

REGIONAL ANTI-TRAFFICKING MOBILIZATION FOR PREVENTION



Zonta International

Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide



STRATEGIES • TRAINING • ADVOCACY • RESOURCES
Women's Economic and Political Leadership

Selma Hadžihalilović, RAMP Coordinator

REGIONAL PROJECTS ON PREVENTION OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

With the regional project on prevention of human trafficking we focused on the importance of investment in the women's movement and in women's nongovernmental organizations. We supported local partner organizations that implemented awareness-raising campaigns, held seminars for experts from various government authorities, ratified memorandums of cooperation for the prevention of human trafficking and organized theater shows for school children—we believe deeply that small projects do make a difference.

The STAR Network of World Learning has been working against human trafficking in the region since 2002. Building upon this experience, STAR has, with the generous support of the Zonta International Foundation, used its knowledge and experience in a regional project called RAMP (Regional Anti-trafficking Mobilization for Prevention). Supporting five small, cross-border projects in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia and Montenegro, RAMP confirmed again the importance of regional knowledge sharing in prevention of human trafficking. The establishment of new contacts very often surprised us in a positive way—there is always something new to learn, a different point of view to hear and new questions to be raised.

With RAMP, we focused on the importance of investment in the women's movement and in women's nongovernmental organizations. We supported local partner organizations that implemented awareness-raising campaigns, held seminars for experts from various government authorities, ratified memorandums of cooperation for the prevention of human trafficking and organized theater shows for school children—we believe deeply that small projects do make a difference. Small projects can provide answers to burning questions such as how to establish partnerships with state institutions, how to find sustainable financial resources and how to respond effectively to the needs of all victims. How to recognize new forms of violence or new tactics used by traffickers to recruit their victims? How to truly respond to the needs of the society? How best to listen to and support each other?

While we do not have complete answers to all of these questions, RAMP and its partner organizations did articulate some important insights. Regardless of the extent of the violence endured by a person, it is important to be present. It is essential to listen and to respond to victims with warm and positive words. It is important to engage and to inform others about one's work and accomplishments. Such achievements can help provide a chance for a safe environment for all victims of human trafficking and victims of violence against women. We must also share knowledge with students, researchers and all others who show an interest. It is important to create a network of support.

I wish to use this opportunity to express my gratitude to the representatives of donor organizations and agencies, embassies, state institutions and activists for all your generous support for community mobilization projects for the prevention of human trafficking. Your support means a lot, not only to the World Learning/STAR Network team, but also to our (and your) local beneficiaries. It creates a feeling of security and hope that a solution can always be found.

You hold in your hands the fourth publication of the STAR Network of World Learning devoted to our work on community mobilization for the prevention of human trafficking. Our goal is to provide space for experts on human trafficking, human rights and social engagement. In this volume they address questions of cooperation between the government, institutional (law enforcement, education, social services, etc.) and private sectors in prevention of human trafficking. Our wish is to explore the experiences of all stakeholders in work on cross-border, cross-state cooperation.

This publication does not mark the end of our work. Now is the right moment to go back to the very beginning and confront those basic social problems that are the root causes of human trafficking: women's economic empowerment, and the increasing "feminization" of poverty. We have to continue working against violence against women in all communities. We have to direct our attention to raising awareness of gender inequality, changing the social rhetoric toward women and building confidence and equality for women and girls. We have to continue investing in local communities, building bridges of confidence and initiating positive social change.



Zonta International

Advancing the Status of Women Worldwide

Millions of people around the world are denied fundamental freedoms simply because they are women. On every continent, women face serious obstacles to equal access to education, health care, legal rights and employment opportunities.

Zonta International is a worldwide service organization of executives in business and the professions with more than 33,000 members in 67 countries dedicated to advancing the status of women worldwide. Through education, service and advocacy programs, Zonta International works to remove barriers to equality for women.

Zonta International has consultative status with United Nations agencies, as well as the International Labour Organization and the Council of Europe. The Zonta International Foundation supports the charitable and educational programs of Zonta International through effective fundraising, investment of funds and the distribution of proceeds.

Over the past decade, the Zonta International Foundation has been committed to preventing violence against women. This dedication has led to the creation of grant programs on the international level that fund projects designed to prevent various forms of gender-based violence and has also led to actions designed by Zonta Clubs at local levels.

In 2002, a resolution was passed at the Zonta International Convention promoting the United Nations' Protocol to prevent trafficking. Trafficking of women and girls to be used as laborers or prostitutes is a form of violence against women.

By funding the STAR Network's RAMP project, Zonta International/Zonta International Foundation is furthering its commitment to prevent all forms of violence against women.

Trgovanje ljudima je:

- seksualno iskorištavanje
- nasilno oduzimanje organa
- prisilno prosjačenje
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Women's Association Vukovar, Croatia

IMPLEMENTING AN ANTITRAFFICKING CAMPAIGN ON THE “BALKAN ROUTE”

Women's Association Vukovar is a feminist non-governmental organization established in 1994. Through education and public advocacy, this association works on improvement of the status of women in society. It motivates women to self-organize in order to take a more active role in their local communities and in society in general.

Women's Association Vukovar started work on combating human trafficking in 2002, when it was just starting to be recognized in Croatia and when members of the Association realized that the problem existed in their own community. Women's Association Vukovar is one of seven organizations in Croatia who founded the PETRA Network, a coalition of NGOs that works to combat trafficking of women and children. With support from World Learning/STAR Network and in cooperation with the NGOs “LARA” from Bijeljina, Bosnia-Herzegovina and “Esperanca” from Novi Sad, Serbia, WAV initiated a campaign to combat trafficking on the so-called “Balkan Route.” The “Balkans route” connects Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia.

The Coordinator of Women's Association Vukovar, Ružica Mandić, says about this project:

Although we have been working for many years on prevention of human trafficking, this was the first time that we tried to create a network of nongovernmental organizations to combat human trafficking in a specific, cross-border geographic area. We shared our current local experiences, as well as our past experience and we learned a great deal from our partner organizations in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia. Also, seminars that we held in Vukovar were extremely valuable as they gathered both representatives of police and state institutions together with NGOs. Our first steps were dedicated to education of border police. Another important step was the awareness-raising campaign in which we distributed posters in all three countries. Those posters raised awareness about the problem of human trafficking, the SOS victim assistance hotlines in all three countries. Most important, public information campaigns invite citizens to be more than passive observers of problems in their community. With the SOS hotline as a resource, citizens learn that they can maintain their anonymity but still take action and be part of the solution.

We presented our follow-up activity of cross-border cooperation at the conference organized by ICMPD Austria and held in Bulgaria. We met several organizations that expressed interest in joining our coalition in the future. One of those organizations is ANIMUS from Sofia, Bulgaria. We consider them our fourth partner for future work. This is especially important, as some of the few officially registered victims of trafficking come from Bulgaria.

“Women’s Safe House”, Podgorica, Montenegro

PREVENTING HUMAN TRAFFICKING FOR FORCED LABOR

Women’s Safe House was established in Podgorica in 1999 as Montenegro’s first shelter for women victims of domestic violence. It was not until the year 2000 that victims of trafficking sought support from Women’s Safe House.

Initially, Montenegrin police were likely to treat victims as criminals and prostitutes. They interrogated victims in the presence of traffickers. Victims were often sent to jail or deported quickly over the nearest border in order to shift responsibility for the “problem” of their presence to someone else. Women’s Safe House realized that the southern, coastal areas of the country had a particularly grave trafficking problem and decided to take action. The first step was providing shelter to victims (though laws at the time limited their stay to three months) and presence at police interrogations, services that Women’s Safe House offers to trafficking victims to this day.

Since those first activities, this widely known and respected organization has done tremendous work on lobbying for legal changes, especially concerning protection of victims of human trafficking but also concerning the country’s law on witness protection.

“Even though Montenegro explicitly outlawed human trafficking in July 2001, only a few cases

of human trafficking have been investigated and brought to trial. A very small number of victims and witnesses decide to testify, mainly because of security issues—fear of retribution from traffickers or their allies,” states Maja Raičević, spokesperson of Women’s Safe House. Security issues and legal challenges, however, did not deter Women’s Safe House from taking further steps on protection as well as prevention of human trafficking.

The group considers cooperation with government and law enforcement to be a very important activity, but collecting experiences and contacts from other organizations in the region is also a high priority. Women’s Safe House has, with the support of STAR Network of World Learning, organized a seminar for representatives of government employment bureaus, work inspectorates and police from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia. The seminar, which Women’s Safe House believes to be the first of its kind in the region, took place in Petrovac, Montenegro in April 2007. It paid special attention to questions of forced labor as a form of human trafficking and activities related to prevention of trafficking in the upcoming summer tourist season.

About the Seminar and future activities, Maja Raičević says:

“Montenegro has made it clear that it wants to expand its tourism industry; apartments and hotels have been built with the help of huge foreign investment. We believe that this influx of money and visitors could also bring an increase in human trafficking. With the support of World Learning/STAR Network, we worked with officials from labor bureaus to agree on development of an action plan to prevent and combat human trafficking for forced labor. There is a great deal of commitment among all the stakeholders of this initiative. In Montenegro we do not have any data on human trafficking for the purpose of forced labor, so for us the seminar was of great importance. We gained new knowledge from colleagues from Serbia and BiH, as well as experiences that can be used to prevent, combat and better understand human trafficking. Our goal is to push for the recommendations from the seminar to be adopted by the relevant authorities. What is especially important is the readiness of our Chief Police Inspector to support us in our initiative. This is particularly important since without the support of state institutions all our efforts will have only minimal effects.”



Spokesperson for Women's Safe House Maja Raičević and Executive Director Ljiljana Raičević



Seminar in Petrovac Montenegro in April 2007

The findings and recommendations from Women's Safe House's seminar on human trafficking for employment bureaus, labor inspectorates and police from Bosnia-Herzegovina, Montenegro and Serbia were:

- *There is a need for additional training for employees of national employment services, labor inspectorate, tax agencies, tourist inspectorates as well as judiciary institutions. Training should have a special focus on victim identification and on differences between trafficking for forced labor and more familiar voluntary forms of illicit labor;*
- *It is necessary to have more systematic data collection on human trafficking for labor exploitation;*
- *It is necessary to create mobile national teams for combating human trafficking for labor exploitation that would consist of: inspectors for combating illegal migration and human trafficking, labor inspectors, representatives of tax authorities, tourism regulators and judiciary authorities;*
- *It is important to establish cooperation between the teams mentioned above, national employment services and non-governmental organizations on the state and regional level. It is also important to define the roles and responsibilities of the teams' members;*
- *The central organizer of these activities should be each country's National Coordinator for Combating Human Trafficking;*
- *Countries must harmonize national laws on labor with international conventions;*
- *Employers who violate laws on labor exploitation should be sanctioned, with penalties including forbidding them from employing workers. Evidence and details of their violations should be compiled in a special database;*
- *Clients and customers of victims' services must be punished along with traffickers;*
- *National employment services should provide legal assistance to victims of human trafficking;*
- *The state must actively support reintegration of victims of human trafficking in cooperation with national employment agencies. Trafficking victims should be included in the category of "persons with difficulties," who are eligible for special employment assistance;*
- *It is important to have a Code of Conduct for national employment services and agencies and their response to trafficking for labor exploitation;*
- *Officials must create and maintain a regional database that contains the names and contacts of government officials responsible for specific measures in combating labor exploitation and NGOs dealing with this problem.*

Women's Association MAJA, Kravica, Bosnia and Herzegovina

RATIFIED MEMORANDUM ON COOPERATION

The Women's Association MAJA began its work in 2000. From the beginning, MAJA focused on implementation of self-sustainable projects and supported a more active role for women in civil society. During 2005, MAJA undertook educational workshops with youth and representatives of police and centers for social work with the purpose of prevention of human trafficking. This led to new activities supported by STAR Network of World Learning in border areas widely considered to be hiding places for prominent war criminals and fugitives from the Hague tribunal. MAJA, based in Bosnia-Herzegovina, worked in partnership with NGOs from Serbia, located just across the river Drina. About the project implemented in 2006 as part of World Learning/STAR's RAMP project, the President of MAJA, Ms. Jelika Jovanović, says:

“In the municipalities of Bratunac (BiH), Bajina Bašta (Serbia) and Ljubovija (Serbia) we held several educational workshops for representatives of police forces, local authorities, centers for social work and representatives of primary and secondary schools. On several occasions, after those workshops, we were invited to visit primary and secondary schools and to talk directly with students about the problems

of human trafficking. We succeeded in establishing very good cooperation with educators and psychologists, which we hope to continue. Our printed materials have been included in the libraries of the schools where we held lectures and teachers tell us that many students decided to explore this topic in depth. After the educational workshops, we held a roundtable in Bratunac that resulted in the ratification of a formal Memorandum of Understanding between MAJA and local government representatives from all three municipalities of Bratunac, Bajina Bašta and Ljubovija.

The ratified memorandum expresses the communities' commitment to networking in prevention of human trafficking. Practically, the memorandum means that when we discover a case of human trafficking, we know who to contact and who can initiate what kind of response. In all municipalities, a specific person has been assigned as the anti-trafficking liaison.”

The OSCE Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina recognized MAJA's work on prevention of human trafficking. This organization has become a partner of OSCE in Bosnia-Herzegovina in the field of human trafficking and a coordinator for this issue in eastern Bosnia and Herzegovina.



Student response to the movie “Lilia-4-Ever”

Thirty students of the secondary technical school in Bajina Bašta, Serbia watched the film “Lilia-4-Ever.” The film depicts one girl’s harrowing journey from an economically depressed town in the former Soviet Union to being forced into prostitution in Western Europe. During discussion that followed the film, the students made it clear that they found the movie very educational and that it would help them recognize some forms of human trafficking. The students also expressed the opinion that naiveté and lack of consideration is one of the most important contributing factors to human trafficking.

The education of students is very important and I will continue to educate them using the movie as well as other educational materials provided by MAJA Kravica.

Anica Jovanović, Educator

Women's Association "Pearls From Ključ", Ključ, Bosnia and Herzegovina

TRAVELING PREVENTION

Since 2003, the Women's Association Ključki Biseri (whose name translates as "Pearls from Ključ"), with the support of World Learning/STAR Network, works on prevention of human trafficking. The mass participation of citizens in the town of Ključ, especially youth, in any activity undertaken by this association, is the most distinctive feature of their work. When Pearls From Ključ organizes a demonstration, a workshop or a performance, the community is there - women and men, girls and boys.

During 2005, the youth of Ključ wrote and produced a performance on the subject of human trafficking. The performance was very well received not only in their immediate area, but also in the asylum centers and refugee camps throughout Bosnia and Herzegovina where they performed the piece. The next step of Ključki Biseri was to show this performance in neighboring countries. The director of the Association believes that the youth achieved significant results:

- An important step forward in our work was the cooperation with three associations outside of Bosnia and Herzegovina: the NGOs "Korak" from Karlovac, Croatia, "Delfin" from Pakrac, Croatia and the PETRA Network (of anti-trafficking NGOs) from Croatia. Members of those organizations supported our work and understood that this kind of presentation, using drama and performance, can be more effective than the typical workshop or lecture.

All three organizations expressed a great interest in organizing performances in their local communities. With help from "Korak," Karlovac was the first stop on the tour of our performance, which is titled "Traveling Prevention."

Taking a group of performers on the road requires significant preparation, and also significant funding. Ključki Biseri managed, with the help of many volunteers and minimum funding, made it happen. Hadija Bajrić, a member of Ključki Biseri, believes that their success is the result of continuous work with the youth of Ključ:

- Given that we are already known in our local community for our work on prevention of human trafficking, it was not hard to find a venue for a performance a little further away. We were simply overwhelmed by invitations from all sides to visit and organize not only educational workshops but also to present our theater performance. However, our visit to Croatia represented a great challenge, not only for the young performers but for us as well. Arranging and collecting all the necessary travel documents for minors was a major undertaking. We printed more than 100 posters and posted them all over Karlovac and Ključ. We made promotional t-shirts and distributed invitations, all of which created a positive euphoria among the youth of Ključ.



Promotional poster announcing performance on human trafficking

The performance was very well received by the audience in Croatia.

- We received rave reviews from the audience in Karlovac. Our next step will be to bring the performance to two more cities in Croatia: Pakrac and Samobor. As we have become well known beyond our local community, we have also received an invitation from an organization in Belgrade that is interested in our work and activities related to combating human trafficking. We are also planning to offer performances for paying audiences.

The trip and the performance in Croatia were a great success and a great thrill for the youth involved. However, I believe that the visit is itself was not the most important achievement. Rather, it was a positive change that we inspired among the youth. Through our project, we enabled our youth not only to gain knowledge on human trafficking, but also to become educators in the field of prevention of human trafficking. Many of the youth now spend their free time organizing and planning performances and presentations. Providing positive, active ways for youth to spend their time and energy was one of the main goals of our organization. With this project, we believe we have succeeded.



Youth from Ključ in Karlovac, Croatia

Women's Association Derventa, Bosnia and Herzegovina

FROM EDUCATION TO REGIONAL COOPERATION

Women's Association Derventa implemented in 2005 a project called Prevention of Human Trafficking in the Local Community. That project represented the Association's first effort to establish open dialogue in its community on human trafficking. Although some Association members were skeptical about the interest of the community, the response was incredibly strong - over 900 people participated in the workshops and seminars that WAD organized.

Further steps, supported by STAR Network of World Learning, were dedicated to improving partnership and cross-border cooperation with other organizations and institutions. These efforts included the Association for Women's Human Rights from Slavonski Brod in Croatia and by the NGO "Future" from Modriča in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

Ms. Nada Dodig, President of Women's Association Derventa, talks about the project implemented in 2006-2007:

The prevention of human trafficking is something that requires cooperation with state institutions and also with other nongovernmental organizations. With the support of STAR Network of World Learning, we have made our first



Meeting with NGO and community representatives from Derventa, Modriča, Slavonski Brod and Bosanski Brod

steps. At the beginning we were engaged in the education of students in secondary schools, representatives of centers for social work, health workers and representatives of local authorities. We realized that our activities should be broadened and we received an opportunity to help organize a meeting of local authorities and NGOs from Derventa, Modriča, Slavonski Brod and Bosanski Brod. That important meeting resulted in a Memorandum on Mutual Cooperation in Prevention of Human Trafficking.



Women's Association Derventa seminars and workshops

SIXTY YEARS WITHOUT IDENTITY

Women's Association Derventa has been recognized not only for its work with local institutions, but also has made significant progress in gaining the trust of the community. After a citizen of Derventa came forward, Association members discovered and helped a woman who lived 60 years without identity. As a girl of 15, Marija had been given into servitude to a wealthier family near Derventa. When the wars of the 1990s began, Marija's "employers" fled the conflict and left her behind. The consequences of war resulted in Marija living alone on the property without any income. For years, Marija supported herself by working in the property's small vegetable garden and taking care of the chickens. Members of the Women's Association Derventa coordinated with the community and Derventa's Center for Social Work to find resources and services for Marija. Today Marija, at the age of 75, has an ID card and receives social support for the first time. Marija has never been married and spends most of her time alone. We hope that with the help of her friends and advocates at Women's Association Derventa she will spend the rest of her life in peace.

Prekogranična suradnja ženskih udruga iz Slavanskog Broda i BiH Partneri protiv trgovine ljudima



Ženska udruga rješava problem trgovine i

SLAVONSKI BROD - Ženska grupa Brod sa ženskim udrugama iz Dervente i Modriče u BiH počela je provoditi projekat pod nazivom "Interpartnerstvo i međugranična suradnja u borbi protiv trgovine ljudima". Projekat se zasniva na radionicama u čijem radu sudjeluju lokalne institucije zadužene radi sprečavanja trgovine ljudima i da ih se dodatno informira o navedenom problemu.

-Projekatom se teži pomoći djetel-

ma teško prepoznati. Projekatom će se pogranični policajci dodatno educirati u otkrivanju lažnih dokumenata i postupku upućivanja žrtava na mjesta u kojima im se može pružiti pomoć.

- Potrebno je razvijati i projekte obrazovanja, zapošljavanja i socijalna siromaštva. Naime, u čak 98 posto slučajeva žrtve su ženama iz zemalja istočne Europe, koje su vrlo siromašne, a u posljednje vrijeme imamo i

"ДЕРВЕНТСКИ ЛИСТ" 21. децембар 2006.

БРОЈ 2023

УДРУЖЕЊЕ ЖЕНА

ПРИЈЕТЊА СВАКОЈ ЗАЈЕДНИЦИ

"Interpartnerstvo i međugranična suradnja u borbi protiv trgovine ljudima u BiH i Hrvatskoj", naziva je projekat koji implementira Udruženje žena "Derventa". Udruženje

o dosadašnjim aktivnostima i planovima za naredni period. Glasajući o problemu trgovine ljudima, predstavnicе derventskog Udruženja žena naglasile su da je ova pojava

uzrociima pogranična područja, a planovima za naredni period. Glasajući o problemu trgovine ljudima, predstavnicе derventskog Udruženja žena naglasile su da je ova pojava uzrociima pogranična područja, a planovima za naredni period. Glasajući o problemu trgovine ljudima, predstavnicе derventskog Udruženja žena naglasile su da je ova pojava uzrociima pogranična područja, a planovima za naredni period.



U razgovoru na ovu temu učesnicama su predstavnicе policije, inspekcije, pedagoga škole, predstavnici nevladinih organizacija i drugi koji su djelovali u zaključnu da je trgovina ljudima velika opasnost, i da je u cilju sprečavanja takve pojave potrebno organizovati razne sastanke i uspostaviti suradnju sa svim subjektima, ali i građanima.

Naglašeno je da još uvijek nije zabrinjavajuće da je bilo koji građanin derventske opštine bio žrtva trgovine ljudima, ali i konstatovano da je derventska policija već imala iskustva te vrste kada su žrtve bili ljudi iz druge kontinenta, najviše iz Afrike.

Trgovina ljudima direktno je vezana za trgovinu drogama i za prostituciju, a jedan od načina jestu i razni oglasi za rad u inostranstvu. Čak se u javnim medijima mogu čuti i prozivati policije za dobar posao i veliko platu, i za koje služe kriminalne organizacije i policijci koji su dio tima koji se bavi trgovinom ljudima. To treba imati na umu i posebno upozoriti mlade koji su i najviše žrtve.

Da bi bila sprečena prinosno ublažena vlasnost od trgovine ljudima potrebna je derventska i stalna suradnja policije i drugih derventskih službi sa nevladinih organizacijama i građanima, zaključeno je u konstataciji da se u narednom periodu posebna pažnja treba posvetiti mladima, te njihovom informisanju i obrazovanju.



INTERPARTNERSTVO I PREKOGRANIČNA SURADNJA U BORBI PROTIV TRGOVANJA LJUDIMA



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"ДЕРВЕНТСКИ ЛИСТ" 7. децембар

УДРУЖЕЊЕ ЖЕНА РАЗМЈЕНА И

Udruženje žena "Derventa", zajedno sa partnerskom organizacijama Udruženje građana "Budućnost" iz Modriče i "Udruga Brod - grupa za ženska ljudska prava" iz Slavanskog Broda, realizuje projekat pod nazivom "Interpartnerstvo i međugranična suradnja u borbi protiv trgovine ljudima".

Ovaj projekat se realizuje u Derventi, Modriči, Slavonском и Босанском Броду од новембра ове до маја следеће године, а циљ пројекта је јачање сарадње између институција и невладиних организација на локалном, регионалном и међуграничном нивоу у борби против трговине људима. Овај градови су одабрани због близине границе а искуства ове три невладине и партнерске орга-

низација, какав је већ већина у овим градовима. Циљ пројекта је наставак "Удружених жена", која је започела у јули прошле реализацијом под називом "AntiTraff", локалној заједници под вјештаством дојавитеља "World learning star network", а дојавитељска кућа већ дуго на годишња проводи пројекте сузбијања трговине људима у свијету, у БиХ је присутна од 2002. године, а у Хрватској од 2004. године. С обзиром да трговина људима не познаје и не признаје границе, овакви пројекти помажу пограничним локалним заједницама у побољшању међуграничне сарадње, а тиме и сузбијању овог зла на локалном нивоу, као и подизању свјесности о проблему трговине људима.

NE trgovini ljudima



Udruženje žena Derventa zajedno sa partnerskom organizacijama Udruženje građana "Budućnost" iz Modriče i "Udruga Brod - grupa za ženska ljudska prava" iz Slavanskog Broda realizuje projekat pod nazivom "Interpartnerstvo i međugranična suradnja u borbi protiv trgovine ljudima".

Press clippings from Women's Association Derventa's activities

Carol Bellamy, President and CEO of World Learning

HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS A FORM OF TERRORISM

The only thing we think about in terms of human security today is terrorism. Trafficking is a form of terrorism, in my view. Another way trafficking threatens human security is the fact that nobody in the government or authorities has ownership. The responsibility for trafficking either has too many parents or too few parents, if you will. Too often there isn't any lead authority in the area.



Carol Bellamy assumed the leadership of World Learning in May 2005, having completed ten years as Executive Director of UNICEF, the children's agency of the United Nations.

During her tenure at UNICEF, Ms. Bellamy brought a compassionate yet pragmatic ethic to improving the lives of children. She stepped up UNICEF's work in emergencies, doubled its funding, put the issues of child exploitation on the global agenda and fought for health, protection and education as fundamental rights of every child.

Ms. Bellamy has had a distinguished career in the private sector. She held leadership roles at prominent investment banks including Bear Stearns & Co. and Morgan Stanley and Co.

Ms. Bellamy served for five years in the New York State Senate (1973-1977). In 1978, she

became the first woman to be elected President of the New York City Council, a position she held until 1985.

In 2004, Ms. Bellamy was named to Forbes Magazine's 100 Most Powerful Women in the World.

Her visit to Croatia and her participation at the May 2007 Conference in Krk was an opportunity to talk to this highly accomplished woman about the problem of human trafficking and the role of World Learning in supporting local NGOs that work on prevention and support to victims.

Why are the activities of local women's NGOs important to fighting trafficking?

It really needs a combination of things. You need central governments as well. One of the things that local indigenous women's groups can do so well is understanding the trauma that the woman has gone through, sensitivity in discussions, just being there, providing a safe environment, being trusted by the victim. These groups play a range of personal roles, but also formal roles.

The second thing is, in my view, is that a lot of the way you're going to build this in to society with any kind of sustainability is through working with local groups. It doesn't have to *only* be women, but they're going to be the most sensitive to these issues.

What are the messages that you hear from these local organizations?

I hear that it's an area that just doesn't receive funding. That it falls through the government cracks and through the international funding mechanism cracks. It doesn't necessarily fall into any one particular responsibility.

A second thing that I hear is the fact that it's not taken seriously. It's not seen as a "serious" issue. It's not seen as a crime or it's seen as a situation in which women themselves created the problem. It's seen as a "soft" issue.

There's not enough attention paid to it and yet it's huge in its numbers. It's often seen as something that goes on within a family and not as something that is under-girded by organized crime.

What is it that makes trafficking such a threat to human security?

There are many things that are a threat to human security and if we only invested in more of them... The only thing we think about in terms of human security today is terrorism. Trafficking is a form of terrorism, in my view. Another way trafficking threatens human security is the fact that nobody [in the government or authorities] has ownership. The responsibility for trafficking either has too many parents or too few parents, if you will. Too often there isn't any lead [authority] in the area.

Secondly, it isn't something that lends itself to a simple solution. It's violence. Violence against women and girls is on the increase in this world today. It's why AIDS continues to grow... If you can make money off of it, you make money off of it. For it's scale [trafficking] should be taken more seriously, but it isn't because it's treated as a "woman's issue" and therefore less important.

Also, countries and governments don't want to admit that it's happening in their borders. That's one of the big problems on issues that deal with violations of human rights or on protection-related issues. They'll admit it's a problem, but, "Oh, it's someone else's problem. It's not our problem."

Organized crime is notoriously hard to root out. How best to stop it?

It is. I think that you can confront it in a number of ways. One tactic, which is very important, is simply shining public light on it. It makes it harder to push these sorts of issues under the proverbial rug and not take them seriously. It's everything from public attention, to resourcing, to networking. Networking it seems to me is critical. You really do have to involve a range of entities, from the police to the social sector; people who don't necessarily find themselves in the same room.

I also think that local NGO strengthening is very important, whether it's trafficking or anything

else. You can't just assume that local NGOs will be strong. They need everything from good financial management to telephones. Strengthening local resources is an important technique.

What is World Learning's mission in fighting trafficking?

I don't think of World Learning's mission in fighting trafficking *per se*. If you really looked and said, "OK, where does World Learning position itself in this area of international social development?" you would find that we do have some developed, over-the-years expertise in local NGO strengthening and local capacity building. Sometimes those words are spoken so often that they don't have meaning.

Frankly they could mean everything from working with parent-teacher associations in schools to working with anti-trafficking NGOs. World Learning doesn't have expertise only in trafficking, it's really in the area of local capacity building. And one of the areas that lends itself to stronger local capacity building is trafficking. That's a reason to focus on it. We are discovering, and have discovered, that just because people want to make a difference doesn't necessarily mean that they're going to be able to go out and do that. They have to build some skills and resources to do that. World Learning has some strength in supporting that process.

Regional Conference, Krk, Croatia

THE COMMUNITY STRIKES BACK

Supported by the Zonta International Foundation and the Tides Foundation, World Learning/STAR held a regional conference from 21 to 25 May 2007 at the Hotel Koralj in Krk, Croatia. The conference, titled “The Community Strikes Back,” brought together anti-trafficking experts from four countries in the former Yugoslavia (Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro and Serbia) as well as from the USA. Zonta club members from Greece and Croatia also participated.

Conference Opening

After an opportunity to meet and hear from the conference participants, World Learning President and CEO Carol Bellamy delivered the opening remarks to the conference. Emphasizing the importance of local NGO capacity and fostering meaningful connections between NGOs and state institutions, Bellamy offered an energetic start to the conference.

Angeliki (Kika) Ziti, a member of Zonta’s Athens, Greece chapter and active in Zonta’s European leadership, followed Bellamy with an introduction of Zonta, its mission, structure and history. Zonta has consultative status at both the UN and the Council of Europe, and Ziti suggested that Zonta provides a good bridge for advocacy with international organizations.



Kika Ziti, Zonta Athens, Selma Hadžihalilović, RAMP Coordinator and Ivana Radović, NGO ASTRA Belgrade

Trafficking Prevention Through the Eyes of STAR Network Partners

Reports from the “front lines” are an essential part of ensuring that the conference attendees are aware of the facts and realities of trafficking in the many communities of the region where STAR’s partners are working. Presenters offered summaries of their recent activities, achievements and challenges.

Mara Radovanović, of the NGO “LARA” from Bijeljina, BiH and RING Network Coordinator, provided a sobering assessment of the state of the trafficking problem. Radovanović provided insights into the economic models that underpin trafficking. The owners of nightclubs (where the forced prostitution of trafficking victims frequently takes place) are lower-level-

el criminals and not the ones making the largest profits from trafficking, for example. These members of the criminal hierarchy shoulder most of the risk of their business in exchange for only a small percentage of the funds. The leaders of the mafia enterprise remain insulated from routine police pressure and collect the bulk of the proceeds.

Perhaps due to the relative ease of identifying nightclubs as a venue for forced prostitution, traffickers are increasingly moving their operation into private homes and apartments where their activities are harder to detect and deter. She also offered evidence of the traffickers' networked tactics by pointing out that women from different countries, found in different parts of the region, told very similar stories of the tactics used to recruit and enslave them. Radovanović highlighted the need to harmonize laws and systems at both the national and regional level.

Ružica Mandić, of Women's Association Vukovar, Croatia and PETRA Network Coordinator, introduced the PETRA network, a group of Croatian NGOs that collaborate to fight trafficking and support victims. PETRA members are noted with stars in the map at right. Large red stars denote PETRA member organizations who staff the SOS emergency phone line for trafficking information and assistance. Vukovar is marked by the red star in the far east of the country, close to the borders of Bosnia, Serbia and EU-member Hungary.



PETRA Network members

Mandić shared information about the number of victims identified in Croatia. Thus far in 2007, eight victims of trafficking have been confirmed. She attributed this relatively small number of victims to the fact that while many members of Croatian law enforcement are well-trained in how to recognize trafficking victims, these tend to be higher-level police officials and prosecutors and not the street cops who are often the first to respond to problems and would thus be the ones in a position to recognize a victim of trafficking.

Challenges in direct work with victims was another important theme. Shelters and social services are very expensive and government often relies on NGO expertise without providing ad-

equate financial support. Domestic victims of trafficking often refuse the services of shelters when they are available due to a lack of trust that the services will be useful or positive.

Maja Raičević helps direct **Women's Safe House** in Podgorica, Montenegro. Women's Safe House is a shelter for victims of trafficking and domestic violence as well as an NGO working to raise community awareness of these problems and advocate for change. Raičević discussed Montenegro's struggle against trafficking as being tightly bound to its struggle against corruption. Her organization has demonstrated links between traffickers and officials at the highest levels of national government. Uncovering these stories has put Women's Safe House and its staff under great pressure and, at times, danger. The need for an improved legal framework, including better witness protection for trafficking victims who agree to cooperate in prosecutions, provisions for seizure of traffickers' financial assets after conviction and longer prison terms, was a main theme of Raičević's presentation.

Ivana Radović, of the NGO ASTRA from Belgrade, Serbia, provided some historical perspective on the trafficking problem in the region. She dated the origin of the problem to the 1980s, when a "flood" of women from the Soviet Union came to Yugoslavia, hoping it would serve as a gateway to the more prosperous West. The possibility that some of them might be transported or prostituted against their

will was never considered. Today, the problem of internal trafficking, wherein traffickers minimize risk and maximize profit by keeping



victims in one country, has become more pronounced. Radović also echoed the observations of her colleagues in the region when she observed that trafficking has moved into private flats and out of nightclubs. She also highlighted the fact that both government and NGOs often show a preference for prevention work over service to victims. Seminars, conferences and trainings are less risky and less expensive than work to rescue and reintegrate victims. She recommended more systematic and formal collaboration between government and NGOs. At present, cooperation is often good, but it relies on personal connections among individuals in

police, government, centers for social work and NGOs. When individuals are promoted or transferred, much of the potential for efficient cooperation is lost.

Aleksandra Drašković works in the office of Montenegro's National Coordinator for the Fight Against Trafficking in Persons. The office coordinates the work of the governmental agencies, nongovernmental and international organizations involved in combating trafficking in persons in the country. She highlighted her work on a regional referral mechanism that is a collaborative effort among 10 countries in the region.

Višnja Vosak, a member of Zonta's Zagreb, Croatia club and a successful businesswoman

related a story about her work in facilitating an economic cooperative for residents of a home for deaf children. The children formed a business selling food. Vosak and Zonta advised the entrepreneurs during their start-up phase and helped with public relations. Vosak stressed that NGOs who seek partnership with business must emphasize what they offer rather than what they need. If businesses see that they will benefit through positive public relations and exposure, they will be more motivated to support the good works of NGOs.

Working with Youth and Working with Government/Professionals

Two days of the conference were devoted to small group discussions. One group met to discuss ways to improve cooperation and partnership with government and professionals (such as social workers, police, prosecutors and judges). The second group met to discuss work with youth.

The government and professionals group presented a list of problems, innovations and recommendations for future work.



Problems in working with government and professionals

- *Difficulty of identifying victims. There is a need for standardized definitions and criteria;*
- *Bureaucratization within government bodies makes communication and collaboration with NGOs and within government difficult;*
- *Lack of formal partnership mechanisms between NGOs and government;*
- *Lack of long-term rehabilitation services for victims;*
- *No systematic approach for support to local (same-country) victims;*
- *Lack of coordinated strategy among NGOs;*
- *Lack of mental health services for victims.*
- *Lack of knowledge of international law related to human trafficking among judges;*
- *Lack of legal provisions to seize traffickers' financial assets and property. Jail sentences are the only penalty in the great majority of cases and sentences are far too short;*
- *Lack of effective witness protection programs and procedures;*
- *High rate of turnover among National Coordinators in many countries.*

Innovations in working with government and professionals

- *Regional referral mechanism among 10 countries in the region;*
- *Independent monitoring teams that determine whether the NGOs, government bodies and other professionals working against trafficking are living up to their commitments and responsibilities;*
- *Standardized forms (one for victims and one for suspected traffickers) for first contact with individuals. Whether police, social workers or NGOs make the first contact, they collect information on the form. Forms are the basis for assigning a case code to avoid use of victims' name in later proceedings. This is a pilot initiative in BiH;*
- *Learning from the Philippines where there is a model law for confiscation of traffickers' assets after conviction. The proceeds are placed in a fund for the benefit of trafficking victims. A proposal for a similar law is pending in Montenegro;*
- *Multidisciplinary local working and response groups are forming in Croatia. These include social welfare officials, border police, employment officials, police and NGOs. The groups will meet monthly to share information and maintain contact for future cooperation.*

Recommendations for working with government and professionals

- *Ongoing, regular training for police rather than one-off training seminars. Training should be part of the program in police academies and be reinforced periodically throughout police service;*
- *Procedures and systems to ensure the safety of civil servants and professionals who come into contact with trafficking.*
- *Trafficking awareness programs must be part of training programs for social workers, teachers and other professionals;*
- *Find ways to shorten victims' time in shelters. Too often shelter stays last for years because secondary services to victims are lacking. Employment, housing and social reintegration services must be part of this effort;*
- *Broaden the range of government offices that are called on to assist in fighting trafficking or reintegrating victims. Employment offices, Ministries or Offices for Tourism and Labor and tax inspectors can all play a role in the fight against trafficking.*
- *If victims are returned to their home country after being discovered, improve feedback to the sending country about the results of their case (implies a need for someone to be alert to the circumstances of victims who are repatriated);*
- *Strengthen the capacity of NGOs, especially women's organizations, in the remote border areas where trafficking flourishes.*



Mara Radovanović of NGO LARA, Bijeljina talking with Carol Bellamy, President and CEO of World Learning



Ružica Mandić of NGO Women's Association Vukovar, interviewed by Croatian television

Working with Youth

It is very difficult to work in schools in a systematic, long-term fashion. Getting permission to work with schools systematically rather than in a one-off training or presentation requires much bureaucratic wrangling and sometimes changes to central curricula. Permits and accreditation is a major obstacle. The group recommended working with teachers and other school personnel rather than directly with students. They observed that while NGO activists were well-meaning, they lacked the pedagogical background and training necessary to introduce such a complex and emotional topic as trafficking to young people. The group, defining youth as anyone between kindergarten and university age, concluded that youth are very often more vulnerable than adults. Children from dysfunctional environments, those under state protection, children from orphanages and other children with special needs are especially important target groups for those fighting trafficking.

Group members also raised the need to reach youth outside of schools. They observed that, for the most part, trafficking does not happen in schools and that children who are not in school tend to be more vulnerable than those who are enrolled. The need to educate communities and parents about the risks of trafficking was highlighted.

Cooperation is a Fact

According to several participants, cross-border collaboration and cooperation in the area of anti-trafficking is better than in many oth-



er facets of government-NGO relations. Tensions over funding, priorities and consultation remain, but it is important to see the “forest” and recognize that, at many levels, cooperation is good and has come a long way over the past 3-5 years. One NGO representative noted that “we don’t have to scream and yell and pull sleeves anymore.” NGOs are heard in government, though not always to the extent that the NGOs might like. The next step is for NGOs to strategize as a network in order to make themselves stronger advocates for change.

Go Beyond Prevention

The conference participants identified increased public knowledge of trafficking as a success of recent years. The recommendations and obser-

vations focused on providing improved services to victims, both immediately after their discovery and over the longer term. Without sustained efforts to mitigate underlying economic and social pressures, the unemployment and family violence that are the root-causes of trafficking, the effectiveness of awareness and prevention messages will be limited. Future anti-trafficking efforts in the region should seek to support these efforts rather than continue to raise awareness for prevention.

Internal Trafficking

One surprising piece of information was the statement from NGOs in both Bosnia and Croatia that the increased attention to cross-border human trafficking had not decreased trafficking. Rather, it had increased the dangers of trafficking within one country. As police and customs officials become more aware of illegal migration and trafficking, as border scrutiny tightens at the Schengen border and as travel documents become more sophisticated and more difficult to counterfeit, traffickers seem to be opting for lower-risk, lower-cost ways of finding victims. Croatia, with marked disparities in wealth between wealthy coastal Dalmatia and Zagreb and poorer areas to the east in Slavonia, is particularly prone to internal trafficking.

EU Accession as Advocacy Opportunity

Some of the countries of the region, including Slovenia, Romania, Bulgaria and Hungary, are

already members of the European Union. The others, to varying degrees, aspire to join. Croatia is closest, with membership possible as early as 2009. The EU insists that prospective members' legal and regulatory frameworks be in line with European standards. As a result, there is real pressure for real change. NGOs that fight trafficking (and that work on the root causes of trafficking) have a historic opportunity to influence the many new laws and regulations that will come about during the process of EU accession. International donors and NGOs would be wise to support these advocacy efforts.

Fast and Flexible vs. Structured and Sustainable

While all attendees agreed on the need for strong government-NGO cooperation, there was lively debate as to the best way to put the principle into action. Many participants decried the fact that much of the partnership between sectors rests on individual connections that disappear when staff change jobs or are replaced in the political process. Some called for more systematic collaboration that is governed by written regulations and memoranda of understanding rather than ad-hoc personal connections. This stance was met with concern from some who emphasized the shape-shifting nature of traffickers and their tactics as a reason to avoid a cooperative basis that, while well-founded and systematic, was difficult to change and adapt to new problems and realities.

Lael Stegall, co-Founder of STAR Network

EFFECTIVE CHANGE COMES THANKS TO THE TALENT AND COMMITMENT OF LOCAL GROUPS

We insisted that it had to be a local issue also, that money had to stay in the region and make it to these smaller communities. Now, six years later, there has been astonishing action. We are way beyond talk. The groups that STAR supports work with schools, police, social workers, youth... all at the local level. Cross-border partnership is a reality too.



A co-founder (along with Jill Benderly) of the STAR Network in 1994, Ms. Lael Stegall has been active in the support of social change organizations, both large and small, since the early 1970s. She has focused her work on supporting women's organizations in their efforts to find the financial resources necessary for their work in local communities. Her presence at the World Learning/STAR conference in Kirk was an opportunity to hear her perspective on trafficking prevention and on the many other projects that STAR has supported over the past 13 years.

You are a co-founder of STAR Network. During the conference you said that you have the perspective to see the forest and not just the trees. How does the forest look to you today?

I see a very green, healthy forest with lots of new shoots but also a solid group of strong trees in the center.

Trafficking is part of this incomprehensible mindset that women can be property. Six years ago, when STAR began to look at trafficking, it was confined to international conferences, international law enforcement. We insisted that it had to be a local issue also, that money had to stay in the region and make it to these smaller communities.

Now, six years later, there has been astonishing action. We are way beyond talk. The groups that STAR supports work with schools, police, social workers, youth... all at the local level. Cross-border partnership is a reality too.

There has been a great change, beyond my wildest expectations—and it isn't because there was a large quantity of money spent. It's due to the talent and commitment of the local groups.

What is the early history of STAR?

STAR began with a focus on women's economic and social empowerment. We concentrated on advocacy for women's participation in the processes and decisions that affected their lives.

From the beginning, it was very different than most USAID projects. We always had a strong belief that women must have access to the tools of power in order to create a different order. It wasn't about therapy or "healing." Because women were always at the center of STAR it never had a patronizing, "oh-you-poor-victims" point of view. We had a very feminist point of view that these women were not victims but rather the region's hope for recovery.

That attitude of ours brought us into conflict with traditional practices. STAR's work is about power.

What has STAR learned?

That is an important question, because it has not all been perfect from day one.

We have learned to be wary of emotion. STAR had its origins in conflict that caused profound damage to everyone involved. We had to be careful to make decisions as much as possible on the basis of the best ideas and skills available, not our emotions.

We learned to take time to let ownership develop. When I started with STAR I had a very action-oriented mindset. I wanted to cut through all the bureaucracy and endless analysis that I saw as a major obstacle to change. I wanted to roll up my sleeves and jump in. It took some time to learn that it takes time for local actors to gain the tools and power they need. STAR



Lael Stegall (r), co-founder of STAR Network at the conference

has been successful because it has continued to involve young, fresh voices. It was hard sometimes to turn away more senior people or groups because we felt we needed to invest in young women leaders. We learned the power of patience.

As an American, an “outsider,” I’m sure you’ve heard people tell you that the problems of the former Yugoslavia were none of your business. How do you balance the need for local ownership of the process with the need for outside assistance to drive change?

Oh, yes. I heard that in the first week of my first trip to the region.

We saw the words in the STAR acronym (strategies, training, advocacy, resources) as the tools that we brought. We said, “We understand that you know what your communities need, but we bring this and this and this to the table.”

We had non-Americans involved. Local women were at the table from the beginning. When we used non-local trainers, we were always careful to get very high-quality people. I think some of the locals had been a little disillusioned by experiences they had had where younger, inexperienced

foreigners had come out and given sub-standard trainings or workshops. The quality of our people, foreign and local, won over some of the skeptics.

We listened a lot. We had advisory boards in all the countries and another one for the entire region. That blunted some of the charges that we were just U.S. propaganda. Jill [Benderly, STAR’s other co-founder and current Regional Director] and her language fluency helped a lot. We deliberately did everything we could to show that there was a lot of local ownership of these projects.