

## PROJECT FICHE

Title	Preventing, Fighting and Addressing the Social Consequences of Trafficking in Human Beings in the Republic of Belarus		
Total cost	1 200 000 €		
Aid Method			
DAC-code	15063	Sector	Human rights

### 1. RATIONALE

#### 1.1. Strategic framework

Human trafficking is a new and multi-dimensional phenomenon in the CIS and different international studies show a significant increase since 1989, and also changes in scope and character. Trafficking in human beings (THB) in countries in transition can be viewed as the extreme expression of socio-economic and institutional breakdown and inequality in Eastern Europe and the CIS. The social and economic decline in the region, as well as the prospects of work in Western Europe, have, in the context of restricted migration, given traffickers room to exploit individuals.

The findings and conclusions of the expert report (indicate which expert report, title, source) on the trafficking in human beings (THB) in the Central Europe and CIS suggest addressing human trafficking in an integrated manner, covering protection of victims, the prevention of the trafficking in human beings (THB) and the prosecution of those who facilitate or commit the crime. Common characteristics among victims of trafficking are that they lack employment opportunities, have a low level of education and often have suffered different oppressive conditions including various forms of male violence. They have generally not been abroad, and lack contacts in and knowledge about the West. Women from rural areas tend to be over-represented among victims of human trafficking, as do persons who have been exposed to violence in their homes and in state institutions. <sup>1</sup>

#### 1.2. Lessons learnt

A joint UNDP/EU Project “Combating Trafficking in Women in the Republic of Belarus” (2003-2005) has aimed at assisting Belarus in the fight against women trafficking. This three-year project, fully funded by the European Commission, has been implemented by the Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare in close cooperation with the Belarus State Border Troops Committee, Ministry of Internal Affairs, Ministry of Justice and several NGOs as well as IOM and UNHCR.

The project has brought together the government, civil society and international organizations in a successful partnership which significantly contributed to strengthening the national capacity, consolidating efforts to combat women trafficking and reduce illegal migration. It has also facilitated cross-border cooperation on anti-trafficking activities between Belarus and the European Union. In particular, the project has undertaken a comprehensive review of national legislation and provided recommendations to amend Belarusian legislation in field of the trafficking in human beings (THB).

In order to provide assistance to women victims of trafficking, as part of the project, a first-ever electronic database has been developed containing information on almost 400 organizations

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<sup>1</sup> “Trafficking in Human Beings”, a Guidance Note, UNDP RBEC Bratislava Centre, 2004

from more than 50 countries involved in combating illegal human trafficking. In July 2004, a rehabilitation shelter for trafficked victims was opened jointly with Minsk City Executive Committee. A hotline offering free information to women travelling abroad for employment purposes is now available in any region of Belarus.

One of the major challenges the project attempted to tackle was to break down the “it is her own fault” stereotype, as victims of trafficking are often treated as guilty themselves and even as criminals. The project contributed to changing the perception of law-enforcement authorities on this issue through seminars and meetings and with the help of EU experts who shared best practices with their Belarus colleagues.

A high-impact documentary “Ally’s Dream” has been produced to increase awareness of young girls and women to prevent them from being forced to work in sex businesses through threats of violence, abuse of authority, debt bondage, deception, or any other form of intimidation. The film has already been disseminated in more than 30 countries, broadcasted on the Belarusian TV and shown in cinemas, schools, colleges and universities across the country.

The partner government agencies have requested to extend technical assistance to Belarus in the area of combating human trafficking. It was also recommended that the next phase should have an enhanced focus on preventive measures through scaling-up advocacy, training and awareness-raising campaigns geared to various target groups, such as women and young people. Victims’ protection and reintegration programmes should also be developed and implemented based on best international experiences.

The proposed project is designed to continue and follow-up the work done by the first EU/UNDP project to combat women trafficking, which laid the ground for further enhancement of cross-border cooperation, upholding the Law, implementing international commitments and building capacity of NGOs and the rehabilitation centre on combating the trafficking in human beings (THB).

To be effective in preventing women trafficking, the new project should address the social and economic differences which drive people to move to other countries in search of a better future. An analytical study based on recent research and survey in the region should be conducted to identify the root causes and to explore the links between the trafficking in human beings (THB) and various aspects of human development to find ways to effectively address the problem through preventive interventions.

The experience gained in the first project suggests extending a network of institutions/organizations delivering basic anti-trafficking information and rendering assistance to victims, especially for the population living in small towns and in remote and rural areas. There are more than 130 “centres of social services”, employment services, multi-service community centres operational in all regions and small communities over the country whose capacity to provide information can be enhanced.

### **1.3. Complementary actions**

Key complementary actions relate to the fight against poverty, the promotion of human rights, gender mainstreaming, economic empowerment of women, sustainable development of small cities and remote/depressed areas.

### **1.4. Donor coordination**

The project will coordinate its activities with other international and donor agencies working in the area of combating human trafficking: (1) with the IOM in assistance to victims and public-awareness campaign; (2) with the OSCE to help promote a National Reference Mechanism; (3) with UNICEF, which conducts child-focus research and advocacy; (4) with UNHCR for aspects related to refugees; (5) UNFPA, which provides reproductive health assistance to victims.

## **2. COUNTRY CONTEXT**

### **2.1. Cooperation related policy of beneficiary country**

The Republic of Belarus has recognized and declared that trafficking in human beings is an inhumane and detestable form of crime. The Government has already signed a number of international conventions concerning protection of trafficked victims e.g. the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Pacts on Civil, Political, Economical, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination of Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Beijing Platform, and the Convention on the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings and Use of Prostitution Through These Persons of 1949, the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime and Protocols thereto. The Government has also increased the priority put on trafficking in its fight against crime at national and international levels.

Criminal liability for trafficking is envisaged in the Penal Code of the Republic of Belarus. Several important documents have been recently adopted to amend Belarusian legislation in the sphere of combating trafficking in persons: the Decree of the President of the Republic of Belarus No. 3 “On Certain Measures Aimed to Combat Trafficking in Persons”, the law of the Republic of Belarus “On making alterations in, and amendments to, some codes of the Republic of Belarus to award stricter punishments for trafficking in persons and committing other related offences” as of 14.05.2005. The Edict of the President of the Republic of Belarus “On Measures to Protect Victims of Trafficking” is under preparation.

The adoption of the Presidential Decree No. 3 “On certain measures aimed to combat trafficking in persons” was a notable step towards the implementation of international norms on human trafficking in the Belarusian legislation. Notably, Belarus is the first state in the post-Soviet space to have passed a number of legislative acts that regulate and govern the solution of human trafficking-related issues.

Over the past four years, the number of detected and investigated cases of trafficking in Belarus has grown three-fold. Whereas 197 offences relating to trafficking were detected in 2001, 583 offences were detected in 2004 (443 offences in 2002, and 535 offences in 2003), of which 203 offences are those of trafficking persons outside the territory of the State. 850 victims of trafficking in persons were identified during the past three years (some 100 victims in 2003, 350 victims in 2003, and 400 victims in 2004). The real figure is probably higher as many cases are not reported to the police.

### **2.2. Sector context**

People become the victims of human traffickers mainly due to inequitable resource allocation and the absence of viable sources of income. In Belarus, young people are some of the most vulnerable groups in the labour market. Despite a low rate of official unemployment, young people are disproportionately represented among the unemployed. Even in Minsk, youth unemployment problem is as relevant as in other parts of Belarus: young people represent 39.3% of the work force, but contribute 55% of total unemployment. The lack of knowledge and poor familiarity with the needs of perspective employees increases young people's risks of long-term unemployment, leading to their social exclusion, a passive attitude to life and the adoption of a lifestyle of dependency. Others seek to apply their knowledge, energies and initiative by engaging in the shadow economy or leaving the country to do seasonal work. To this end, students, graduates from Universities and vocational schools, as well as orphanage leavers (the most vulnerable group of young people) are included in the priority target group for a full scope of preventive measures to be undertaken by the project.

The labor market for young women is also restricted – more so than for young men. Despite having a higher educational and professional status than men, women are also disproportionately vulnerable in the labour market, as suggested by the share of women unemployed in Belarus (at 68%). To improve their chances of re-employment, women understandably seek opportunities to learn new professions, acquire new skills and start up their own businesses. To motivate women to go into business, the special training programmes and positive role models are required.

### **3. DESCRIPTION**

The project will focus on preventive measures and better protection and rehabilitation of trafficked victims. In particular, the project aims to improve coordination and information-sharing among responsible agencies and NGOs; to scale-up advocacy, training and awareness-raising campaign geared to various target groups; to develop victim protection and reintegration programmes based on best international experience; to enhance the capacity of Civil Society Organization, rehabilitation centres and local/municipal social& development centres to provide prevention services. The project will contribute in generating part-time and long-term employment for women and young people.

#### **3.1. Objectives**

The overall project objectives are:

1. To combat trafficking in human beings in the Republic of Belarus and to reduce illegal migration both into Belarus and into the European Union
2. To foster cross-border cooperation between Belarus and the European Union in the area of justice and home affairs, in particular regarding preventing, fighting and addressing the social consequences of the trafficking in human beings (THB)

The specific objectives are as follows:

- § To strengthen the national capacity in preventing and combating trafficking in persons;
- § To consolidate a system of coordination and sharing of information between the Ministry of Interior and State Border Guard Committee
- § To enhance and extend the network of institutions rendering prevention and protection services for the population
- § to promote policies and interventions addressing root causes of the the trafficking in human beings (THB);
- § to raise awareness of the target groups on trafficking in human beings

#### **3.2. Expected results and main activities**

Main activities:

##### Data collection and research

- § Enhancing data collection and research on trafficking in persons, particularly on trafficking in children, by building on past research and engaging in exchanges with the United Nations Children’s Fund and other relevant actors.

- § Conducting more far-reaching analysis of the root causes of the trafficking in human beings (THB), its demand and supply factors, its networks and its economic consequences, and its link with illegal migration. Based on the research, developing recommendations on well-targeted prevention measures on trafficking in human beings.
- § Identifying the most vulnerable segments of the population and developing specially designed training programmes and awareness-raising campaigns for them.

### Legislative review and reform

The project will continue to promote and support legislative review and reform efforts in compliance with international standards, as well as to further develop co-operation with other relevant partners and organizations. In particular, it will provide assistance in elaborating an international expertise on the Law on the Status of Victim of Trafficking, which will provide the legal basis for rendering assistance and protection to victims of the trafficking in human beings (THB), especially during pre-trial investigations and in court proceedings.

### Law enforcement co-operation and information exchange

- § Enhancing and consolidating the system of coordination and sharing information between the MOI and the State Border Guard Committee. *(The previous project has provided the central headquarters of MOI and SBGC, border detachments and regional departments of MOI with the equipment facilitating information exchange. However, the lower-tier departments have also to be linked to and incorporated into the system of information exchange. It is expedient, within the new project, to equip the regional militia departments (Baranovich, Pinsk, Mozyr, Slutsk, Lida, Orsha), check points with intensive capacity (Varshavsky Most, Bryzgi, Kamenny Log, Beniakoni, Novaia Guta, Brest-Central) and consolidate the entire system of coordination and sharing information on trafficking in human beings).*
- § Assisting in arranging the international missions of the MoI and Border Guards representatives to participate in joint investigations of criminal cases related to trafficking offences.
- § Assisting in building networks, exchange information, and outline priorities for trans-boundary co-operation (e.g. participation in the OSCE annual meetings of national coordinators, representatives or experts on combating trafficking; the EUROPOL events)

### Training

- § Providing or improving training (study tours) for border officials, law enforcement officials, judges, prosecutors, immigration and other relevant officials in all aspects of trafficking in persons. Consideration is to be given to human rights and child- and gender-sensitive issues, and co-operation with national non-governmental organizations and relevant international agencies (like the EUROPOL) will be encouraged.
- § Arranging additional trainings on dealing with particular aspects of sexual crime, e.g. sexual abuse of children (in co-operation with the United Nations Children's Fund and other relevant organizations).
- § Preparing and introducing a short-term training course on combating the trafficking in human beings (THB) to the curricula of the Academy of the Ministry of Interior and the Border Guards faculty/the Military Academy; providing a modest set of training-related equipment for Academies.

- § Developing a special training course and a manual on rendering assistance to victims of trafficking and providing preventive measures; Conducting this course for new institutions joint the anti-trafficking infrastructure (e.g. centers of social assistance, community-based NGOs and so on)
- § Creating a Library resource on anti-trafficking issues to deliver books to the interested organisations.

### **Prevention of trafficking in human beings**

#### Economic and social policies aimed at addressing root causes of the trafficking in human beings (THB)

- § Using the network of centers for social assistance, employment services, multi-service community centers to provide basic preventive measures at the local level (in small/single-industry cities and remote areas).
- § Enhancing job opportunities for women by delivering SME training courses, specifically tailored for this target group.
- § Strengthening the capacity of the "Youth Social Service" organisation (Minsk) to promote youth employment and self employment, as well as to provide education, information and advice to clients who wish to become entrepreneurs. *(The centre's structure will comprise a youth labour exchange and a business centre. The labour exchange will supply clients with current information on available job vacancies in a format that best suits their specific needs. It will also provide young people with informational, instructional, advisory, mentoring and other types of support needed to improve their chances of finding employment. The focus of the business centre is on encouraging entrepreneurial initiative among young people by conducting training workshops and providing current advice to business start-ups. A web portal will be created and maintained to enable client access to the youth employment centre's information resources. This project will establish a pilot multi-service centre for young people in Minsk City, which could provide a model for similar centres in other parts of Belarus).*

#### Awareness-raising

- § Undertaking, in co-operation with civil society and NGOs, information campaigns to generate public awareness about trafficking in its various forms, including the methods employed by traffickers;
- § Extending awareness-raising campaigns to smaller towns and villages whose populations are at particular risk. Providing a special awareness-raising campaign for children's community/orphanages.
- § Producing and disseminating anti-trafficking billboards, posters, leaflets, t-shirts, caps and other hand-outs.
- § Organising live radio and TV broadcasts with participation of qualified experts and high-ranking officials.
- § Producing a series of six documentary films, 10 minutes-long each with the working title "Stop Trafficking in human beings". *(Films will be devoted to various aspects of the trafficking in human beings (THB), expose the causes of this phenomenon, point to its causes and consequences, and provoke far-reaching repercussion in society. The films will*

*be bound by a concept common to them all; they may be shown separately, though. The cycle of films must be attractive to the general viewer and, at the same time, it should meet the requirements set for serious documentaries. The cycle of films will be shown on the national TV and at the regional trainings and project events).*

- § Increasing awareness about trafficking among immigration authorities and consular and diplomatic personnel so that they use this knowledge in their daily contacts with potential victims. Encouraging the consular and visa sections of the diplomatic missions to use printed and other materials in their work with at-risk individuals.
- § Encouraging embassies of Belarus to disseminate information on relevant national legislation such as family law, labour law and immigration law as is of interest to potential migrants, including through NGOs.
- § Training of the media to promote zero tolerance towards all forms of trafficking and to counteract the demand for victims of trafficking.

## **Protection and assistance**

### Access to information and consultations

- § enhancing the capacity of the toll-free telephone “hotlines” to serve five purposes: (1) to act as an independent source of advice and guidance to potential victims who may be considering job opportunities or other offers to go abroad, (2) to act as a first point of contact providing access to a referral mechanism for victims of the trafficking in human beings (THB), (3) to facilitate the anonymous reporting of cases or suspected cases of the trafficking in human beings (THB); (4) to provide on-line legal advice (by internet); (5) to conduct training/counselling to institutions involved in combating the trafficking in human beings (THB).

### Shelters for victims of trafficking in women

- § Supporting protection activities and social services provided by the rehabilitation shelter (created by the previous UNDP/EC project), including elaborating and testing the re-integration mechanism and programmes.
- § Using the shelter to provide trainings (1) for victims of the trafficking in human beings (THB), which will facilitate their future reintegration, employment and independence, as well as improving their competitive capabilities after the experienced trauma; (2) for psychologists and social workers on the basis of the experience gained by the shelter workers.

### Assistance and protection of victims in the criminal justice system

- § Building partnership with the National Bar Association for providing free-of-charge attorney’s assistance for the victims of trafficking (including legal support at the court hearings).

## **Expected results**

The legal trafficking-related framework is improved in line with recommendations of the EU experts; capacity of the relevant government agencies and NGOs enhanced; awareness raising activities facilitated (video films produced and run over the country); rehabilitation of victims improved (complex rehabilitation programmes offered; the group of social workers, psychotherapists trained); comprehensive prevention programme addressed the priority target groups.

1. A comprehensive analysis of the root causes of the trafficking in human beings (THB) conducted and used for developing recommendations on the trafficking in human beings (THB) prevention measures
2. Belarus law-enforcement/law making agencies, Criminal Police; the Border Guards, NGOs and institutions of the anti-trafficking infrastructure trained in dealing with trafficking in human beings.
3. Information exchange facilitated in cross-border cooperation.
4. A law on the status of the victims of trafficking drafted and undergone international expertise
5. Enhanced capacity of the State Border Guard Committee and the Ministry of Interior through provision of equipment for the lower-tier (regional) departments and checkpoints to consolidate the system to exchange information on the trafficking in human beings (THB).
6. The national network of anti-trafficking institutions extended by including the local Social & development Centres to deliver information on the trafficking in human beings (THB) in remote areas.
7. Enhanced capacity of the toll-free telephone “hotline” to provide on-line legal advice and conduct training/counselling to institutions involved in combating the trafficking in human beings (THB).
8. Enhanced capacity of the rehabilitation shelter to protect victims and render them re-integration services
9. A special training course on unleashing women’s entrepreneurship developed and delivered in remote/rural areas.
10. The Youth Social Service organization transformed into a multi-service center able to promote youth employment and business training/counselling.
11. Awareness on the trafficking in human beings (THB) increased owing to promotion of well-targeting campaigns, publications and a series of six documentary films, 10 minutes-long each with the working title “Stop Trafficking in human beings”.
12. Improved Assistance in protection of victims in the criminal justice system

### **3.3. Stakeholders**

Ministry of Labour and Social Welfare of the Republic of Belarus is an executing agency on behalf of government. The Project will be implemented in cooperation with:

State/Governmental Entities:

Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Information, Ministry for Foreign Affairs, Border Guards State Committee, Border Guards Faculty of the Military Academy, MoI Academy, Minsk City Executive

Committee, Belarusian State University, “Youth Social Service” Centre, Minsk City social services centre, Rehabilitation shelter for victims of trafficking in women;

#### NGOs

Belarusian Association of Young Christian Women, Belarusian Association of Social Workers, Minsk City Bar Association, Belarus Union of Entrepreneurs and Employers; Club of business women (Brest oblast), Union of Physicians (Mogilev), other NGOs (in regional towns to be précised during the implementation of the Project);

#### International Organisations:

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), TACIS office in Minsk, International Organization for Migration (IOM), UNICEF, OSCE, UNFPA.

### **3.4. Risks and assumptions**

Since the Government of Belarus is strongly committed to combat illegal migration and women trafficking, the risk in operating the project is very low and associated with limited access to employment and other opportunities of self-affirmation by vulnerable/social excluded groups. An additional risk is related to some gaps in the legal sphere, such as the lack of legal status of victims of trafficking and subsequent lack of reliable statistical data on trafficking incidence that might impede appropriate benchmarking and impact assessment of the project realization.

### **3.5. Conditionalities**

Continued positive attitude by the Government towards the issue of trafficking and satisfactory coordination among government agencies and international organisation.

### **3.6. Crosscutting issues**

The project is directly devoted to promoting gender equality and combating violence against women and children.

The project will be implemented in synergy with other projects on poverty reduction, sustainable local development of small cities, economic empowerment of rural women, SME development and removing barriers to entrepreneurship.

## **4. IMPLEMENTATION ISSUES**

### **4.1. Implementation method**

Centralised management by the EC Delegation in Kiev.

### **4.2. Budget and calendar**

The total budget available is of 1,200,000 euro.

The project operational duration should be of 36 months.

### **4.3. Procurement and award of grants procedures**

All contracts implementing the financing agreement must be awarded and implemented in accordance with the procedures and standard documents laid down and published by the

Commission for the implementation of external operations, in force at the time of the launch of the procedure in question.

All programme estimates must respect the procedures and standard documents laid down by the Commission, in force at the time of the adoption of the programme estimates in question.

#### **4.4. Performance monitoring**

The project will be monitored according to standard procedures.

Project monitoring and evaluation will be based on periodic assessment of progress on delivery of specified project results and towards achievement of project objectives.

#### **4.5. Evaluation and audit**

The project will follow standard procedures for evaluation and audit.

Annex : Logframe