



Extracts of Presentations and Recommendations for Anti-trafficking work in the **KORÇA QARK** from the 2006 CAAHT Annual Conference Report

This document extracts key data for Korça Qark from the report of the **2006 Annual Conference of the USAID program *The Albanian Initiative: Coordinated Action Against Human Trafficking (CAAHT)***. Information includes highlights from presentations and working groups regarding good practices and ideas for anti-trafficking programs and activities implemented by governmental structures and civil society actors. The full conference report is available in PDF format on the CAAHT website: www.caaht.com.

Recent developments in the work of the Regional Committee in the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings

Korce—Prefect's Office (Technical Secretariat) — Ms. Donika Ristani
(2006 AC Report, page 35)

Highlights of the presentation

- A Technical Secretariat (Table) of the Regional Anti-Trafficking Committee has been established near the Prefect's Office with the participation of representatives from the Prosecutor's Office, the Directorate of Police, the Intelligence Service, Regional Directorate of Social Service, Directorate of Economic Assistance at the Municipality, Employment Office, Directorate of Education, and non-profit organizations such as Terre des Hommes and Korce Women. The purpose of this structure is to collect information on trafficking issues and report it to the Regional Committee.
- The Table meets once every two months. Numerous cases are reported in its meetings. They are discussed and intervention plans are developed. Cases have been about women and girls trafficked and/or re-trafficked.
- Vulnerable groups at the Korce *Qark* are identified. Every administrative unit, in cooperation with the local government and other institutions, identifies persons at risk and categorizes them: children, youth, women, senior citizens. The groups most at risk are women and girls that have been abused and/or divorced, orphan children, and street children. Within the legislative framework, it is possible to economically assist them through local governments and different NGOs.
- Children that have dropped out of from school are also identified and different measures to decrease their numbers are taken. Eighty percent of these children are from the Roma and Egyptian communities. In cooperation with the Directorate of Education, some of these children have returned to school.

- Employment opportunities are offered to people at risk. The Employment Office, in cooperation with the representatives of other institutions participating in this Table, has employed four women from the Roma community with two others expected.
- The Technical Table has emphasized the need to open a shelter for the victims of human trafficking in Korçe.

Highlights of the discussion

- Good cooperation has been established with many NGOs, especially Terre des Hommes and Korçe Women. These organizations deal with the identification of trafficking cases. Also, the Employment Office has cooperated with businesses to identify employment opportunities for trafficking victims.
- There are five Roma associations in Korçe that do not cooperate with each other on different problems including trafficking. They do not cooperate with other governmental and non-governmental institutions.
- The rate of school dropouts has decreased. Previously, from April to May, the classrooms were almost empty because children would emigrate; presently the situation has improved. However, we should emphasize that trafficking methods have become more sophisticated. People move together with their families, with the destination changing from Greece to Macedonia.
- The representative of the Deputy-Prefect at the Technical Table should cooperate with local actors especially on data, which has been inaccurate. The Deputy-Prefects of Pogradec and Korçe should establish a network of local institutions and organizations and find the way to collect information relating to the situation in this area. Pogradec has two border points and trafficking is present.
- The Office of Social Services that monitors NGOs in Pogradec can have the information on anti-trafficking from these organizations.
- The Representative of the Technical Secretariat of the Regional Committee of Vlora appreciated the work of NGOs and their cooperation at the Technical Secretariat.

Objectives and current activities of the municipality child protection structures

Pogradec Municipality Child Protection Unit — Mr. Sokol Lako (2006 AC Report, page 39)

Highlights of the presentation

- The Office of Protection of Children Rights is a result of the collaboration between the Municipality of Pogradec and Terre des Home. This office is an integral part of the municipal administration. It aims at protecting and promoting children rights through needs identification of children and their families, and offering services in accordance with the legislation and standards of social services.
- The main duties of this office include identification of children abandoned, abused, exploited and trafficked, as well as children at risk; cooperation with other institutions, public or private, to improve the situation of children and their families; establishment of a database on children rights and their protection; and promotion of children's rights and their protection in respective institutions and community.

- Although new, the office is producing results. It has identified the needs of families in difficult economic and social conditions through family visits, contacts on the street, and exchange of information with local institutions. Based on these needs, individual intervention plans for each child are developed.
- In cooperation with NGOs dealing with children and the community, it has organized different awareness and cultural and sport activities.
- In cooperation with the foundation Nehemia and children of the “Rilindja” private school, food and material assistance was distributed on the International World Food Day for 112 children identified by the office.
- The office plans to organize different vocational courses aimed at employment of poor families to help improve their economic conditions.
- *A success story:* A 2-year-old Roma child was not accepted at day care because the school management claimed there was no place. The employee of the Office learned about this case by accident when she saw the child in midst of used clothes his mother was selling and intervened to register the child at day care center.

Highlights of the discussion

- Such an office is a good initiative that should be supported by all governmental and non-governmental institutions. In this context, the Office should promote itself and work to increase the awareness of all community actors.
- The Roma community presents many problems in relation to children’s rights, including both the community and families understanding these rights and protecting them. More work should be done to involve this large community of about 3,000 Roma people in Pogradec in education activities that increase awareness about children’s rights.
- Different characteristics/problems of this community (early marriages, working on the street, etc.) should be taken into consideration when working with Roma people. A way to involve them can be found. For example, in the context of New Year festivities, an activity has been organized with Roma children in Korce that was a success. Also, the Municipality can involve Roma people with different jobs.
- The Office of Children’s Rights should cooperate with other institutions and refer different cases to them (*e.g.*, referring them to schools) and look for expertise outside the Office for different problems.
- The Office should fill vacancies and receive training to increase the capacity of staff. Gradually, this office can distribute social assistance funds.

CAAHT Grantee Presentations

House to house awareness raising to reach vulnerable communities and individuals — Ms. Miranda Fishka, *Institute for Gender Applied Policies* (2006 AC Report, page 12)

Highlights of the presentation

- We implemented this project in the rural areas of Lezhe, Mirdite, Prenjas, Lushnje and Devoll.
- The target group is 12 to 16-year-old girls.

- Its services included awareness raising, prevention, advising and informing.
- The methodology included situation analysis, data analysis, determining intervention areas, training animators, home visits, and distributing information.
- In the areas where the project was implemented, partners included village elderly, the Education Directorate, Social Department, and the police.

Highlights of the discussion

- We focused on the mentioned areas because of their specific needs. There are other at-risk areas—the city of Pogradec and districts of Devoll and Shkodra.
- It is important to establish partnerships with different stakeholders—village elderly, Education Directorates, and the Social Department—for the successful implementation of such projects.
- There were initial difficulties with home visits because of different social and infrastructure problems.
- The contribution of teachers for the implementation of such projects is very important.
- It is important to measure success/results of such projects.

School-based prevention activities — Mr. Robert Stratoberdha, *NPF* (2006 AC Report, page 14)

Highlights of the presentation

- The NPF aims to prevent school abandonment and its consequences by providing educational, social, and economic support to children and their families who could become victims of abuse, exploitation and trafficking.
- NPF believes that schooling / education is the best way to remove children from the streets and make them feel safe from trafficking or other forms of abuse and exploitation.
- Approximately 80% of the beneficiaries come from Roma and Gypsy communities. They are in special, integrated classes where they learn the school curricula. Based on their performances, they are then integrated in the normal education system or go to vocational training courses.
- NPF's motto for encouraging vocational training is "Future parents-future workers," which means that if beneficiaries receive proper training, they could become professionals and support their families in the future.
- A teacher from the state educational system and a social worker (a "social teacher") tutors the children. The social teacher also looks after the social-economic problems of the children in their families.
- NPF-organized special classes serve as a good model for the Ministry of Education and Science to initiate in different areas of the country "Second Chance" classes that comprise children who have abandoned school.

Highlights of the discussion

- It is widely recognized that for children from Roma and Gypsy communities to integrate fully into normal life, government and non-government structures should

solve the social-economic problems. Governments should develop programs to increase employment opportunities for these people.

- Sixty percent of the beneficiaries who participate in the special classes are boys, while 40% are girls. This mentality and culture of these communities do not allow girls to attend schools because they marry young.
- Eighty percent of those who participate in the special classes go to normal schools, while those over the age of 16 take vocational training courses.
- School is the best place for integration of children from marginalized communities, and it is a human right.
- Legislation is in place, but government needs to take all necessary measures to enforce these laws.

Improved protection through offering of legal services to vulnerable or at-risk communities — Ms. Holta Kotherja, *Legal Clinic for Minors*
(2006 AC Report, page 18)

Highlights of the presentation

- The Legal Clinic offers legal and psychological assistance relating to birth registration, registration of unregistered families and children, assistance during the interrogation of children who are victims or witnesses to the prosecutors and police, and care giving.
- The Legal Clinic trains police and offers legal expertise and legal aid.
- Referrals from different organizations help the Legal Clinic to identify cases. These include especially BKTF and legal aid organizations, the police and prosecutor's office, courts, registration offices, and social services at municipalities.
- Legal aid consists of legal representation at court, presence during the interrogation by the police or prosecutor, legal advice, facilitation during the administrative procedures, etc.
- Psychological assistance consists of the presence of the psychologist during the interrogation by the prosecutor, emotional support for child victims, facilitation of family relations, psychological reports for the court, case referrals to other organizations.
- Legal and psychological aid has helped 532 children; 33 cases have been about deported children.
- Police training sessions have focused on interview techniques and children's rights. Ten one-day sessions were organized in ten *qarqe*.

Highlights of the discussion

Question: How many of the children who have benefited from legal aid have had connection with trafficking?

Answer: There are no exact data. Some of the children have been victims or potential victims of human trafficking.

- Legal Clinic is a project. In the future, such services can be incorporated as a function of governmental institutions.
- We need to amend registration laws.

- A major issue is taking care of children without parents.
- While it is important to handle cases that others bring us, we must also be proactive in addressing children's needs.

Mediation and conflict resolution techniques to decrease stigmatization and improve reintegration of victims of trafficking — Mr. Oltion Kadaifciu, *Albanian Foundation for Conflict Resolution*
(2006 AC Report, page 18)

Highlights of the presentation

- AFRCR conducted a project to increase conflict resolution, reconciliation, and mediation for civil society organizations and local government institutions involved in anti-trafficking. Moreover, AFRCR local offices deal concretely with mediation of existing conflict cases, focusing on mediation between victim and family. The most important step towards reintegration in the society is the reconciliation with the family and being accepted and not stigmatized. This process will, in the long run, decrease the stigma towards the victims and will make society more accepting of such human suffering.
- Project objectives to improve the reintegration included:
 - Increase the capacity of these structures to deal better with conflict cases between family and victims of trafficking.
 - Increase the training capacities of the involved actors by creating a sustainable structure.
 - Offer reconciliation and mediation for concrete cases between victim and family or other parties.
- Using appropriate survey and research techniques, they developed two manuals and corresponding training modules that demonstrated how to apply basic conflict resolution and mediation skills in cases related to vulnerability to trafficking and reintegration of victims of trafficking. Training participants considered the content and form of the produced manuals as good quality.

Highlights of the discussion

- Participants wanted to know about the concrete mediation of the cases and the techniques used. The AFRCR representative described several specific cases from the organization such as victim-family conflict, or family-family conflict. Some of the conflicts that he reported to the group were resolved, some were in process, and some have not been able to be resolved.
- The AFRCR representative gave participants additional information about the collaboration with and help provided by other organizations for the identification of the cases assisted by AFRCR. He noted that they have had a good collaboration with anti-trafficking police officers, who have become one of AFRCR's primary referral sources.
- Participants wanted information about specific conflicts and their solutions. These kind of specific cases of conflicts were explained to the group during presentation. The participants discussed particularly about this issue because they wanted to suggest some more ideas about solutions.

Awareness raising and skills building with Roma girls and women —
Ms. Aida Mosko, *Dorcas Aid International, Albania*
(2006 AC Report, page 24)

Highlights of the presentation

- This ten-month project was implemented in the *qark* of Korce. It was focused on prevention of trafficking in families at risk. The project cooperated with different government institutions and NGOs in the area of Korce municipality.¹
- The main goal of the project was prevention of trafficking of children and girls in Korce. Main interventions included encouraging the interest of at-risk children in school; providing vocational and employment training; informing families about their rights and duties; and providing economic support for each family.
- The identification of beneficiary groups was done in collaboration with other institutions including anti-trafficking police, Legal Clinic for Minors, NPF, Emanuel, and Tabita. Cooperation with the Directory of Education, school directories, and the municipality that provided the facilities and materials for different trainings, education and other activities planned in the project was considered very important.
- One important achievement was social and educational reintegration of Roma children. Eighty children went back to school and normal social life. Eighty-one percent of these children passed to the next level at school. Some special classes were opened for these children, and close contact was kept with their families; summertime camps were organized; and visits to each family were conducted to establish good connections through conversation and economic support.
- Another achievement was vocational and employment support. Twenty-eight persons aged 14 to 18 attended vocational training courses. Employment opportunities will be offered to them in collaboration with the private companies. Twenty-five companies are contacted and some of them have promised employment. Vocational training courses have been identified in accordance with labor market needs.
- Roma families received economic support. Eighty families receive food, clothes, medicines, and school materials. The organization prepared individual plans for each specific case reflecting the support needed. Each week the organization staff meets with at-risk families. The meeting focuses on each family member's rights and obligations.
- Some participants exchanged contact information with each other and with the presenter.

Highlights of the discussion

- Working with the families is important. During Dorcas' first visits, it gave families some financial support that made these families interested in further collaboration. Then the teachers who visited the families focused on the Roma children's positive characteristics as a way of increasing family interest in the project.
- One of the participants stressed the importance of establishing connections with Roma families and paying attention to all their needs: cultural, artistic, and sport, not just the financial ones. The project's motto was to make the Roma people feel part of the community.

¹ *Editor's note:* Dorcas Aid International coordinated this project. Implementing partners funded under this project included: Tabita, Ndihmë Për Fëmijët (Help the Children) and Emanuel Foundation.

- Participant discussion focused on the differences of working with the Roma people as compared to Egyptians: the nomadic lifestyle made working with the Roma people more difficult.
- Participants considered the work done with the families as a whole, not just the children, as positive.
- Cooperation with other government structures is a necessary for working with the Roma people. Including the Roma community within government structures will also be important in future work.
- Government should work more on helping these target groups in the future. While the business communities wish to employ Roma people who have attended different vocational trainings, the Employment Office has not paid any real interest to this issue.

Identifying Actions in Qark Groups

Qark: Korce

(2006 AC Report, page 49)

Five chosen actions:

1. Establishing shelters with an appropriate and professional staff.
2. Training of local governmental structures that deal with anti-trafficking work.
3. Educational and social integration of vulnerable children/youth through supportive policies from the state and civil society organizations.
4. Coordinating actions among all actors focused on anti-trafficking work
5. Ensuring effective work of respective structures in anti-trafficking work for prevention, protection, and integration.

All actions from Qark Discussions

Qark Group: Korce

(2006 AC Report, page 71)

All Actions

- Establishing shelters with an appropriate and professional staff.
- Training of local governmental structures that deal with anti-trafficking work.
- Educational and social integration of vulnerable children/youth through supportive policies from the state and civil society organizations.
- Increasing economic and professional level of target groups.
- Different educational activities for children/youth during summer season.
- Coordinating actions among all actors focused on anti-trafficking work
- Sensitizing of public opinion in anti-trafficking work of human beings.

- Ensuring effective work of respective structures in anti-trafficking work for prevention, protection, and integration.
- Collaborating with families to address anti-trafficking problems.
- Coordinating better among governmental structures and NGOs in providing social services for victims and families at risk.

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