman arrives at the NGOs social workers try to help her to become aware of her situation and explain which factors should influence her decision to remain in Spain or return to her country of origin. They give information on what it means to collaborate with the authorities, the risks and long-term implications, the social and labour situation in Spain, possibilities for assistance in the countries of origin.⁷⁵

Should a woman decide to return to her home country the NGOs evaluate her needs and try to assess the risks involved. They also contact local NGOs to speak with family members and to evaluate the situation upon her return. They provide material and financial support in the host country during the time it takes to arrange travel documentation, raise money for the travel ticket and arrange the woman's reception by a partner-NGO at the other end.

Depending on what a woman wants to do, they will contact organisations that are able to provide repatriation and reintegration support. These include Fundación CIPIE the Red Cross and the IOM that can all help with arranging the travel, reception and follow-up in the reintegration process through locally based partner organisations. Proyecto Esperanza, through the Congregación de Adoratrices, works within a religious network of representatives based in countries of origin such as Colombia and Ecuador as well as with other NGOs in other countries of origin. In cases where women have collaborated with the authorities they are also entitled to assistance for their return.

It is not possible to determine how many women have managed to integrate, although Proyecto Esperanza does report that three of the women they had helped to repatriate

⁷⁵ Proyecto Esperanza carries out information workshops when the women arrive at the NGO.

have returned to Spain within the year and ended up in situations of exploitation all over again.

Good practice

Proyecto Esperanza provides integration assistance to the women that had returned to Spain. In cases where reintegration has not been successful they tried to assess the causes and find new long-term alternatives for these women, be they in Spain or in the country of origin.

3.6. United Kingdom

In February 2003 specific measures to address trafficking in human beings came into force. They were introduced by the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. The new Sexual Offences Bill, was going through Parliament at the time of the publication (end 2003) of this paper. It sets out a wider offence covering trafficking for sexual exploitation into, within and out of the UK. There are no specialised NGOs that provide direct assistance to victims of trafficking.

Although there is no clear residence procedure for victims of trafficking those who collaborate with the authorities may be able to obtain an 'exceptional leave to remain' (ELR) on compassionate or humanitarian grounds that gives them a temporary residence for up to four years.⁷⁶ People with ELR have similar legal rights in the UK to those granted refugee status, in that they are able to access benefits, health services, education, employment and assistance with housing.

Once the ELR comes to an end a permanent residence permit or 'indefinite leave to remain' (ILR) may be granted when there is evidence that the person is in considerable danger should she return to her country of origin. According to Anti Slavery International only one woman has been successful in obtaining asylum.⁷⁷ In fact many victims of trafficking are immediately deported because of the lack of legislation to address this issue and a lack of agencies to which they can be referred.

In March 2003, the Home Office, in conjunction with the NGO Eaves Housing, launched a six-month pilot project to provide adult victims of trafficking with accommodation and access to services when they agree to assist the authorities. The criteria for inclusion in the pilot are: that she was brought to the UK; that she is working as a prostitute; that she has been forcibly exploited; that she has come forward to the authorities; that she is willing to co-operate with the authorities. The woman will have a four-week rest period in which to decide whether to co-operate. Should she decide against she will have to leave the pilot project. If she agrees she will be provided with access to:

- Safe accommodation
- Food / subsistence allowance
- Interpretation and translation services
- Health assessment and services
- Counselling services
- Legal information

If a woman accepted by the project decides to claim asylum she must leave the project.

⁷⁶ However not many women have obtained ELR. In London, since 1999 only two women who testified against their traffickers have obtained temporary residence.

⁷⁷ Elaine Pearson, "Human traffic, human rights: Redefining victim protection," Anti Slavery International, 2002.

The government has said that decisions for longer term residence will be made on a case-by-case basis, but that there will be no automatic right to remain in the country for those who co-operate with the authorities.

3.7. Problems to be addressed

A. Health

Language and cultural barriers

There are considerable language and cultural barriers that impede effective communication between health professionals and women victims of trafficking. All in all, there are very few cultural mediators and/or translators working in the health services.

Public Health Structures

There sometimes is a lack of sensitivity with public structures to the needs of victims of trafficking. In some cases male doctors carry out examinations, this is something to which women can react very badly.

NGOs

Most NGOs do not receive public funding for providing medical assistance and often have to cover the costs of medical consultations and treatment whilst waiting for the women's situation to become regularised. This gap in health care provision and funding needs to be addressed.

B. Housing

Shelters

In non-specialised shelters victims of trafficking are sometimes stigmatised by other members of the centre when it is discovered that they have been involved in prostitution. Their contact with people in the shelter can be difficult *"they are not always co-operative, they don't speak to others, they don't want restrictions placed on them, they refuse to follow rules...[in fact] victims of trafficking don't behave as 'victims' are expected to behave."*⁷⁸ Women may also have problems with substance abuse (drugs and/or alcohol) and need specialised assistance that the shelters are not able to provide. They may come across as arrogant or aggressive and trouble makers. It is difficult for them to adapt to a new set of rules, in some cases staying out all night without notice is no longer possible. *"When they are free, they don't want restrictions and it is difficult for them to truly appreciate the importance of adhering to rules for safety reasons."*⁷⁹

Specialised shelters

The danger with having specialised shelters is that women may pass on information on their whereabouts to friends and families or in some cases remain in contact with people still involved in prostitution. It is therefore relatively easy for traffickers to learn about the shelters.

Access to housing

In cases where women do not work it may be difficult for them to pay the initial costs of moving into independent accommodation. Landlords are also not keen on letting apartments to people that are unemployed. Women face a certain amount of prejudice and discrimination with landlords that, when seeing residence permits, believe that they are involved in prostitution.

⁷⁸ "...In the case of one woman there was considerable tension at the shelter when she refused to take her turn in cleaning the toilets. This caused endless arguments with the other women who felt this was unfair. After being reprimanded for her behaviour, it was discovered that the traffickers had regularly made her clean their toilets with a toothbrush as a way of humiliating her" Interview with Andrea Hiltzke, 26 August 2002

⁷⁹ *Idem*

There is social housing in most countries but generally victims of trafficking cannot access these because of long waiting lists (three-four years). There are also no government structures to follow-up and give advice to women migrants; most of this work is carried out by the non-governmental sector.

C. Education

Financial problems

Although many women dream of continuing their education they have difficulties in obtaining grants for this purpose. For those who embark on a long-term educational project there may be a lot of frustration when they are not able to obtain work afterwards. There is a lot of pressure on women to find work to support their families in the countries of origin. This makes it difficult for them to embark on projects for further education.

Language barriers

Some women have had little or no education in their countries of origin and this makes it difficult for them to pick up education in the system of the host country. They may be further dissuaded by difficulties in communicating with teachers. There is, therefore, a higher drop out rate amongst these women with language problems.

Access to education

In the UK the fact that women only get short-term residency permits of four weeks to six months means that they cannot follow long-term education courses.

D. Vocational training

Background of clients

NGOs report that the success of vocational training courses generally depends on women's previous educational and professional experiences. Current programmes for vocational training activities with a strong focus on theory can be very difficult for women with little or no formal education.

Courses have to be developed that take into account the personal capacities of women. Generally, they seem to be able to follow practical training, but have more difficulty with the theoretical aspects of training. This is due to difficulties in speaking, reading and writing in the language of the host country and in some cases a lack of academic experience. There needs to be more practical training and less theory depending on the level of the group.

Access to vocational training opportunities

For victims of trafficking that wish to follow vocational training in public structures, access is not easy due to limited residence and work permits. They may also have to wait for several months before receiving the necessary documents.

E. Employment

Victims of trafficking

Women are only able to get very low paid jobs because of difficulties with the language, and a lack of professional and educational experience. They lack self-esteem and feel that they are incapable of getting better-paid opportunities. They are particularly afraid of making mistakes. Some women feel unable to negotiate or defend themselves before employers because their work permits bind them to those employers.

Victims of trafficking also have difficulties with simple interviews, feeling as though their integrity is being called into question.

There is great pressure on women to send money back to their countries of origin. Because there are many difficulties in finding work there are great risks of women falling back into their former environment of exploitation.

Public structures

Mainstreaming into public structures for employment can be difficult. Most public service providers are not sensitive or sympathetic to the situation of the women and are not so positive about them being able to find work. This is due to the fact that women are not authorised to work unless they have found an employer who is willing to apply for their work permits.

Unregulated working conditions

Many women end up working as domestic employees. This sector of work is not regulated externally and there is a lot of exploitation.

Discrimination

Opportunities are not always available for women from different ethnic backgrounds. African women in particular face a lot of discrimination in the labour market. Stereotyping and racism manifests itself with regards to certain groups.

Cultural barriers

Most NGOs interviewed across Europe reported that cultural differences made it difficult for women to work in the host countries, i.e. differences relating to communication, work methods, dealing with problems and work rhythms.

One has to consider a woman situation in a family and cultural context. Many of them have to take the entire responsibility of caring for their children and have considerable difficulties in finding work as a result.

Work permits

Potential employers are reluctant to undertake extensive administrative steps required to employ the women, especially because of the precariousness of their legal situation. They may also be reluctant to invest in training their employees. Women are also in vulnerable situations when work permits bind them to their employers.

F. Repatriation / Reintegration

Countries of origin

There has to be more political pressure on governments of countries of origin where the problem of trafficking is not acknowledged and assistance is not readily available to women returning. There is little or no action to address the problem or to support NGOs struggling to provide assistance.

For women that are forced to return to their countries of origin the chances of successful integration are very slim. Most of the NGOs interviewed report that most women are not successful in reintegrating into their communities. This is a) because they suffer from stigmatisation and have difficulties to adapt as a result of having been trafficked and b) because in most case viable and long-term self-sustainable options are not available to the women in the countries of origin.

4. Reintegration

The process of reintegration, as such, begins when a person decides to return to live in her country of origin. This whole notion of 'going back' is predicated on rebuilding life's relationships in a country, a community and a family. Returning to one's country of origin can be just as difficult, if not more so, than leaving it in the first place, bearing in mind the social and economic disruption that naturally takes place when a person emigrates.

NGOs that work with victims of trafficking in host countries categorically state that given the choice the majority of women will choose to remain in the host country in spite of the difficult socio-economic conditions that most face. This is linked to a desire with women to find economic independence and/or to support their families, as well as a wish to turn their experience into something positive. Understandably, for these women the idea of returning home with nothing to show for after having 'worked' abroad can lead to a sense of failure and frustration.

The main motivation of women wishing to return to their home countries may be related to: a) family ties, especially if their partners and children remain in the countries of origin, b) a desire to put their experiences behind them and rebuild their lives, c) a lack of sustainable opportunities in the destination countries because they have not been able to obtain residence permits.

Overall, the way in which the individual perceives the return is invariably shaped by her experiences abroad, the length of time away, the personal and collective motivations that originally led her to migrate and the socio-economic context in her country of origin. These factors shape the expectations and motivations that victims of trafficking have of their return and for this reason it is essential that a woman makes an aware and voluntary decision to go back. In cases where women are forced to return there is a high risk that the person will be re-trafficked.

It is important to underline the fact that many victims of trafficking that do return to their countries of origin tend to seek personal solutions to solve their problems and reintegrate without the assistance of organisations.

4.1. Defining the process of reintegration

Reintegration of victims of trafficking is more than just a movement of a woman back home or to another region in the country of origin and should be differentiated from the repatriation process. *"Repatriation refers to the process of recovering the protection of the country of origin within the legal and social dimensions that citizenship implies."*⁸⁰

The concept of reintegration, however, can be defined as: *"the process of inclusion and re-building relationships within a community in the country of origin at four levels: physical, socio-economic, socio-political and cultural. [This involves]*

- *The resettlement of the returnees in a concrete territorial space within the jurisdiction of the country of origin.*
- *The achievement of a reasonable standard of living in terms of dignity similar to the local population and within the economic context of the country of origin.*
- *The participation of the returnees in a democratic way in the decision-making processes affecting their lives at the local and national levels.*

⁸⁰ International Journal of Refugee Law, Volume 13, Oxford University Press, 2001.

- *The adaptation of both populations to living together again taking into account that different life processes may have resulted in different ways of interpreting reality and cultural paradigms.”⁸¹*

From the empowerment perspective the conditions have to exist for victims of trafficking to live a ‘normal’ life in safety. They must be given possibilities to develop to the full their autonomy and personal capacities. As in the integration process, this is subject to their opportunities for work, education and training, and access to physical and mental health services in the country of origin.

4.2. Factors influencing the process of reintegration

The reintegration of victims of trafficking is a complex issue. Needless to say, when the factors that led to trafficking in the first place have not been resolved there is a considerable high risk of repeated trafficking or of the person returning to the environment of exploitation.

The successful reintegration of victims of trafficking depends on a wide range of factors and situations, including the person’s individual profile, the environment into which she is to reintegrate and the different support mechanisms for reintegration in the countries of origin. Again, in this context it is important to consider the rolls that the state, civil society and local communities play in the process. In this section special attention will be paid to factors influencing reintegration.

The State

Through repatriation a woman places herself under the protection of the state, this requires that she benefits on her return from a legal status in the country of origin. When repatriation takes place a woman recovers her citizenship and the rights inherent and responsibilities attached to that status. As a citizen she should have the same full recognition of her rights, as other nationals do. This recognition encompasses political, social, cultural and economic rights, such as the rights to freedom of movement, freedom of expression, food, housing, education, property, work and health. The effective re-establishment of national protection relies on the attitudes and efforts of state authorities as well as those of the returnee herself.⁸²

Several countries fully comply with the minimum standards for addressing trafficking in human beings (by introducing or updating legislation, the sustained efforts of law enforcement, established mechanisms for protection and assistance to victims of trafficking). But in most countries of origin governments still have difficulties in combating trafficking and providing victims with appropriate assistance.

In Albania, for example, the government has been reluctant to recognise that its citizens can be victims of trafficking and, thus, it has no protection or assistance mechanisms in place to support women on their return. The situation is exacerbated by the fact that on their return women victims of trafficking may be prosecuted and treated as criminals and not helped to reintegrate. Migrant women that are victims of trafficking may be penalised under existing laws on immigration and prostitution. Women that are charged with violating immigration laws might receive a prison sentence of a maximum of two years. If they are charged for prostitution they may receive sentences up to five years.⁸³

⁸¹ International Journal of Refugee Law, Volume 13, Oxford University Press, 2001.

⁸² “Repatriation refers to the process of recovering the protection of the country of origin within the legal and social dimensions that citizenship implies.” International Journal of Refugee Law, Volume 13, Oxford University Press, 2001.

⁸³ ‘Responding to the health needs of trafficked women - Fieldwork preparation workshop report: London, 2-4 August 2001, UK’, quoting Ledia Beci, International Catholic Migration Committee, Albania (pp4)

On the issue of protection, and irrespective of whether or not victims of trafficking collaborated with the authorities of destination countries, women often fear retaliation from traffickers or corrupt officials. *“Many trafficking victims also understand that law enforcement officials in the countries to which they are trafficked may be complicit in trafficking networks; many victims are thus reluctant to engage with such officials in any manner.”*⁸⁴

In some cases NGOs report that local authorities exploit women that have returned to their countries of origin. They have no knowledge of their rights and are afraid to take their cases to court for fear of being accused of a crime. There are similar reports that people working with victims of trafficking are subject to pressure from other organisations.⁸⁵

Conditions of return

In many destination countries victims of trafficking are apprehended, arrested and deported as a matter of course, their status as illegal migrants take precedence over their status as victims of trafficking. There are no clear procedures for women to file complaints against their exploiters and no information is given to them about their right to claim asylum or seek legal and social assistance. Within 24 to 48 hours they may be put on a plane, often wearing the same clothes as at the time of their arrest.⁸⁶

There have been reports from countries of origin like Nigeria that victims of trafficking that were deported were interrogated by the authorities, publicly exposed, paraded and shamed in the belief that this would prevent further trafficking of women for prostitution.⁸⁷ Needless to say, women who were forcibly detained and deported were rejected by society once back in the country of origin. The misconception that women were willingly going to Europe to work for the sex industry has only recently begun to be addressed.

There are also reports from women that were deported that traffickers in the countries of origin were warned of their return and that traffickers met them at the borders or airport. Research carried out by Human Rights Watch in Greece and Bosnia-Herzegovina indicates that: *“victims facing deportation are likely upon return home to be subject to serious human rights violations in the form of reprisals or being reintegrated into the trafficking network...women deported from Greece were at grave risk of subsequent abuse because they were often repatriated by bus or train and thus vulnerable to traffickers working land routes.”*⁸⁸ They are then returned to the destination country through the same criminal networks that had trafficked them in the first place.⁸⁹ This often increases their ‘debts’ to traffickers for the cost of transportation.

Economic factors in the origin countries

Most victims of trafficking chose to migrate abroad for economic reasons. Poverty is a major factor leading to trafficking and for this reason the economic situation into which a victim of trafficking is to be reintegrated has an enormous impact on the success of the process. A recent study carried out by the IOM on the profile of victims of trafficking indicates that the socio-economic situation of women before their recruitment by traffickers is characterised by its precariousness, both at the economic level (low level of

⁸⁴ Human Rights Watch Briefing Paper, Commentary on the European Commission Proposal for a Council Directive “on the short term residence permit issued to victims of action to facilitate illegal immigration or trafficking in human beings who co-operate with the competent authorities.” July 1, 2002

⁸⁵ EE folder n 4. Women Consulting and Prophylaxis Center ‘Anti Crisis’. Email received 6 June 2002

⁸⁶ Paola Monzini ‘Il Mercato delle donne: Prostituzione, tratta e sfruttamento’ Donzelli editore, Roma, 2002.

⁸⁷ This happened in 1999 with the massive forced deportations of Nigerian women from Italy.

⁸⁸ Human Rights Watch Briefing Paper, Commentary on the European Commission Proposal for a Council Directive “on the short term residence permit issued to victims of action to facilitate illegal immigration or trafficking in human beings who co-operate with the competent authorities.” July 1, 2002

⁸⁹ GEN folder 48 : ‘Albania: breaking the cycle of prostitution’, STOP Traffic, 24 April 2002

education, unemployment) and family level (difficult social background and financial responsibilities).⁹⁰

In this respect special attention should be given to the feminisation of poverty. In Nigeria where an estimated forty percent of the total population lives below the poverty line women and girls from the rural areas are the most affected. Many families unable to meet the costs of schooling will take girls out of education, resulting in the illiteracy of two thirds of the female population. Today, seventy percent of women contribute to the domestic economy, as farmers, petty traders, domestic workers and homemakers. In the majority of cases their work is not rewarded and low income and a lack of collateral or property restrict their access to credit. Their lack of training and education means that they are not able to access other opportunities in the better-paid employment sectors, making them prime targets of recruiters.

In Central and Eastern Europe the breakdown of traditional social economic and political systems in the transition to market economies means that social services and education are no longer free and unemployment is on the rise. *“As a consequence of traditional gender stereotypes and discrimination in the labour market, women make up a disproportionate amount of those workers in low paid, less prestigious jobs and are more affected by unemployment. Additionally, women as single mothers increasingly have the sole economic responsibility for their families.”*⁹¹

Overall, depending on how long a woman has been away and whether or not she has had the possibility to earn some money abroad, the economic situation of victims of trafficking and their families has, at best, remained the same, and at worst, deteriorated. One can add to this the problem of debts to traffickers incurred for documents and transport. In the latter case a woman may be required to migrate to another city or another country in order to attempt to earn more money.

Women who return to their home countries will need to have viable long-term economic options, not only for their survival but also in many cases for the welfare of their families. Establishing some kind of economic stability, therefore, plays an important roll for a woman and her family dependants in the process of reintegration.

It is for this reason that NGOs in the host countries claim that many women do not want to return, in spite of the difficult personal sacrifices that this entails for women who leave behind their partners and children.

Family situation

Family circumstances prior to a woman leaving her country should not be overlooked in the reintegration process. The kind of family and affection derived from the unit can be the cause that a woman became a victim of trafficking in the first place. According to the IOM: *“The predominant recruitment method seems to be more informal: it appears...that most victims of trafficking in human beings have been recruited by their partner or by close friends and/or relatives. More and more recruitment is taking place in the informal way.”*⁹²

In cases where family members encouraged or played a roll in the trafficking of women abroad it is essential for the family situation to be evaluated prior to a woman returning.⁹³

⁹⁰ Preytjens, IOM Brussels, 2002

⁹¹ Angelika Kartusch, “Modern Slavery and Trafficking in Human Beings, Identifying Effective responses for Europe” Paris, November, 2000.

⁹² Preytjens, IOM Brussels, 2002

⁹³ The Dortmunder Mitternachtsmission reported that they had seen the case of one victim of trafficking returning to Germany with her daughters to exploit them in the sex industry. According to the woman, she had been through the same experience and it was now up to her daughters to earn the money.

All NGO experts agree that those who were trafficked once by their family members are at a higher risk to be trafficked again if women are reintegrated with these family members. In these cases the economic situation has to be taken into account, but above all the relations within a family and the perception of the economic or moral value of certain kinds of work, such as commercial sex work.⁹⁴

Another reason for evaluating the family situation is to determine the risk of rejection faced by a woman when her family is aware of the trafficking experience and her involvement in the sex industry. In some cases family members will rally around a woman to give her support and help her rebuild her life.⁹⁵ In Russia, one NGO reports receiving phone calls from *“mothers and fathers, sisters and husbands who on the return of a family member were concerned about her behaviour and suspected that she was a victim of trafficking. They tend to ask for advice on how to help her and what to do as a family to support her.”*⁹⁶

In other cases it will be seen as if a woman brought shame on the family, especially when there has been no economic achievement from her experience abroad. When she was supposed to bring money back home disappointment and friction may occur as a result. *“This is related to norms of behaviour that have not been respected and will therefore cast a bad name on the whole family. These norms are related not only to the fact that a young woman has left the village... or the nature of the work, but also to the contribution the trafficked person has been able to make to the family. If there was no contribution, but instead only more misery through illness and stigma, the trafficked person will be blamed putting shame on the family.”*⁹⁷ In most cases NGOs report that the women keep their story secret in order to avoid bringing shame on themselves and their families.

Finally, it is important to remember that victims of trafficking may have been cut off from their families over long periods of time. The IOM research carried out with 88 victims of trafficking in Belgium indicated that at the time of the interviews women had been away from home for an average period of three and a half years.⁹⁸ For them their family situation at home may have changed drastically and they no longer have the same place within the family unit. *“In some cases their husbands have found new partners. Their children are not able to recognise them. The money they sent home may have been misspent, adding to that person’s feeling that their whole experience was for nothing. In a certain sense, it is a further lack of consideration for what that woman has been through.”*⁹⁹ This makes it more difficult for a woman to pick up her life, as it was, she would have to reassess her position within her family and her community as well as recover from her experiences. For some women perhaps a better way of integrating is to establish a new family environment through marriage, which means a new start and offers a certain economic and social protection. However, this kind of situation takes women back to their old problems, they have not been economically empowered to divert their dependence upon male partners. Unless this is done more women will continue living in poverty and dependency.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁴ Annuska Dersk, Paths of exploitation, Studies on the trafficking of women and children between Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam. IOM and Center for Advanced Study (CAS). 1999

⁹⁵ In countries where there is greater awareness of the problem of trafficking, NGO experts report that social infrastructure for victim support regards these women more as victims and less as criminals.

⁹⁶ Feodor, Russia

⁹⁷ Annuska Dersk, Paths of exploitation, Studies on the trafficking of women and children between Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam. IOM and Center for Advanced Study (CAS). 1999

⁹⁸ “The length of their stay ranges from 3 months to 10 years” Preyjtjens, IOM Brussels, 2002

⁹⁹ Interview with Vomade.

¹⁰⁰ GEN folder 45, Society for the advancement of women, Malawi, Email received 12 May 2002.

Society and stigmatisation

Reintegrating as part of a community can be more difficult than reintegrating into a family unit. Public opinion can be a strong force and condemn a victim of trafficking, especially when there are noticeable changes in her behaviour. There may be conflicting ideals regarding the proper behaviour of women.

According to Vomade women in the Dominican Republic have a lower social and economic status than men. There is much gender-based discrimination that they find difficult to accept when they return, because they have been exposed to other social models in which women can be more economically independent. The communities may consider these women as potential troublemakers in that they do no longer want to accept the rolls that are imposed on them by society.

In cases where women return with funds, they are befriended, without funds they may be stigmatised and shunned, considered failures. Without money to show for their 'work' abroad some women do not return home for fear that their experience will be known to everybody in the community. Because of a lack of follow-up, support and real economic alternatives they head for the cities or try to migrate abroad, where they fall back in prostitution to sustain themselves and to continue sending money back home.¹⁰¹

Stigmatisation is one of the greatest problems for victims of trafficking. Within the social environment there may be strong disapproval of a woman's activities, whether they are suspected or known. Victims of trafficking are regarded as immoral when it is known that they were involved in prostitution and are rarely seen as victims. The reaction of the community and family will therefore have serious repercussions on the reintegration process. Women who have been trafficked are stigmatised. *'All victims of trafficking are hiding from people as they are not certain that people would not point at them or accuse them... Trafficking is considered to be a closed issue. A lot of people perceive trafficked women as prostitutes that sell their bodies.'*¹⁰² If a woman is stigmatised she may feel isolated and rejected, leading her to leave her community and putting her at greater risk of being trafficked once again.

Individual

Reintegration requires that the individual readapt to a social situation, a working environment, a certain lifestyle or behavioural code. This can be difficult once a woman has seen other ways of living or has become accustomed to having a greater degree of freedom than she would have in her community. It really depends on the degree of choice a woman had before being trafficked, whether she was working and had a valuable roll to play in the family.

The extent to which she can or wants to readapt will have a major impact on the reintegration process. NGOs remark that for women who have been to the city, returning to a small village can seem restraining, boring or economically untenable. These difficulties are exacerbated by problems regarding physical and mental health that affect the way they view themselves and are viewed by others around them.

Health

Because of the trafficking experience and exploitation in the sex industry women often have serious health problems when they return to their home country. These range from STDs, complications caused by abortions, to mental health problems.

Those returning with the assistance of organisations are mostly able to access medical treatment before reintegration. However, depending on the type of assistance received prior to leaving the host country and the specific health problem to be resolved, the

¹⁰¹ Paola Monzini, 'Il Mercato delle donne: Prostituzione, tratta e sfruttamento' Donzelli editore, Roma, 2002.

¹⁰² EE folder n 4. Women Consulting and Prophylaxis Center 'Anti Crisis'

treatment may well have to continue at home. This can be expensive for the victims and their families, especially if they are not fit to work as a result.

In the worst-case scenario women have contracted the HIV virus. This requires a wholly different approach in the reintegration process. For victims of trafficking being HIV positive makes life more difficult when they are trying to return to the life they were leading before. Persons with the HIV virus may be greatly stigmatised and this may put a woman in a difficult position vis-à-vis her family and community. There seems to be much uncertainty among organisations about how to deal with the reintegration of victims of trafficking with HIV/AIDS. Organisations in Cambodia often try to keep the disease secret from other villagers or the victims themselves. This can then have serious repercussions on the spread of the virus in communities where victims of trafficking come from.¹⁰³

Furthermore, treatment may be expensive and wholly inaccessible to women that do not have the necessary resources to pay for medication and where there is no state support to cover the expenses. It is also very difficult for organisations that work with returnees to cover medical costs. However, if a programme of anti-retrovirals has been initiated in the host country it is essential that it is continued at home. When an infected person is taken off his or her ARVsm the HIV virus in the blood will multiply and the immune system goes back to where it would have been without the treatment.

Some victims of trafficking in the UK were granted refugee status to be able to continue the ARV programmes. This was based on credible medical evidence that their return would significantly reduce the applicant's life expectancy as a result of a complete absence of medical treatment in their countries and that this would subject them to acute physical and mental suffering.¹⁰⁴

4.3. Services and activities provided for reintegration

A. Information on repatriation/reintegration assistance

Although many NGOs in destination countries try to provide information on reintegration assistance, there seems to be a lack of clear information about assistance available in the countries of origin. In a study carried out by the IOM, interviews with 88 victims of trafficking, 87% of respondents did not know of any aid association in their countries of origin that could help them in the case of their return.¹⁰⁵

Information

In order to address the lack of information on reintegration assistance the IOM has developed accurate and up to date country information sheets on reintegration in Albania, Bulgaria, Ecuador, Lithuania, Moldova, Nigeria, Romania, Russia, Sri Lanka and The Ukraine. It compiled information on legislation and available assistance for victims of trafficking in the countries of origin. The purpose of these fact sheets is to help actors in host countries, such as NGOs, social workers and the police, to assess the viability of a return and analyse a woman's reintegration prospects.

Developing a reintegration plan

Although many women return home empty handed from the trafficking experience, in some cases they are able to work and save some money before going back. They may want to buy some land, build a house, put their children through school, and set up their own business. In cases where they are able to put money aside NGOs, such as Vomade that works with Dominican women, try to work out a reintegration plan based on the individual's personal project, and provide information and follow-up through its branch

¹⁰³ Annuska Dersk, Paths of exploitation, Studies on the trafficking of women and children between Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam. IOM and Center for Advanced Study (CAS). 1999

¹⁰⁴ Article from The Guardian, 'Life Chances' Liz McGregor, 31 July 2002

¹⁰⁵ Preyjiens, IOM Brussels, 2002

office in the Dominican Republic. Having a personal project to return with facilitates the reintegration process, and helps women rebuild their lives using whatever funds they have available. It also gives them a certain sense of achievement.

B. Preparing for return

Case assessment

Generally, organisations, such as the IOM and ICMC in Albania, screen trafficked women to ascertain their intentions and motivations prior to their return to the country of origin. A psychologist then works out a case profile after a number of meetings. A reintegration strategy tailored on a woman's needs is developed accordingly.

Case assessment in the origin country

Rejection by family members can be a problem with dire results for women, placing them in a situation of vulnerability and disorientation.¹⁰⁶ Prior to a woman's arrival the receiving organisation carries out a risk assessment, that includes the security risks for the returnee (through a meeting with the family and her partner). The family situation and willingness to have her back is also assessed. The organisation then elaborates a plan of action for the victim's reintegration based on available resources and services provided by local organisations. The case assessment is implemented by NGOs in the countries of origin and as well as by the IOM and ICMC through their Inter Agency Referral System.

Family tracing and mediation in the origin country

In situations where women wish to return to their own communities and families local NGOs may be required to establish contact with family members prior to a woman's return.¹⁰⁷ This can only be done on the condition that the woman asked for this kind of intervention to take place.

In some cases, and this is particularly true in situations where very young women were trafficked, the NGO will also have to inform, mediate and sensitise family members about what has occurred. If there is a risk of rejection locally based NGOs, such as the Reverend Sisters in Nigeria, mediate with family members. *'We counsel the family, we try to talk to them. We give them reasons why they should now accept that girl, because she has been trafficked'*¹⁰⁸

Pre- repatriation assistance

NGOs, such as La Strada,¹⁰⁹ provide pre-repatriation assistance to women and their children (when the child is born in the host country), including temporary shelter, medical and psychological service, security measures in cases of threat, food and clothes.

They will make all the necessary repatriation arrangements, obtain travel documents and organise transport. In cases where it is possible, they will network with partner NGOs in the countries of origin to provide post-repatriation assistance (shelter, medical, psychological and material support, vocational training, counselling and information) and social support to victims' families.

Post - repatriation assistance

The woman is met at the airport and informed about possible assistance. In cases where further assistance is not required safe transportation home is provided. A partner/ NGO in her local area is located to follow-up and provide assistance. In cases where women do not have family, their families do not want them back, or cannot offer what they need, reintegration takes place at women's shelters in the capital or another district.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ For this reason, the majority of women prefer not to tell their families what happened to them.

¹⁰⁷ This work is essential in that it helps the organisation in the home country to ascertain whether she will be accepted or rejected by her family and develop a reintegration plan accordingly.

¹⁰⁸ GEN folder 43, Interview Elaine Pearson with Reverend sisters, 6 march 2002.

¹⁰⁹ EE Folder 10, La Strada Moldova. Email received 23 May 2002

¹¹⁰ IOM/ ICMC reintegration methodology in Albania.

C. Health services

Investigation into the health of trafficked women in the sex industry shows that there are serious health problems that have to be dealt with on the women's return to their home countries. Women suffer from trauma, poor health, infectious diseases, drug and alcohol addictions, depression and other mental health problems. Providing women with support, whether it be directed at self-help groups of women who have suffered from violence or referrals to professional medical services, is the first priority for NGOs that work with victims of trafficking. In this respect service providers serve as a bridge for accessing services provided by public institutions.

Information on sexual health and medical treatment

Certain NGOs, such as the Salus Foundation in the Ukraine, provide health information and medical treatment for sexually transmitted diseases to victims of trafficking and women working in the sex industry. They have developed booklets on 'How to protect yourself – Advisory for Women in Sex Business', 'HIV/AIDS', 'Hepatitis', 'What does STI mean.'¹¹¹

In some cases organisations, such as the IOM in the Ukraine, can cover the costs of medical treatment as part of their 'reintegration for trafficked women' projects. However in many countries, victims of trafficking must cover these costs themselves, especially if they were not directly assisted by these specific organisations for their return.

Programmes for victims of trafficking with HIV/AIDS

Women who have contracted HIV as a result of their exploitation in prostitution have the double problem of getting over what has happened to them and facing a new situation as a result of the virus. For this reason this group of women needs support in the process of reintegration and above all an integrated form of assistance, both physical and social. In Colombia the IOM provides specific psychological attention and follow-up to women returnees that are HIV positive.¹¹²

In Nigeria, la Legga Italiana per la lotta contro l'AIDS, in collaboration with the IOM, has also worked to promote a common operational framework for NGOs, public structures and social workers to provide health services for trafficked women with HIV and other STDs.¹¹³

Psychological follow-up

The psychological follow-up of women is done through counselling or psychotherapy on a one-to-one basis by professional counsellors or psychologists that have experience of working with victims of trafficking, domestic violence, sexual assault, torture and war trauma.¹¹⁴

According to the NGO Reaching Out in Romania the trafficking experience results in women developing a dependent relationship with traffickers. *"Abroad they need this relationship to survive and in this way it is easy to keep the women and girls under control. The women are raped frequently and they start to believe the reality that the trafficker enforces on them. They believe they are useless and are programmed to think like this."* The result is that the women no longer trust themselves or others and this is exacerbated by a lack of self worth. In the countries of origin women fear that others will know about their involvement in the sex industry and then judge them. Reaching out

¹¹¹ EE Folder 17, Salus Foundation, West Ukrainian Programme of Trafficking in Women Prevention, Email received 08 May 2002.

¹¹² GEN folder 21 : Fanny Polania, Email received 2 May 2002

¹¹³ Measures to counter trafficking in Nigerian women and Minors and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmissible Diseases, Lega Italiana per la Lutta Contro l'Aids, IOM.

¹¹⁴ EE folder 34, Incest Trauma Center, Belgrade, Email received 6 May 2002

helps women take responsibility for their own actions and deal with possible stigmatisation and negative reinforcements of their behaviour in society. *“They will be exposed to other people’s rude comments. We try to help them build up belief in themselves as worthy and valuable human beings.”* Intensive therapy may take anything from six months to three years depending on the person.¹¹⁵

Support Groups

Group counselling is provided to women returning to their countries of origin. In the Philippines women, who had personal experience of migration for work purposes, set up the NGO Baita. They focus on providing assistance and psychological support to women returning to the Philippines in order to facilitate reintegration. The aim of the group is to create an environment where a woman feels that she is able to express what has happened to her, is listened to and understood. Support groups help women build self-esteem and can lead them to think about alternative ways of perceiving things in their everyday lives.¹¹⁶

Ethno Cultural therapy

Cultural beliefs may be an obstacle to women achieving a general wellbeing in the process of reintegration into society. There are numerous reports of trafficked women from Sub-Saharan Africa are often made to enact rites that bond them to the trafficking network. Women take an oath of loyalty before their departure. It is their belief that breaking the oath can result in their own or a family member’s death. NGOs in Nigeria are addressing this problem by providing counselling. *‘We try to tell them that those things will have no impact on them. That is the essence of counselling, to disabuse the woman of whatever evil...because they took the oath at a shine. That oath is very, very important. It is very important to get the [woman’s] conscience free of that problem.’*¹¹⁷

Family counselling

Counselling is given to parents and other close relatives to help the family deal with a woman’s return, especially if the woman suffers from trauma. Certain mental health problems may arise as a result of the trafficking experience and a woman’s exploitation in the sex industry. If necessary the woman’s partner is involved in counselling and a wide range of issues are covered, including trauma and emotional distress, couple dynamics, roll and responsibility within relationships, family planning, conflict resolution. When she has a child NGOs, such as the SEF Foundation in Romania, also provide information on parenting, children’s psychological and social development.¹¹⁸

The ICMC in Albania also organises family counselling sessions for women who are still in the shelter. Efforts are made to strengthen relations with families through supervised meetings and special group counselling sessions.

Support groups for women working in the sex industry

For women working in the sex industry certain NGOs such as Puerta Abierta in Argentina, have drop-in centres where activities are carried out with children, mothers and other family members to build on relationships and encourage family bonding. The organisation also does outreach work and visits mothers and children in the areas where they work (squares, streets, rented rooms, bars, clubs) providing support in difficult family situations.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁵ Interview between Fiona Luchoo and Iana, Reaching Out Romania, May, 2002. *Humanistic approach – Carl Rogers ‘Golden nugget’*

¹¹⁶ EE Folder114, Women for Women Centre, Aviv, Western Ukraine.

¹¹⁷ GEN folder 43, Interview Elaine Pearson with Reverent sisters, 6 march 2002.

¹¹⁸ EE folder n5. SEF Foundation, Romania. Email received 12 June 2002

¹¹⁹ GEN folder 22, Puerta Abierta Recreando, Argentina. Email received 15 June 2002

D. Housing services

In many countries of origin where trafficking of women is prevalent several NGOs run emergency shelter facilities for women that have returned. Most women who access these facilities feel that they cannot return to their families or communities in the immediate term.

Specialised Shelters

The shelters are often run by social workers who ensure that women's basic needs are met, including food, clothing, medical and psychological assistance. Some shelters also provide longer-term follow-up, such as general social support, orientation for education and vocational training, assistance with securing employment and legal counselling. However, in most cases shelters only provide their services in the short-term and may refer the women to other NGOs for a follow-up in the reintegration process. Shelter facilities specifically for victims of trafficking are provided in countries of origin by organisations such as:

La Strada

La Strada is one of the most active NGO networks that provide reintegration assistance to victims of trafficking. It has offices in many countries of origin of trafficked women throughout Central and Eastern Europe, including Belarus, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, FYR Macedonia and Moldova, Poland and the Ukraine. It implements a multi-disciplinary programme that provides social assistance to trafficked people through short-term shelter, medical, psychological and legal assistance. It also helps with the reintegration of third country nationals wishing to return to their home countries. The programme seeks to refer victims to support networks and assists women who wish to file charges against traffickers.¹²⁰

International Catholic Migration Committee (ICMC)

The ICMC is a Non-Governmental Organisation that provides emergency assistance and shelter to refugees, internally displaced persons, migrants and victims of trafficking. It works with local NGOs and the IOM to provide protection and sustainable solutions for trafficked women.¹²¹ It runs a shelter in **Albania**, where between January 2000 and December 2001 225 trafficking victims (both country and third country nationals) were provided with a combination of safe shelter, medical screening, social services, return transport and reintegration assistance, using the Inter Agency Referral System.¹²²

For women returning to Albania the shelter provides reception and housing facilities as well as a) medical assistance including, examinations and the initiation or continuation of treatment; b) psychological assistance involving individual and group counselling. Social workers try to help women become part of the life in the shelter and develop and maintain trust in others there. Intensive therapy aims to stabilise the psychological situation of women suffering from trauma and to get them to think rationally. And c) basic job orientation, including education and temporary employment programmes based on women's personal capacities with the aim of improving social and professional skills.

¹²⁰ Trafficking in Human Beings in South Eastern Europe, Current Situation and Responses to Trafficking in Human Beings in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, the FYR of Macedonia, Moldova, Romania/ UNICEF, UNOHCHR, OSCE –ODIHR. Published by UNICEF 2002

¹²¹ EE folder 42: IOM Albania. Email received 30 April 2002

¹²² Under this system the IOM facilitated travel documents, escort and assistance to final destination. Since January 2002, the IARS is implemented by IOM and by the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC), together with partner-NGOs. This system enables a group of organisations to provide return and reintegration assistance to victims of trafficking. The IARS system is currently used for women returning to Albania and women from other countries (*third country nationals*) who wish to return home from Albania.

The International Organisation for Migration (IOM)

The IOM works with local NGOs in the countries of origin to provide shelter and assistance in the reintegration process of victims of trafficking. Existing measures aim to facilitate the women's social and family reinsertion process. Assistance takes the form of short-term shelter, personal subsidies, registration and attendance fees for vocational training, special grants to employers who generate job opportunities for women (through salary supplements) and the purchase of professional equipment (for self-employment) on a case-by-case basis.¹²³

Reintegration assistance can be provided for any period from three months to one year. Activities and services differ from one country to another depending on the specific resources of the IOM country branches. Currently, the IOM runs shelter facilities in:

- Albania in co-operation with ICMC.
- Bosnia-Herzegovina, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro (PRTB). This project aims to facilitate the safe return of trafficked women stranded in the Balkan countries. The IOM office, in co-ordination with local partners, provides temporary shelter, psychological and social assistance. The project aims to reintegrate victims of trafficking by reuniting them with their families and facilitating access to vocational training and/or employment orientation courses.¹²⁴
- Bulgaria. The project provides return and reintegration assistance through shelters and safe houses, legal, medical and psychological assistance. Another long-term objective is to find safe accommodation for women and get an agreement on a witness protection scheme with the Bulgarian authorities.
- Lithuania. Based in Vilnius, the IOM works in partnership with the NGO 'Missing Persons Family Support Center' to provide temporary shelter for returned victims of trafficking.
- Moldova and The Ukraine. Two rehabilitation centres currently provide medical services and accommodation to victims of trafficking. In the last two years the IOM has assisted more than 1,000 victims of trafficking in Moldova and the Ukraine alone, providing gynaecological, psychiatric, psychological and medical assistance, as well as vocational training and apprenticeship programmes. With regards to regional reintegration options, micro enterprises and vocational training the IOM works with an extensive network of national NGOs. They are given direct financial support and technical assistance.¹²⁵
- Nigeria. A shelter was set to open in October 2002 in co-operation with NCWR (Catholic Sisters/COSUDOW). Currently, IOM provides safe accommodation in Lagos for transit in onwards journeys or for longer stays. It also facilitates transport to the final destination and gives rehabilitation and reintegration assistance, such as family tracing, medical and psychosocial counselling, training and business assistance and follow-up.¹²⁶

¹²³ GEN folder 44: Measures to counter trafficking in Nigerian women and Minors and prevention of HIV/AIDS and other Sexually Transmissible Diseases, Lega Italiana per la Lutta Contro l'Aids, IOM.

¹²⁴ GEN folder 49: IOM / Programme of Assistance for the Protection, return and Reintegration of Trafficked Women and Children in Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, FYR of Macedonia, Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro. http://www.iom.int/en/what/main_ARN_new.shtml

¹²⁵ EE folder 31: IOM Project co-ordinator, Belarus, Moldova, The Ukraine, Email received from Frederic Larsson 7 May 2002.

¹²⁶ Peytjenns, IOM Belgium, 2002

- Romania. The programme carried out by the IOM in Bucharest includes assistance to victims of trafficking such as temporary shelter and protection for returning and transiting victims, as well as reintegration mechanisms.
- Vietnam. This project has been implemented in Lang Son province since 1997. It includes a reception shelter and a reintegration scheme. It promotes income-generating activities for former trafficking victims that return to their home communities.¹²⁷ The target group counts 2,500 people.

OSCE (ODIHR)

The OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR) is an inter-governmental organisation based in Warsaw. Since the year 2000 OSCE has co-ordinated the efforts of agencies and NGOs that address the issue of trafficking in Montenegro. In collaboration with IOM, UNICEF, ICMC and local NGOs such as Women's safe House and Women Lobby they have designed a multi-component Victim Protection Programme which provides shelter, social and medical assistance to victims of trafficking and establishes mechanisms to assist women in their (re)integration.

Host Families

In order to facilitate the reintegration of women who come from less privileged social backgrounds and need individual attention and special support, foster care is provided within a family. The ICMC is currently implementing this approach in Albania to provide women with alternative models of family life, especially if the trafficking experience occurred as a result of family problems. The aim is to get women to reintegrate in the wider society by giving them new opportunities in a more supportive environment.

E. Financial assistance

Support for initial subsistence

Although most NGOs are unable to provide financial assistance to cover women's every day expenses, in some cases organisations such as the IOM give financial assistance to women to facilitate their initial reintegration process. The sums that are given vary. In Bucharest up to US\$ 200 is given to a woman who has returned under the voluntary return programme. This financial help is given for the first three to four months after repatriation.¹²⁸

Revolving funds

NGOs, such as the Society for the Advancement of Women in Malawi, have established revolving funds that provide loans to women who want to create and/or develop small-scale enterprises. Before they can obtain loans women will be trained in various skills and team building, so that they are able to run their small businesses effectively. It is also important for the sustainability of projects that women have a basic knowledge of accounting systems. The fund aims to initially target 3,000 women in both rural and urban areas that are victims of gender based violence: *"Research on existing micro-credit schemes in countries such as India have shown that poor or rural women can use loans productively. The women are urged to form groups of five members. This approach follows closely the village banking concept where group or peer pressure provides major security."* Currently this NGO is seeking investment to develop the fund's infrastructure to become self-sustainable and to meet increased demand.¹²⁹

¹²⁷ IOM, 'Reception and Reintegration of Trafficked and Other Vulnerable Vietnamese Women and Children (RTVV)', http://www.iom.int/en/what/main_ARN_new.shtml

¹²⁸ EE folder n5. SEF Foundation, Romania. Email received 12 June 2002

¹²⁹ GEN folder 42, Society for the Advancement of Women, Malawi, Email received 7 June 2002

Business Loans

Women who lack economic opportunities are extremely vulnerable to trafficking. In the Ukraine, where ninety percent of the new unemployed is female, traffickers lure them into the sex industry abroad with the promises of lucrative jobs. To address the problem of unemployment and create economic alternatives for women, the Donetsk 'Women for Women Centre' in the Ukraine currently provides credits to women through its Women's Economic Empowerment programme. This scheme establishes mechanisms for women to apply for loans from credit unions once they have completed a three-month course in business entrepreneurship and have successfully defended a business plan.¹³⁰

F. Vocational training

In those countries that have in place a social-economic infrastructure, partnerships have been established between NGOs and private vocational training schools to enable women returnees to access training opportunities. Vocational training programmes are currently implemented by:

The International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX)

This US-based NGO aims to deliver viable economic alternatives to returnees and potential victims of trafficking through its Regional Empowerment Initiative for Women.¹³¹ It targets high-risk groups of women. IREX works with local women's organisations in the major cities of Bulgaria, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Lithuania, Moldova, Romania and Russia to provide job skills training and job placement support that address the economic conditions that compel most women to seek opportunities abroad. *"The aim is to prevent trafficking in the countries of origin as women at risk are vested with the skills and confidence to successfully pursue safe opportunities in their home countries."*¹³²

ICMC

As part of its reintegration programme the ICMC facilitates access to vocational training courses. The appropriate training course is chosen when woman's personal and professional capacity and the situation in the local labour market have been evaluated. Job orientation and labour insertion is done after a woman has completed her vocational training.

Winrock International /Women for Women Centres

Winrock International is a US-based non-governmental organisation that works with local NGOs in the Ukraine that have an experience in providing rehabilitation services to returnee victims of trafficking -both in co-operation with the IOM and other government and non-government structures.¹³³ In the Ukraine several centres belonging to the 'Women for Women' network were created to help returnees acquire the necessary skills for finding employment or starting their own businesses.¹³⁴

The aim of the training programmes is to facilitate access to employment and to increase the competitiveness of women in the labour market by updating their skills. In the programme consultation and information on employment opportunities and labour legislation is available. Professional skills training focuses on information technology, accounting, office assistance, handiwork and crafts. In the Aviv Center alone 23

¹³⁰ EE folder 26. Winrock International, Email received 4 May 2002

¹³¹ This scheme promotes the empowerment of women from selected countries of the former Soviet Union and Southeast Europe.

¹³² GEN folder 56 : IREX, <http://www.irex.org/programs/reiw/index.htm> Information accessed 06 August 2002

¹³³ Victims of trafficking are also provided pro bono legal consultations that often involve support if a woman wants to initiate or become involved in prosecuting traffickers. There are also family issues that come up (property division, residence registration, etc) with which the lawyers assist.

¹³⁴ The programs at three NGOs in Aviv, Dnipropetrovsk and Donetsk have been ongoing since late 1998. Since then four more partners have started to provide these integrated services in Rivno, Zhyotmhyr, Chernivtsy and Kherson. EE Folder between 9-10 : Email received from Chernivtsi Center 'Women for Women'

professionals hold training sessions. Examples of the courses provided by the Women for Women network include:¹³⁵

Courses in Business:

The course targets women that want to start their own businesses. Participants consider the practical and legal aspects of entrepreneurship, marketing, business planning, personnel management, office management and financial management.

Business training ranges from courses for beginners (investment planning, marketing and advertising) to financial analysis and techniques of effective selling. Training is conducted by local structures that have considerable experience in providing business services and are specialised in training and consulting. In the Donetsk region eleven such organisations participate in the programme for business training.¹³⁶

Basic Computer Courses:

This course aims to develop knowledge and skills in the field of information technology. The course covers computer basics and output devices, printers and scanners. Participants learn how to use a keyboard as well as a wide range of software programmes (Word for Windows, MS Excel) and learn to navigate on the internet.

Courses in Office Management:

The courses aim to acquaint women with business documentation and the operation of office equipment. They target women that want to get jobs as office managers and personal assistants.

Course in Tour Guiding:

Women learn about the history and modern life of a town. It teaches them how to conduct an excursion and they learn about the work of tour guides. It also covers basic language training.

Crafts/ Industry

Training has to be designed keeping in mind the demand of the labour market and the chances of economic success for independent businesses. Countries that have a poor the social and economic infrastructure or where access to education, training and employment is difficult, NGOs have to implement out capacity building projects and run small income-generating activities, very often with a creative use of material and human resources. In Colombia the NGO Nueva Era Social runs courses in flower arrangement, jewellery, glass making, ceramics and card making. It also provides courses in dressmaking, the maintenance of industrial machinery, in the production of leather goods, cosmetics and hairdressing.¹³⁷ In Malawi the Society for the Advancement of Women runs a chicken farm, the produce of which is sold to help sustain the women financially.

G. Access to employment

Information on labour opportunities and access to employment agencies

In some countries of origin NGOs working with victims of trafficking provide information on the labour market and local employment agencies. They help women develop curriculum vitae, assist in filling out job applications, and train in interview techniques.¹³⁸

They also give information on jobs skills necessary for finding employment or for starting one's own business (information technology, use of internet and email, operating office equipment, English for business), and offer legal consultations on employment, women's rights at the work place and on business related activities.

¹³⁵ EE Folder 14 . Iviv Women For Women Center, West Ukraine. Email received 14 May 2002

¹³⁶ EE Folder 19. Donetsk Women for Women Center, DRLBPW, Email received 9 May 2002

¹³⁷ For business they carry out courses on accounting and system training.

¹³⁸ EE folder 22. Zhytomyr 'Women for Women Center'. Email received 8 May 2002

The women for women centres provide an updated library of practical tools to individuals involved in small business and that want to start their own businesses or to those that want to increase their economic and legal knowledge. They also run hotlines women can call to discuss these issues.

Supervision and assistance in setting up small businesses

If a personal business plan has been worked out with a woman prior to her return locally based organisations in the country of origin are contacted to supervise the creation and development of the small business. These local NGOs are in charge of administering funds when women are given financial support to set up a small business. The projects are supervised everything, from paying the rent to buying material, in order to ensure that funds are managed adequately. According to Solwodi in Germany eighty percent of its clients has succeeded in reintegrating by creating their own business. In Nigeria the IOM can provide up to US\$ 1,000 to each individual project.¹³⁹ Solwodi gives loans of up to 7,500 Euro.

H. Follow-up

The follow-up in the reintegration process is difficult to do. In general NGOs only have contact with a woman when she is given some form of direct assistance for repatriation or reintegration. With women that have accessed and left shelter facilities regular contact is maintained to monitor their reintegration process and to determine whether they or their families were threatened or harassed.¹⁴⁰

If a woman has not returned under one of the existing international programmes or has not been put into direct contact with a local organisation, then the follow-up is only possible if she herself tries to access the services of NGOs. However, women who return outside of the established framework are reticent to establish contact with NGOs. Solwodi remarked that: *“women remain very sceptical about assistance in the country of origin and are reluctant in most cases to get in touch with the local organisations, they do not want anyone to know what happened to them. They don’t believe that they will really get any help, it is not until the project is up and running and they have the tools given to them that they actually begin to understand that NGOs are there to help them.”*

It has to be said that most NGOs providing support in the countries of origin are limited by a lack of human and material resources. They can provide general orientation for reintegration (administrative assistance and access to public services) but in most cases very little practical assistance is available after the first few weeks of a woman’s return. As available assistance is only given in the short-term many victims of trafficking eventually lose touch with the organisations.¹⁴¹ Nevertheless, certain information services have been set up to address possible requirements or queries from victims of trafficking and their relatives. The most common of which are hotlines.

Hotlines

In some countries NGOs have established special telephone consultation services through their hotlines. Individuals can make enquiries and obtain practical advice on the issue of trafficking.

¹³⁹ GEN folder 43, Interview Elaine Pearson with Reverent sisters, 6 March 2002.

¹⁴⁰ GEN folder 55: IOM Press Briefing Notes ‘The Ukraine – Protection and Reintegration Assistance to Victims of trafficking’ / Stop Traffic, 15 February 2002

¹⁴¹ IOM and ICMC in Albania try to carry out follow-up on a case-by-case basis through periodical meetings with women in their homes.

The OSCE/ODIHR office in Montenegro has established a hotline that has a co-ordinating roll for institutions that may come into contact with women victims of trafficking. It also gives information directly to women.¹⁴²

In many of their offices La Strada runs a hotline that provides anonymous and free counselling and information services to potential and actual victims of trafficking.¹⁴³ La Strada in Moldova has trained staff to deal with calls to the hotline that is specifically targeted to victims of trafficking and potential victims of trafficking. Through the hotline they:

- Provide information on the issue of trafficking (what is trafficking in humans, dangers and consequences, recognising a situation of trafficking, illegal migration)
- Assist relatives, friends and other individuals in recovery and repatriation of victims of trafficking.
- Assist victims of trafficking in accessing medical, psychological, material support.
- Provide information support (procedure and conditions of employment abroad, marriage with a foreigner, tourism, including visa regimes, legal provisions pertaining to migration and migrants of the countries of origin and destination; organisations able to provide support in case of need)

I. Training of professionals

Certain organisations that have extensive experience in working with victims of trafficking provide training to local NGOs, social workers and service providers (in the area of health, housing, protection, legal support and follow-up) develop effective integrated rehabilitation services for victims of trafficking. Sensitisation of the various actors, on how to work with women from an empowerment perspective, is also done.

Empowerment

Self-esteem and empowerment is not so much a concrete programme. It has to do with the way service providers work and with activities developed with the active participation of women that have been victims of trafficking. *“Work is carried out with organisations which are service providers during the process of reintegration and with the authorities to prevent re-victimisation be it through the organisations or the authorities. During the process of empowerment victims become participants to the process and search for personal or collective solutions which lead them to take charge of changes in their lives.”*

It is about work in training, changing attitudes, values and making decisions. In this concept work is about breaking down established preconceptions of what it means to be a victim and how this is perceived.

The biggest challenge is facing the possibility that someone who has survived trafficking may decide, upon returning home, that there is no perspective at home and wonder whether it is not better to ‘try again’ to find work abroad. This is where the empowerment training and women’s rights training conducted by the centres play a key role. The same applies to promoting in different activities the recognition of women’s rights as citizens, human rights, how to claim and demand those rights and how defend and respect those rights in their relationship with others.

Creating specialised services

The NGO CIVICA in Moldova provides training in operating hotlines for disadvantaged women and victims of trafficking. It gives psychological, legal, job and social consultations

¹⁴² EE folder 35, ODIHR Anti Trafficking Project Fund, OSCE/ ODIHR Office in Montenegro, Podgorica, 31 March 2002. Email received, 6 May 2002

¹⁴³ EE Folder 10, La Strada Moldova. Email received 23 May 2002

to victims of trafficking. It has also developed effective collaboration between NGOs and social workers in the public services.¹⁴⁴

With respect to working directly with psychological support to victims of trafficking, the Incest Trauma Centre in Belgrade has carried out training sessions for the police and social workers in:

- Psychological support to victims and gender sensitivity
- The connection between sexual abuse and sex industry
- Sexual trauma and post traumatic stress syndrome. Psychological assistance to victims of sexual abuse and/or sex trafficking¹⁴⁵

4.4. Problems to be addressed

A. Country responses to trafficking

In many countries of origin there are difficulties in combating trafficking and providing victims with appropriate assistance. On the whole, there is a lack of specialised structures¹⁴⁶ and government institutions, inadequate services target the specific needs of women and there is a lack of established frameworks for the long-term reintegration of victims of trafficking. Trafficked women may, therefore, become reliant on the services provided by NGOs, whose reintegration services are very short-term due to insufficient material, financial and human resources.

There is a reasonable fear of recruiters. There are weak social systems and there is a lack of supporting organisations to provide a follow-up to victims of trafficking.¹⁴⁷ There is discrimination, harassment and repression by the authorities of women that continue to work in prostitution.¹⁴⁸

B. Health

NGOs that work with repatriated victims of trafficking report that many women suffer psychological problems on their return to the country of origin. This is mainly due to the violence they have suffered. There are numerous cases where women need help with drug or alcohol addictions.

Most women have contracted sexually transmitted diseases and in some cases women may have contracted the HIV virus. In some countries of origin, such as the Ukraine, legislation may stipulate that there should be access to free medical treatment. However, resources are not readily available, the cost of treatment is extremely high, making it difficult for women and/or NGOs to cover expenses. There is also a lack of knowledge of doctors on the needs of trafficked women, making it difficult for NGOs to mainstream women into existing structures. More training of professionals is needed in this area.¹⁴⁹

C. Housing

In most countries shelter is only available on a short-term basis. In its project proposals the IOM in Romania pointed out that 'longer term shelter assistance and counselling will

¹⁴⁴ EE folder 27, 'Civic Initiative' in Moldova. Email received 8 May 2002

¹⁴⁵ EE folder 34, 'Report of the Incest Trauma Center – Belgrade after completed serial or training for police officers working on trafficking in human beings/ sex trafficking issue on the territory of Serbia' March 26, 2002

¹⁴⁶ NGOs currently working in this area have developed their mandates from the work that they may have done with victims of domestic violence, refugees and exiles, women and children.

¹⁴⁷ EE folder 39, La Strada Czech Republic. Email received 9 May 2002

¹⁴⁸ GEN folder 22, Puerta Abierta Recreando, Argentina. Email received 15 June 2002

¹⁴⁹ 'Responding to the health needs of trafficked women - Fieldwork preparation workshop report: London, 2-4 August 2001, UK', quoting Inna Shvab, Manager of social assistance and Victims Support, La Strada, The Ukraine, (pp3-4)

be necessary prior to reintegration if trafficking victims are to be successful in their return to their communities of origin.¹⁵⁰

D. Vocational training

The idea that many organisations and agencies promote is that learning specific skills enables young women to earn their own living and at the same time helps build self-esteem. The most typical kind of support for victims of trafficking, especially for those coming out of commercial sex work, is skills training. However, *“not all girls and women are able or persistent enough to complete the training. Some women cannot afford to stay away from home for so long without contributing to family income. Others are already too used to earning more money in much less time and go back into commercial sex work.”*¹⁵¹

In countries such as Romania there are also strict criteria for admission to a variety of vocational training courses provided by national institutions. In order to follow a vocational training course a person needs eight years of education –to get work in a clothes factory– and at least ten years of education for admission to other courses, such as courses to become a waitress, cook, nurse or secretary. Most women have less than the required minimum educational background. When they pass theoretical tests it is possible for them to access the courses, but even though they may have been successful there is still resistance to them starting a course.¹⁵²

It is difficult to get professionals to provide training for both material and financial reasons. Where teachers do not work on a voluntary basis it is difficult to pay for the hours worked. Also, at first a very personal approach and attention is needed and teachers need to have a specific profile for this kind of intervention.

E. Follow-up

Initially when a woman returns to her country of origin she is given the contact details of organisations that can provide basic support for reintegration. When a woman is in a voluntary return programme, such as that of the IOM, the follow-up of individuals is carried out on a case-by-case basis. However in the majority of cases women that return to their countries are not provided with long-term follow-up. The reasons are two-fold a) a lack of resources and specialised services to provide follow-up of victims in the long-term, b) a desire on behalf of women to forget what has happened to them. Many also fear that their experiences will be uncovered if they are seen to be accessing assistance from organisations working with victims of trafficking.

¹⁵⁰ EE folder 20, IOM Counter Trafficking Activities in Romania, Email received 08 May 2002

¹⁵¹ Annuska Dersk, Paths of exploitation, Studies on the trafficking of women and children between Cambodia, Thailand and Vietnam. IOM and Center for Advanced Study (CAS). 1999

¹⁵² EE folder n5. SEF Foundation, Romania. Email received 12 June 2002

5. International seminar on good practices from a legal and NGO perspective

5.1. Introduction

On the conclusion of the two researches on legislation and good practices an international seminar was organised on 28–29 April 2003, with the participation of twenty representatives from organisations visited during the researches. The seminar's aim was to bring together the experience of organisations working in different European countries, and to provide a way forward for NGOs operating in the six countries: Belgium, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Spain and the United Kingdom.

Over two days and with the information from the two researches as their basis participants discussed the influence of legislation on practical support and good practices from their organisations in the fields of health, housing, education, vocational training, employment and reintegration. The good practices discussed during the seminar focused on the empowerment perspective for women to live without fear and with prospects. Concrete experiences were exchanged and recommendations formulated.

5.2. Discussion on legislation

Introduction

The phenomenon of trafficking is identified as a crime against humanity, where women are misled. They want an income for their families but are left in debts. Women's trafficking is a feature that can be seen as a response to the feminisation of poverty. It is the NGO-sector that deals with the implications, irrespective of the legal provisions present in a given country. Policy-makers rarely look at trafficking from the women's perspective (as women, migrants and/or workers) as a result of which trafficked women are being treated under criminal law or as illegal migrants. It is hoped that the inconsistency between the measures taken for victim's protection and the measures taken for investigating and punishing offences can be addressed in the near future.

Presentation of the Dutch National Rapporteur on Human Trafficking

As the Netherlands does have the instrument of an independent national rapporteur the specific role of this rapporteur was further explained. The major objectives are to collect information, to do research and to make recommendations.

The rapporteur reports to the government once a year. The idea is that reports present facts and figures. So far two reports were published (both in Dutch and English) and the third report is on its way. The rapporteur links information to different stakeholders. The conclusions and recommendations are presented to the government and, together with a reaction of the Minister of Justice, discussed in parliament.

Discussion

There is a contradiction inherent in different instruments available, that basically translates in victims of trafficking being mainly used to provide information to the legal system and no attention is given to the protection of their rights and their empowerment. Italy is an exception in this and apparently, by giving priority to a woman and her security and her future options, this has a positive impact on her willingness to share information with the authorities on her experience as having been trafficked.

A major issue for discussion was how to avoid the misuse of this rule, because that is the argument used by other governments for not implementing this social path. The Italian participants mentioned that they have the victim's trust and act on her behalf vis-à-vis the

police so that direct contact with the police is not necessary from the beginning. Information is compared between the aid workers and the police to countercheck it. They also allow enough time for a woman to tell the complete story, which is often difficult to do at once.

Positive aspects in the legal provisions in the six countries:

- A reflection period in which to decide whether to press charges or not against traffickers; in Belgium, Germany (a bit short, only four weeks) and the Netherlands.
- Access to full assistance without having to denounce criminals; in Italy
- Work permits possible; in Italy, Belgium and Spain.
- Specialised police units for investigating alleged cases of trafficking. Trained police officers, in most countries.
- Criteria to consider assessing whether a woman may be a trafficking victim; in the Netherlands
- 24-hours telephone help line. Information and assistance about and for victims; in Italy

Negative aspects in legal provisions:

- In most countries a leave to stay in the country is only granted for short periods and has to be extended repeatedly. The victims are in a permanent state of uncertainty when planning and conducting their lives.
- Co-operation between police and immigration is not effective and there are often tensions.
- Police investigations teams do not regard traffic in human beings a priority. Advanced investigation techniques should be used in trafficking cases as well.
- Too little attention from police officers to their decisions to either identify a woman as a possible victim of trafficking or see her as 'just another' illegal immigrant.
- Women are often pressured into pressing charges. Even in countries like Italy where testifying is not a prerequisite for a right to stay.
- The protection of victims should not end when a trial ends, or when a victim chooses to return home. Considering the nature of organised crime in particular, a trafficked person that does testify against her traffickers may still be in danger even when prosecution in the destination country is successful.
- Where victims return home there is a need for co-operation in the repatriation process between authorities in the countries of destination and origin.

5.3. Discussion on good practices

After an introduction by Cristina Talens, one of the researchers, the discussion on good practices began. The different themes were discussed in working groups, with emphasis on the good practices of each organisation.

A. Health

After a discussion on general criteria, good practices were identified in Spain (mobile clinics of Medicos del Mundo and VOMADE) and in Italy (Gruppo Abele). These practices apply an empowerment perspective and give specific support to victims of trafficking.

Many organisations work with cultural mediators and peer educators in their outreach work among migrant sex workers. The work with peer educators includes training and capacity building of women, who once were sex workers or victims of trafficking, to support other women in their struggle to increase their options and shape their lives according to their wishes. In addition to skills and knowledge, training of peer educators was a substantial component of trauma counselling. The approach in setting up peer

education has to be from an empowerment perspective. The training of peer educators is actually undertaken by the Tampep Network in six different countries.

B. Housing

In the field of housing the different experiences were discussed, and based on this first overview some general criteria were formulated that should be taken into account when talking about housing for victims of trafficking.

It is important that the housing offer is very diverse:

- diverse in the sense of the age of victims: specific shelters for minors
- diverse in the sense of specific shelters for victims of trafficking and accommodation in general shelters for abused women
- diverse in the length of stay: crisis shelter for a few days, intermediate shelter for a longer period and then more independent housing
- diverse regarding independence: shelters, autonomy houses and independent houses.

Safety is a basis criterion in the housing offer. When the security of victims cannot be guaranteed it is not useful. Specialised social assistance should be available to women staying in shelters and mediation should be provided to women looking for independence.

C. Education

In Spain courses are given to people that are undocumented including victims of trafficking. It helps women to look to their future direction and open up new avenues for education and/or work. The target group of Vomade, according to its own research, is made up of twenty percent university graduates. It tries to address the needs of those women as well as the needs of women with a lower education. It works closely with the government that contributes to courses for women who have a legal status. For women with an irregular status to be able to participate in education Vomade contributes through its membership fees. Its point of departure is that in the end everybody should be legal and no distinction should be made.

In Belgium there is close collaboration in language courses and social orientation courses for women with a legal status. Women are also paid by local government to follow Dutch language lessons (1 Euro per hour). It is also possible for them to enter university. In the Netherlands the BLinN project also tries to accommodate women that do not have a legal status and get them into language courses and other education facilities.

In Italy structures for women with a legal status are identified. One of the difficulties in the collaboration between governmental and non-governmental organisations is the recognition of diplomas.

Good practice

In the field of integration of victims of trafficking in general and education in particular, the practice of working with volunteers is considered important. Volunteers can make a substantial difference when it comes to supporting victims of trafficking and to help them understand the new context in which they live. The volunteers support complex daily life situations and in addition provide a feeling of safety to women by linking up to them without having a 'hidden agenda'. In Italy volunteers relate to women in language courses 'as a couple', to give some insight in Italian family life. In Italy as well as in the Netherlands a system of 'buddies' exists where volunteers link up with women on a regular basis to support them in their identified need to find their way in a new culture with a usually very insecure future outlook.

D. Vocational training and employment

Regarding the issue of employment, it was stated that employment is a fundamental human right, so victims of trafficking in human beings should not be excluded from employment, as happens in the Netherlands. There are different aspects to be taken into account when talking about vocational training and employment for victims of trafficking. Stigmatisation or discrimination must be avoided, so the sensitisation of enterprises is important, as is the option for a woman to not tell about her background. Furthermore, to date it has proven really difficult for women to find skilled jobs; most are unskilled and low paid. This means that education, vocational training and access to the labour market should be integrated in one programme, where women are supported to improve their skills and find a better job.

Good practice

Vomade in Spain offers courses to 250 women. The course includes the provision of information about the labour market and presentation techniques. Despite the fact that they do not all lead to the desired type of jobs, women have begun to look for better education once they were given this opportunity and were able to access the labour market.

E. Reintegration

Most organisations do not specifically work on reintegration. It requires a detailed knowledge of the countries of origin to be able to work on reintegration. In addition, most victims of trafficking indicate that they do not want to go back to their countries. In the Netherlands there is a growing co-operation between development organisations and organisations that work with victims of trafficking. An example is the BLinN programme where connections with local partners of Novib/Oxfam Netherlands sometimes leads to assistance to victims of trafficking that are returning to their countries of origin. However, time and resources are needed to do this work since it has to be tailor-made. A follow-up system to find out if a woman is really being supported is lacking. None of the participants had developed good practices in the context of reintegration.

The participants of the seminar agreed that the issue of reintegration has to be worked out in the second phase of the Daphne project, since there is a need for better linkages between organisations that work in the various European countries and organisations in countries of origin.

5.4. Recommendations and evaluation

All the participants were very enthusiastic about the seminar and especially about the very concrete exchange of experiences between them. All the participants were people with practical experience in supporting victims of trafficking and therefore the exchange of information and experiences was very specific.

An overall recommendation was that trafficking must be looked at within a framework of migration, empowerment and human rights. All support to victims of trafficking should be given from an empowerment perspective, based on her ideas, needs, personal skills and expectations. It should not be stigmatised, it should not focus on a passive idea of the victim, but on the active involvement of the individual woman.

It was agreed that good practices in the fields of health, housing, education, vocational training, employment and reintegration should all aim to meet the following criteria:

- Be sustainable in the long-term
- Be accessible for all victims of trafficking
- Take a gender perspective and an empowerment strategy as a point of departure
- Take human rights standards as a basis, in particular access to basic social services
- Have a positive collaboration between government and non-governmental organisations
- Show respect for diversity resulting in tailor-made support.

It was also generally agreed that much more has to be done to start working effectively on reintegration. Co-operation between countries of destination and countries of origin should be further worked out and the European Union should also provide financial support for this co-operation.

Per country some specific lessons learned were mentioned, based on experiences and ideas from other countries:

- Belgium aims to explore more on how to organise work in the illegal sector, like in Spain, and maintain its good network with organisations in countries of origin
- Germany would like to learn more about peer educators, work more with volunteers in the field of housing for victims of trafficking and explore more on the idea of work pools.
- Italy would like to look more into the issue of diversity when it comes to housing and connect better in reintegration programmes and ideas.
- The Netherlands would like to work more with volunteers on housing and language training, work more closely with migrant and refugee organisations and focus more on the collaboration between governmental and non-governmental organisations, and also on lobby on the issue of the social path.
- Spain plans to work on better access to social protection, involve more volunteers in the issue of housing and to work more on economic incentives for women while they are following education and training courses.
- The United Kingdom would like to explore more on independent housing, work more on returning confiscated assets to victims, and look more into the issues of peer educators and integration courses.

CONCLUSION

Although it was not possible to include all services and activities provided by organisations in the six countries involved in this research, the outcome gives a broad and interesting view on the issue of integration and reintegration of victims of trafficking in human beings. Although the situation is different in each country it was possible to identify some similarities in approaches. During the concluding international seminar it became clear that all partners involved considered it crucial that trafficking in human beings should be looked at within a framework of migration, empowerment and human rights. All support to victims of trafficking should be given from an empowerment perspective, based on her individual ideas, needs, personal skills and expectations. She should not be stigmatised, intervention should not focus on a passive idea of victim-hood, but instead on the active involvement of the individual woman.

Furthermore, and based on the draft outcome of the research, it was agreed that good practices in the fields of health, housing, education, vocational training, employment and reintegration, should all aim to meet the following criteria:

- Be sustainable in the long-term
- Be accessible for all victims of trafficking
- Take a gender perspective and an empowerment strategy as a point of departure
- Take human rights standards as a basis, in particular access to basic social services
- Have a positive collaboration between government and non-governmental organisations
- Show respect for diversity resulting in tailor-made support.

As the research focused on different topics within the issue of (re)integration, we would also like to present some recommendations for each topic.

A. Health

More attention should be paid to the language and cultural barriers that impede effective communication between health professionals and women victims of trafficking. The use of cultural mediators and/or translators could improve this situation.

There is a need for the sensitisation of public health structures, in order to guarantee that the needs and rights of victims are met in a respectful way.

There is a need to provide more funding to NGOs that provide medical assistance while a woman's situation is still not regularised. At this moment they themselves often have to cover the costs of consultations and treatment.

B. Housing

The situation of victims of trafficking in non-specialised shelters should be analysed, as some women complain about stigmatisation by other members of the centres. It is important that both personnel and the other inhabitants of these shelters are sensitised on the issue of trafficking in human beings. In addition victims of trafficking need to be guided in their housing process.

The governmental sector should address the lack of access to affordable independent housing for victims of trafficking. Funding or lending possibilities should be developed for

women to pay for the initial costs of moving to independent housing. Existing discrimination in the housing market should be tackled.

C. Education

There are different financial aspects to be tackled regarding education for victims of trafficking: the opportunities for grants should be increased and more attention should be paid to the pressure women face to support their families back home.

Language training is an important step to increase the opportunities of victims of trafficking in further education. Specific language support parallel to an education course can also be helpful.

D. Vocational Training

Courses have to be developed that take into account the personal capacities of women. There needs to be more practical training and less theory depending on the level of the group. As in most countries vocational training on offer is still very limited, lobby efforts should be carried out to increase the number of available courses for this target group.

E. Employment

The labour market in all countries visited is still very restricted for victims of trafficking. In the Netherlands possibilities should be created for women to obtain a temporary work permit with their residence permit. In the other countries special attention should be paid to the lack of access to the labour market. Special programmes should be developed and good practices disseminated on a wide scale to integrate victims of trafficking into the labour market. Specific issues to keep in mind are cultural differences in approach towards work, the sensitisation of possible employers, the dependence on employers because of the work permit, exploitative conditions in other sectors and the existence of racial discrimination.

F. Reintegration

A general recommendation is that much more has to be done to start working effectively on reintegration. Co-operation between countries of destination and countries of origin and also within countries of origin should be further worked out and financial support for this co-operation should be provided also by the European Union.

Furthermore, there has to be more political pressure on governments in countries of origin where the problem of trafficking is not acknowledged and no assistance is readily available to women returning.

Women face a series of problems on returning to their home country. All the different aspects, such as fear for retaliations, weak social systems, lack of supporting organisations, repressive attitude of the authorities, stigmatisation, and others, should be taken seriously. The training of health professionals and law enforcement agencies is crucial to get them to respect the rights of these women. Further initiatives should be developed in the fields of health, housing, education, vocational training and employment to improve the possibilities for returning victims of trafficking and assure a real reintegration. Co-operation between governmental institutions and non-governmental organisations is important, as well as the international exchange of information and experiences.

G. Final words

The issues of integration and reintegration of victims of trafficking are very complex, but also very important issues to address. Although many organisations, both in countries of destination and countries of origin, already work on (re)integration there is still much more work that needs to be done. An important outcome of this research is the recommendation to continue the exchange of information and experiences, if possible directly between practitioners in different countries that work on the specific topic of (re)integration.

A follow-up project, including the organisations of training for specific practitioners in the fields of health, housing, education, vocational training, employment and reintegration, would be very important to provide more opportunities to victims of trafficking from an empowerment perspective.

ANNEX 1. LIST OF ORGANISATIONS VISITED IN EACH COUNTRY

The organisations with (*) were present at the international seminar.

BELGIUM

PAG-ASA (*)

Cellebroersstraat 16 B

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Tel: + 32-2-5116464

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PAYOKE (*)

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SÜRYA

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GERMANY

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ITALY

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COMUNE DI VENEZIA (*)

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