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Session II: Identifying practical programming ideas for assistance and reintegration

Panel Presentation:

Using the mediation and conflict resolution techniques to improve the prevention and reintegration work

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The phenomenon of trafficking in human beings, both of females and children, besides the economical, psychological and social aspects, is accompanied by another dimension, which we should know and handle. This phenomenon is accompanied by numerous conflicts, which in many cases escalate up to extremity, thus becoming an obstacle to integration or reintegration of the victims in the normal social life. The victims of trafficking, particularly females, are also a target of a kind of stigmatization, both from the surrounding social environment and their families. This happens because of some tradition and of the modeling of relations within the Albanian families, especially in the rural ones, still influenced by hard and conservative relations within the family or the kinship.

What makes it necessary to increase the capacities of specialists of centers, associations and institutions that are focused on integration and integration of the trafficked victims, in the area of facilitation, mediation and reconciliation?

From the assessments made and the direct communications with the centers which deal with the trafficking victims (especially with the "Vatra" Psycho-Social Center), we have remarked that they have faced difficulties, which unless handled in time and appropriately, they could be transformed to conflicts of negative consequences:

First, it is the mentality of the Albanian family, which even for traditional reasons do not wish to accept back the victims of trafficking returned and treated at the integration centers. This mentality is the basis of conflict analyzed from the viewpoint of the victims' families.

Second, many returned victims hesitate to turn back to their families, and in most of the cases they refuse to do it. Not elaborating the reasons of this attitude, this kind of conduct is also a basis of potential conflicts of negative consequences as well.

Third, the stigmatizing attitudes of the surrounding social environment (the neighborhood, relatives, community and in many cases the institutions as well) towards the victims of trafficking make the basis of potential conflict, which if not identified and handled in time and in the appropriate way will bring about negative consequences.

Fourth, but not less important is the too severe conflict among traffickers/tutors and returned victims of trafficking, who (the latter) are under pressure and threats, especially forced not to speak up and not report to the police about the traffickers, or they are forced to turn back to the prostitution market.

These, and maybe other potential conflicts, deriving from trafficking make it indispensable to know the contemporary methods of communication, facilitation, mediation and reconciliation as necessary instruments to handle and peacefully resolve conflicting situations. Certainly, in no case should these instruments be applied to hide the violence that may be manifested towards the trafficking victims in various forms.

What does the application of contemporary techniques of communication, mediation, and reconciliation that will influence to prevent conflicts or to their peaceful resolution when they occur, consist of? From the contact our organization had with civil society organizations in several local communities in Albania, which are focused on the programs of anti-trafficking of human beings, they all expressed the need for more specific training and capacity building, especially in conflict resolution, reconciliation and mediation alternative, and for more coordinated action among the different structures involved in the anti-trafficking networks in different geographical axis in Albania.

Our training for specialists/ persons who deal with the issue of anti-trafficking of human beings will consist of the presentation of techniques and instruments of facilitation, negotiation, mediation and reconciliation in conflict resolution.

Facilitation

Facilitation is a process through which parties are for negotiation and mediation. It is carried out by a facilitator, finding out a satisfying resolution for both parties.

Mediation

Mediation represents that method where the mediator intervenes among the parties in conflicts to facilitate their negotiations and communication in order to achieve a better resolution for the parties (win-win). This method is based on fostering communication among parties, so that they find the resolution ways themselves, and on the parties' will to be mediated.

The principles of mediation

1. Extra-judiciary activity
2. Equality among parties
3. Voluntarism
4. Professionalism
5. Confidentiality
6. Two-sided education process
7. Lawfulness

The phases of the mediation process in conflict resolution

a. Premeditation

- 1) Initial contact with the parties
- 2) Education of parties with the process and setting rules
- 3) The mediation agreement / the rules of mediation
- 4) Using the right voice tone for an effective mediation
- 5) Identification of needs
- 6) Making parties trust in the process and the mediator
- 7) Preparing the place for the mediation session

b. Introduction

- 1) Introduction of participants, establishing reports
- 2) Description of the process
- 3) Clarifying the roles and guidelines on the behaving way
- 4) Verification of the authority to resolve the conflict
- 5) The possibility to ask questions

c. Identification of the points to be discussed / making the agenda

- 1) The introductory words, identification and reaching an agreement on the key issues
- 2) Identification of the issues to be agreed upon
- 3) The agreement on the themes to be discussed

d. Discussion / identification of interests

- 1) Exchanging information and reaching understanding
- 2) Elaborating issues and components
- 3) Withdrawal from the positions to find the common ground
- 4) Creating sensitiveness and managing the emotional climate

e. Negotiation/ considering options for the agreement

- 1) Generating options
- 2) Offers and counter-offers
- 3) Determining relying on the agreement points

f. Last phase

- 1) Examining and clarifying the reached agreements
- 2) Filing of the agreement
- 3) Signing the agreement by the parties.

The goals to be achieved:

Through the AFCR project it is aimed to increase capacities on conflict resolution, reconciliation and mediation for civil society organizations and local government institutions involved in anti-trafficking networks in different (northern, eastern, and southern) geographical axis (Diber, Shkodra, Berati, Kukësi, Gjirokastra, Korça) in Albania, like civil society organizations, anti-trafficking police, educational directories, municipality representatives, and governmental social services etc. Moreover, in the project AFCR local offices will deal concretely with mediation of existing conflicting cases, especially with a focus on mediation, conflicts which derive from the phenomenon of trafficking of human beings.