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THE STATE OF EFFORTS TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING OF PERSONS IN ALBANIA - AUGUST 2006 TO JULY 2007



October 2007

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Cover photos:

Upper left – The Directors of the four civil society residential service programs for victims of trafficking shake hands after signing an MOU establishing the *Interactive Shelter Coalition for the Support and Protection of Victims of Trafficking in Albania*.

Upper right - High school students in Kuçova put on a play to raise the awareness of their fellow students about the realities of trafficking in persons.

Lower left - Students in the high school of Miras (Korça) talk together about how they can protect themselves and their friends from trafficking.

Lower right - Government officials and NGO representatives from the *Qark* of Diber discuss plans to combat trafficking of women and children in their area during a CAAHT workshop.

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THE STATE OF EFFORTS TO COMBAT TRAFFICKING OF PERSONS IN ALBANIA -

AUGUST 2006 TO JULY 2007

An Overview of Governmental and Civil Society Policies and Programs

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Acronyms

ADC	Austrian Development Cooperation
AVR	Assisted Voluntary return
BKTF	All Together Against Child Trafficking / Bashkë Kundër Trafikimit të Fëmijëve
CAAHT	The Albanian Initiative: Coordinated Action Against Human Trafficking
CAO	Citizens' Advocacy Office
CPU	Child Protection Unit
CRCA	Children's Human Rights Center of Albania
CSSA	Council of Social Services Associations
CT NAP	Child Trafficking National Action Plan
D&E	Different and Equal
EU	European Union
ICITAP	International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program
ICMPD	International Center for Migration Policy Development
IGAP	Institute for Gender Applied Policies
ILO	International Labor Organization
IOM	International Organization for Migration
IPEC	International Program on the Elimination of Child Labor
ISS	International Social Service-Albania
MES	Ministry of Education and Science
MFA	Ministry of Foreign Affairs
MOLSAEO	Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
NAP	National Action Plan
NGO	Nongovernmental organization. In this report NGO is used instead of non-profitable organization (NPO) which is the actual legal designation in Albanian law.
NPF	Help for Children/Ndihmë për Fëmijët
NRC	National Reception Centre for Victims of Trafficking
NRM	National Referral Mechanism
ONAC	Office of the National Anti-trafficking Coordinator
OPDAT	Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance and Training
OCEEA	Office of the Coordinator of OSCE for Economic and Environmental Activities
ODIHR	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
OSCE	Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe
RA	Responsible Authority
SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
SIDA	Swedish International Development Agency
TACT III	Transnational Action Against Child Trafficking (Phase III)
Tdh	Terre des Hommes
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
UK	United Kingdom
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
US	United States
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USD	United States Dollar
YWCA	Young Women's Christian Association

Introduction

This third annual report on *The State of Efforts to Combat Trafficking in Albania 2006 - 2007* provides an updated overview on anti-trafficking policies and programs of the Government of Albania (national and local) and civil society between August 2006 and July 2007. It briefly describes the current state of programs and services for public awareness raising, prevention services for women and children vulnerable to being trafficked, and assistance and reintegration of its victims - both child and adult. Law enforcement and prosecution are also important areas in the coordinated effort to combat trafficking of persons. The CAAHT program supports close cooperation between local government and civil society actors with law enforcement officials. Two programs of the United States Mission in Albania - the International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance (ICITAP) and the Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development Assistance and Training OPDAT – work specifically in these sectors. This report does not seek to assess the law enforcement and prosecution dimension of anti-trafficking efforts in Albania.

Despite significant efforts made by numerous anti-trafficking stakeholders, Albania continues to be a country of origin for transnational and internal trafficking of adolescent and adult females for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation and for children trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labor, largely to Greece and Italy. The country no longer is considered a major country of transit, and it is not a significant country of destination. Albanian victims are trafficked to Greece and Italy, with many trafficked onward to the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Norway, Germany, and the Netherlands. Reports from the US government, the Albanian NGO *Vatra Psycho-social Center*, and *Terre des hommes/UNICEF*¹ indicate that internal trafficking of both women and children for sexual exploitation is on the rise.

¹ See "ALBANIA (TIER 2)" in the Country Narratives section of the US Department of State 2006 Trafficking in Persons Report issued in June 2007 (www.state.gov/g/tip/rls/tiprpt/2006/65988.htm); *Vatra Psycho-social Center* 2006 report (pages 14 and 15); *Action to Prevent Child Trafficking in South Eastern Europe: A Preliminary Assessment* (www.childtrafficking.org/eng/publication) published jointly by the UNICEF and Terre des Hommes, page 37.

Chapter 1

Recent and current efforts by central and local government institutions of Albania

a) *Office of the National Anti-trafficking Coordinator*

During this reporting period the Government of Albania, through the office of the National Anti-trafficking Coordinator (ONAC), has attempted to continue a strategic and structured approach to the implementation of the anti-trafficking strategies and National Action Plans (NAPs)². In January 2007, the ONAC issued a *Report on the Implementation of Albania's National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Jan – Dec 2006*³ reviewing the accomplishments and gaps in the implementation of the 2005-2007 National Action Plan in the areas of prevention, protection, prosecution and assistance/reintegration. The report also includes short-term and mid-term objectives⁴, highlighting key National Action Plan objectives and priorities to be completed in 2007. These objectives include a number of priority programs and activities addressing areas where Albania's performance lags behind its stated performance and aims at ensuring a greater degree of ownership and commitment from central government institutions and their corresponding structures, as well as sustainability of the overall anti-trafficking efforts.

Key goals and objectives of the January 2007 ONAC report include:

- full implementation of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) with a fully-functioning Responsible Authority (RA);
- establishment of a victim case-tracking database to improve care for trafficking victims;
- targeted and general public awareness media and education campaigns, plus leaflets for distribution at border crossing points and visa-issuing consulates;
- implementation of the Cooperative agreement with Greece against child trafficking;
- improvement of the existing legislation on anti-trafficking and other related issues; and
- development of standards for services to victims of trafficking in residential centers; etc.

The creation by the current government, elected in July 2006, of the Office of the National Anti-trafficking Coordinator within the Ministry of the Interior was welcome. It was encouraging to see the investment in a staff of three professional and one administrative staff working under the leadership of a Deputy Minister of the Interior to improve coordination and implementation of anti-trafficking work in the country. The fact that the government tries to set a clear roadmap and apparently has a more sustainable and professional coordination structure than hitherto, suggests that it should have been capable of exercising greater initiative and ownership in this area. The CAAHT staff appreciates being among the ONAC partners invited to attend some of the inter-

² More information about the Strategic Framework and National Action Plan 2005-7 and the Child Trafficking Strategy 2005-7 can be found in the CAAHT reports "State of Efforts to Combat Trafficking of Persons in Albania 2005" (from page 1 to page 7) and "State of Efforts to Combat Trafficking of Persons in Albania - January 2005 – July 2006" (from page 2 to page 10). Both reports on the "CAAHT Reports" page at www.CAAHT.com.

³ The *Report on the Implementation of Albania's National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Jan – Dec 2006* is available at ONAC website (www.moi.gov.al/2006/antitrafik/antitrafiku.htm).

⁴ *Ibid.* pages 41 and 42.

ministerial coordination meetings convened by the ONAC. At these meetings, it can be observed that one challenge for the ONAC is the limited level of effort and cooperation exerted by most of the ministries to assume responsibility for the anti-trafficking work that falls within their purview. Despite some positive developments and expressions of political commitment from the government, implementation to date has been minimal, with delays in implementation and a lack of practical activities.

b) Smuggling versus trafficking of persons

Consistent with international law, the report of the ONAC appropriately distinguishes smuggling of persons from trafficking in persons. The ONAC emphasizes that: "Even though people involved in these activities [e.g. smuggling] can not technically be classified as victims of trafficking in human beings, they are irregular migrants who remain vulnerable to the activities of criminal groups."⁵ Therefore, the ONAC proposed an amendment to the Penal Code. This was approved by the Parliament February 26, 2007 within law number 9686. This law criminalizes smuggling of human beings "across non-Albania borders."⁶

c) National Referral Mechanism and Responsible Authority

In April 2005, an inter-ministerial agreement was signed creating the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and a Responsible Authority (RA) as the implementing office for the NRM. In addition to the relevant ministries, selected civil society agencies and the International Organization for Migration were included as signatory implementation bodies. The main purpose of the NRM is identification and referral of suspected victims of trafficking. The RA is responsible to coordinate and process referrals for all trafficking victims, and to perform all other coordination and reporting functions assigned to it in the NRM Agreement. Although some effort has been made to enable the RA to begin functioning, it still is not yet functioning fully and the mechanism and/or structures that support its implementation are either not developed or not sufficiently competent.

Progress has been slow bringing these mechanisms into reality. Border and migration police structures are not properly trained to screen for suspected victims of trafficking and proving to be incapable of handling large influxes of returnees at the main border crossing points. In addition, government has not yet provided training to the consular staff of Albania in the destination countries to provide victim-sensitive consular advice to victims and presumed or potential victims of human trafficking. The role of consular officials is important to the Responsible Authority approach as they are designated to cooperate with host country authorities in helping identify, protect, and facilitate the assisted return and referral of actual, presumed, or potential victims. There appears to be confusion regarding the standard procedures for identification and referral, as outlined in the NRM among both the police and the consul staff.

On the third of November 2006, the General Director of the State Police issued the Duty Order no. 714 "On Procedures which are performed with Albanian and foreign citizens returned from other countries". This order specifies the responsibilities of the border and migration police structures as well as the anti-trafficking police units for the processing of returnees who are identified as victims of trafficking and also the successive actions that need to be taken for their referral to specialized institutions and/or organizations for further assistance. The ONAC, thanks to funding and technical assistance from the OSCE presence in Albania, is creating a database to record cases of victims returned, referred, and protected in Albania. Thus far, the regulation for use of the database has

⁵ See the ONAC *Report on the Implementation of Albania's National Strategy for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings Jan – Dec 2006*, page 5.

⁶ *Ibid.* report page 9

been developed, but it is not yet operational due to a lack of resources to maintain the database once it goes online. It is not clear how this database is distinguished from the Total Information Management Systems (TIMS) database designed by the ICITAP program for the Ministry of the Interior and the database being designed for the ONAC under the auspices of the International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD). This project, entitled "Program for the Enhancement of Anti-trafficking Responses in South Eastern Europe: Data Collection and Information Management", is intended to establish two databases with statistics on trafficking in human beings - one for judicial data and one for victim-centered data.

In addition to establishing and maintaining databases, the RA should ensure that Albania citizens are well informed about the kinds of services provided within the NRM. As the list of civil society and governmental stakeholders involved in the CAAHT project demonstrates, the RA has a growing pool to draw upon of knowledgeable and capable organizations and local officials who are enthusiastic about contributing to the country's capacity to prevent trafficking of women and children and improve the return and reintegration of those who have become victims of this crime. *(Further information about these actors may be found in the succeeding sections of this report.)*

A countrywide, toll-free telephone line was established within the Ministry of Interior in October 2006 thanks to funding from the British government through the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the UN Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). The purpose of the hotline is to enable Albanian citizens to denounce cases of trafficking or seek for assistance. The hotline is operated by police officers at the "Emergency Call" unit who were trained by IOM. A total of 170 phone calls have been processed through this hotline and information has been sent for further investigations to responsible police structures. In order to promote the use of this hotline, from December 2006 to August 2007, the ONAC with support from the International Organization for Migration (IOM) disseminated leaflets, posters and other promotional items throughout the country.

d) Identification and referral of suspected victims of trafficking

The situation of identification and referral of suspected victims of trafficking has deteriorated dramatically since January 2006. For example, in the month of April 2006 99 irregular female migrants were interviewed by border authorities. Of these, 24 (e.g. 24%) were referred to residential shelters for assessment and assistance. In April of 2007, 293 irregular female migrants were interviewed by border authorities; however, only two (e.g. 0.7%) were referred to shelters for assessment and assistance. This disturbing phenomenon is confirmed in the dramatic decrease in referrals by law enforcement officers to the five shelters in the country for known or suspected victims of trafficking. While it could be hoped that this reflects a remarkable decrease in the phenomenon of trafficking in adult and adolescent females in the past year, there is no evidence that any of the factors creating the likelihood of trafficking in human beings in Albania have decreased nor the capacity of border and law enforcement personnel substantially improved during this period.

The frequent movement of trained and experienced police officers to different positions and/or dismissals from the police force is a significant problem, which is likely to contribute to the decline in appropriate identification and referral of suspected victims of trafficking. Beginning in July 2007, the situation was exacerbated by a major restructuring of the State Police that has particularly affected the anti-trafficking sector and has reduced the anti-trafficking police force by almost fifty percent. Concerns have also been raised from different specialized international organizations that provide assistance to the State Police, specifically regarding the failure to achieve reasonable return on the investment by various international donor governments for expensive training delivered by international intergovernmental organizations either to individuals or

within specific areas of competency. The shrinking of a number of Departments/Sectors considered to be either vital to the delivery of ongoing projects or to meeting requirements for the Euro-Atlantic integration is also of concern.⁷

Reports from the Government of Albania assert that trafficking in human beings has decreased considerably during the last year. This assertion is supported by reporting only numbers of victims trafficking who have cooperated with law enforcement structures by denouncing their exploiters. Instituted through internal governmental administrative procedures, this is increasingly narrow definition of victim of human trafficking used by border authorities and other law enforcement officials to determine which deported and returning Albanian citizens should be given assessment and assistance to further determine whether they are victims of the crimes related to trafficking in persons.

e) Regional Committees in the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings

One noteworthy development in the government's assumption of leadership at the local level for anti-trafficking efforts was the issuance by the Office of the Prime Minister of Administrative Order No.139 June 19, 2006 establishing Regional Committees in the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings in all 12 *qarqe* of the country.⁸ After advising the ONAC in drafting this Administrative Order, in July 2006, the CAAHT program supported the ONAC by designing, staffing, and funding three Regional Orientation Workshops for Prefects and the members of their committees to orient them to their roles and responsibilities and assist them in beginning to organize their work together.

Unfortunately, since then the implementation of this order has been disappointing. The ONAC states that each Prefect has exercised his or her responsibility to appoint and convene these Committees and dutifully reports to the ONAC as required. In general, their reports do not represent a comprehensive analysis of the trafficking situation; rather they comprise information that already is collected by the various departments/ministries represented on the Committee for the purposes of their own Ministries. There is little demonstration that this data is being used to analyze the local conditions of trafficking in human beings nor recognition that other data is needed for this purpose and to eventually develop effective and well-targeted measures on anti-trafficking. For the most part, the members of the Committees seem to accept little responsibility for, and have little interest in, analyzing or guiding the development of substantive anti-trafficking programming in their *qarqe*. Some Prefects and Committee members have admitted to CAAHT staff that they regard these Committees to be duplicative of other Committees on which they serve, and that they perceive the requirements of this Administrative Order to place an unnecessary demand on them. The limited response of the committee members and their institutional capability to respond to the issue of human trafficking signals that the Central government has provided insufficient training and instruction for the members of these Committees to fulfill their intended role.

These findings were confirmed by a Needs Assessment Report that the USAID/CAAHT program developed on the basis of responses from the questionnaires with members of the Regional Anti-trafficking Committees and Technical Working Tables. This survey revealed that there is need for much more guidance and training from the ONAC for these Committees if they are to be capacitated to accomplish their tasks under the Prime Minister's order. The entire assessment report is attached in Annex I of this report.

A few of the Committees have exercised the opportunity to invite knowledgeable civil society organizations – which often have the most experience in anti-trafficking work – to

⁷ PAMECA press release on downsizing of the State Police, dated 7 July 2007.

⁸ See the CAAHT report *The State of Efforts to Combat Trafficking of Persons in Albania - January 2005 to July 2006* pages 8 and 9.

partner with them to analyze the needs in their local communities. CAAHT civil society stakeholders, especially organizations receiving CAAHT grants, demonstrate sincere commitment to cooperate with, and contribute to, supporting the Regional Committees of their *qarqe* to assume their full range of responsibilities. The competent NGOs now active in all twelve *qarqe* of the country provide an enormous resource of advisors as well as implementing channels with which the Regional Committees could substantially improve their capacity to meet their responsibilities under the Administrative Order. Regional Committees are urged to welcome NGOs with experience in anti-trafficking, women and child programming to become full members of their Committees.

f) *Child trafficking and child protection*

On February 27, 2006, the Greek Deputy Foreign Minister and the Albanian Deputy Minister of the Interior signed the *Agreement between the Government of the Hellenic Republic and the Council of Ministers of the Republic of Albania for the Protection and Assistance for children, victims of trafficking*. The agreement was ratified in May 2006 by the Albanian parliament but is still pending approval by the Greek authorities. Signing of the Cooperation Agreement with Greece is only the starting point in order to ensure adequate procedures for the safe repatriation of children using the Assisted Voluntary Return approach. In order to make this agreement (or similar ones that may be signed in the future) operational, government structures must increase efforts to fully develop the relevant mechanisms and instruments and prepare its structures such as the National Referral Mechanism and Responsible Authority to be responsive to required standards and procedures.

The Child Protection Units (CPUs) of Fieri, Elbasan, Gjirokastra, Korça and Pogradeci (supported by Terre des hommes), Tirana and Kukes (supported by UNICEF), and Kuçove (supported by Save the Children) are the most elaborated mechanisms in place to date for practical services for children at-risk to trafficking or being reintegrated after having been exploited. These CPUs are responsible for coordinating local-level case management of trafficked children and children at risk. They have been established through constructive collaboration among Terre des hommes, UNICEF, Save the Children, local NGOs, and municipality leadership. One of the most encouraging developments in anti-trafficking work over the past year in Albania is the increasing leadership local government officials are taking to support and promote child protection units, anti-trafficking awareness raising, and analysis of the phenomenon of trafficking in persons in their jurisdictions.

Child protection advocates are urging the Regional Committees towards a reorientation of their purpose from their broad anti-trafficking mandate to the work of child protection. Sensitivity to the needs and problems of child protection are important for a full understanding of the dynamics of trafficking in persons and the needs of its victims. However, child protection is a wider sector of social and education analysis, policies, regulations, and services, best directed by the Ministries and organizations responsible for this sector. The intersection between combating child trafficking and the broader work of child protection should be clarified and the corresponding role and responsibilities of the ONAC and the Regional Committees more clearly defined.

Building on the IOM-funded project *Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings in the Balkans Through Educational Activities and Capacity Building of Schools*, the Ministry of Education and Science (MES) continued to collaborate with the latter to start implementation of a new project to increase anti-trafficking awareness in schools and incorporate anti-trafficking themes in different subjects of the school curricula. This next project phase started in July 2007 and is planned for 100 schools in Tirana *qark*. While this is an encouraging effort, these schools only count for 5.3% of the total of 1,878 public schools in Albania. Upon accomplishment of this project MES and IOM are intending to extend implementation of similar activities with schools in other *qarqe* of the country.

g) Internal trafficking for sexual exploitation

Prominent local anti-trafficking partner organizations as well as the ONAC report that Albania is now facing the phenomenon of internal trafficking for the purposes of sexual exploitation. Some key factors that influence the growth of internal trafficking include: an increasing client market of Albanian and foreign men using prostitution, poverty, poor living conditions, lack of employment opportunities, domestic violence, gender inequality, and insecurity about the future. The Government of Albania is seeking to address this problem. Law enforcement officials have conducted a number of raids on motels and hotels in big cities, where women and girls of different ages are being exploited for prostitution. These law enforcement techniques should be complemented with improved targeting and effectiveness of social services delivery as well as other awareness raising and prevention techniques.

On 7 February 2007 a joint agreement was signed between the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports and the OSCE presence in Albania on the *Promotion and Implementation of a Code of Conduct for Prevention of Child Exploitation in Tourism*. The agreement calls for development of a Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Tourism that will be incorporated in legislation of the Ministry of Tourism and enforced with tourist operators in the country.

h) Vocational training and employment

In the effort to reduce citizens' vulnerability to trafficking in persons, the MOLSAEO began the implementation of the second phase of the regional project to promote women's participation in economic decision-making through the International Labor Organization's (ILO) –*Migrant: project - Employment possibility, professional shaping and migratory policy measures for the prevention and the reduction of trafficking of women in Albania, Moldavia and Ukraine*, which aims, among other things, to provide micro-loans for private enterprises to women and girls who have been trafficked as well as encouraging new employment positions for women and girls who are at-risk or victims of trafficking.

Line ministries, including MOLSAEO, MES, Ministry of Economy and Ministry of Finance are working on designing and approving a package of government-owned initiatives to encourage vocational alternatives to illegal migration, and the trafficking and re-trafficking of young women, girls and children by offering small scale loans, taxation incentives, and micro-economic programs to support new and SME businesses which target early school leavers, high risk groups and regions; as well as by subsidizing the job creation and reintegration activities of shelters and employers working with them, and associated international lending agencies).

i) Legislation

During the year 2006 the government has taken measures to improve the legislation on trafficking and the protection and assistance of victims. In the framework of legal improvements to the Criminal Code, initiated by the ONAC, two amendments were introduced to the Article 298 that criminalize smuggling of persons and exploitation of children for forced labor purposes, which will be accompanied with a new social-educational package of assistance for these children and their families in the form of employment and education support. Both amendments are part of a package of amendments that was introduced to the Criminal Code and were approved by the parliament of the Republic of Albania with the law No.9686, dated 26.02.2007.

j) *Standards for accommodation of victims of trafficking*

The MOLSAEO in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Education, National Reception Center for Victims of Trafficking, NGOs and other stakeholders, developed a document on the *Standards for the accommodation of victims in shelters*. The standards stipulate that beneficiaries should be fully informed about the services offered, the ways the services are provided, and the staff who will be responsible to assist the victims. It places emphasis on the responsibility of service providers to uphold the dignity of their beneficiaries and to treat them with respect. The Standards are a good starting point to improve reintegration services for victims because focus is given to the rights and privacy of the individual beneficiary. However, they lack specificity about how to ensure qualification of the staff and other professional and lack minimum standards to determine what sufficient services are.

The MOLSEAO is to be congratulated for taking this initiative without external funding or technical assistance. It convened a working group that was participatory and drew on not only government officials but also the substantial expertise of civil society agencies working in this field. Now the challenge before MOLSAEO is to continue to use this participatory approach to develop specific standards and criteria for the various service providers such as shelter staff social workers, psychologist, vocational trainers and training programs, etc. Albania lacks both governmental credentialing standards for social services professionals and professional association for these services, which could be mechanisms for self-regulation by the private and non-for-profit agencies.

k) *Summary of efforts by the Government of Albania*

Much remains to be done to ensure a comprehensive and thorough accomplishment of the goals and objectives anticipated in Child Trafficking NAP and NAP 2005-7. The timeline for the implementation of both NAPs are approaching their end-dates. As we enter into the final quarter of 2007, it is important for the Government to publicize it's plans for engaging Albania's anti-trafficking community in a comprehensive review of the purposes and achievements of these NAPs and to engage these anti-trafficking stakeholders in a the development of a comprehensive new anti-trafficking NAP for the next two to three years.

Government efforts and donor efforts have only been sporadically consistent with the strategic objectives listed in the NAP. Implementation has largely relied on contribution of international intergovernmental organizations or donor initiatives such as the USAID CAAHT and TACT programs and driven by the competency, expertise and priorities of these international actors. These have been necessary contributions to assist the people and government of Albania to confront the realities of trafficking in persons and to develop practical responses to protect Albania's citizens from the crimes of trafficking. To date millions of Dollars and Euro have been invested by international players in Albania toward this end. A far greater portion of this burden now must be assumed by the Albanian Government. Central ministries and local governments need to improve the allocation of human and financial resources to ensure sustainability of anti-trafficking programs and services in Albania, rather than continuing to rely overwhelmingly on contributions from donor governments through international intergovernmental organizations and/or Albanian civil society.

Chapter 2

Recent and current support for anti-trafficking work in Albania by intergovernmental organizations and government donors

Intergovernmental organizations and their donor governments have continued to make the majority of contributions to the overall efforts to improve the state of anti-trafficking in Albania. Intergovernmental organizations continue to contribute expertise, financial support, and program implementation in cooperation with various ministries of the Government of Albania. They also cooperate with local government structures and Albanian NGOs, encouraging these entities to assume the leadership in the programs they support. The technical assistance and financial support provided by specific agencies and donors is described in more detail below, according to each entity.

Cooperation between the Government of Albania and its international partners is an essential factor leading to the achievements that the Government of Albania has reached to date in anti-trafficking. Continued support will be necessary to assist the central and local levels of government to fully assume their appropriate roles and responsibilities to ensure a comprehensive, nationwide capacity to maintain and update the public's understanding of the phenomenon of trafficking in persons, to deter trafficking of women and children and to achieve full reintegration of children and women who have become victim to the crimes of trafficking.

It is of increasing concern that the anti-trafficking programs of the Government of Albania continue to depend disproportionately on the initiatives, staff / consultants, and financing of intergovernmental organizations and donor governments. The vast majority of the programs such as training of government employees (e.g. for law enforcement, prosecution, and education), database design and equipment, workshops, roundtables, awareness raising campaigns, curriculum development, etc. are driven by the projects funded through the support and technical expertise mobilized by intergovernmental organizations and donor governments. Albania has had an anti-trafficking National Action Plan since 2001 that obligates the Government of Albania to commit financial and human resources to achieve the goals and objectives of these plans. The level of commitment of these resources continues to lag far behind the declared achievements of the Government, calling into question the sustainability of Albania's anti-trafficking efforts once foreign donors realign their funding priorities. Intergovernmental organizations and donor governments can work more closely together to strategize a coordinated technical assistance and funding approach that will provide more motivation to Albanian governmental institutions to assume their full responsibilities to manifest the Government's reiterated commitment to combat trafficking in human beings and other forms of exploitation in Albania.

a) Intergovernmental Organizations

International Labor Organization (ILO) – International Program for the Elimination of Child Labor (IPEC)

Funded by the government of Ireland, the ILO/IPEC International Migration Program (MIGRANT) entitled *Employment, Vocational Training Opportunities and Migration Policy Measures to Prevent and Reduce Trafficking in Women in Albania, Moldova and Ukraine*, entered its second phase in January 2006 and will finish in March 2008. The Project aims to strengthen the capacities of governments and social partners' in labor migration management, which indirectly contributes to reducing trafficking in human beings in these countries. The project provides victims of trafficking with vocational training, employment and self-employment opportunities. In Albania, the project is being implemented in cooperation with the service providers to victims of trafficking that are members of National Referral Mechanism. During the period under

consideration, more than 30 victims of trafficking have benefited from the project services. The ILO also contributed to the MOLSAEO working group that drafted standards for services to victims of trafficking. ILO-IPEC also is implementing a three-year (September 2006 to September 2009) sub-regional project entitled Protect CEE for technical assistance against the labor and sexual exploitation of children, including trafficking, in Albania, Moldova and the Ukraine. In the framework of this sub-regional project three projects are under implementation in Albania: 1) *Integrated program for the elimination of child trafficking in three selected areas of Albania: Elbasani, Korça and Berati*; 2) *Vocational training for the prevention and elimination of child trafficking in Korça* and 3) *Child Labour Monitoring System in Albania* (Tirana, Korça and Berati).

International Organizations for Migration (IOM)

The IOM's engagement in support of the country's counter-trafficking efforts continues through a multi-dimensional approach including prevention, direct assistance to victims, and increasing governmental and nongovernmental organization capacities towards standardized and effective services to victims. Until September 2006 the IOM, through funding support from the Government of the Netherlands, co-funded with CAAHT the Albanian NGO *Different and Equal* that provides reintegration assistance for victims of trafficking. IOM-Albania is one of the IOM country programs funded by the Swedish International Development Agency entitled *Combating Trafficking in Human Beings in South East Europe and Balkan Region- Phase IV* which provides assistance to the anti-trafficking structures in Albania to encourage full and proper functioning of the National Referral Mechanism. Through this project IOM provides direct return assistance to non-Albanian victims. It also supports the National Reception Centre for Victims of Trafficking (NRC) to provide services to Albanian and non-Albanian victims. The aim of the project is to develop the capacities of the NRC to take over fully the responsibility for direct assistance to non-Albanian victims of trafficking by June 2008. The goal of both projects is to provide a high standard care to victims of trafficking as well as to develop their capacities as comprehensive and sustainable service providers.

IOM is implementing two projects in the area of prevention. *Promoting Safe Migration and Preventing Human Trafficking in Albania*, which had started in February 2006, intends to promote safe migration and prevent trafficking in human beings through the creation of appropriate information exchange among all the stakeholders/interested groups. This project includes establishing a telephone helpline for victims of trafficking and their families, operated by Ministry of the Interior with support from IOM and UNODC. As part of a project entitled *Prevention and Support Activities for Victims of trafficking*, the IOM signed a cooperation agreement with the MES in July 2007. Through the project, trafficking awareness raising materials are being produced for distribution to 50,000 pupils of age 14-18 years through information seminars to be conducted in 100 schools in Tirana Qark during 2007-2008 the academic year.

In June 2007, IOM started a project in partnership with the Research Centre for Gender Equality (KETHI) in Athens entitled *Prevention and Support Activities for Victims of Trafficking* funded by Hellenic Aid. In September 2006 IOM conducted three sessions of trainings for media professionals from Tirana and other Albanian regions on ethical standards in reporting trafficking cases.

Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE)

Protection of the human rights of victims of trafficking as well as support to state and non-state actors to increase their efficacy in the fight against trafficking in human beings remained two of the priorities of the OSCE presence in Albania. To improve the protection of victims of trafficking, the Presence supported the Government's

efforts to draft the standards of social protection for victims of trafficking, to be followed by the publication and dissemination of the standards. The OSCE is supporting the office of the National Anti-trafficking Coordinator to establish a database in order to improve data collection and reporting on trafficking cases. The Presence supported the BKTF Coalition (*Bashke Kunder Trafikimit te Femijeve / All Together Against Child Trafficking*) to conduct an awareness raising campaign against the exploitation of children for begging. As part of the ODIHR/OCEEA Women's Economic Empowerment project, the Presence supported the establishment of a drop in centre in the city of Vlora, which provides rights information and assistance to victims of trafficking and at risk groups. The Presence also supports the Vatra Psycho-social Center shelter in Vlora and other local NGO's, in order to enhance legal assistance for victims of trafficking and at risk groups.

In order to enhance reintegration and social inclusion for victims of trafficking, the Presence trained 15 girls and women victims of trafficking on micro-enterprise development and disbursed micro-credits, initially for three of them. To promote economic empowerment of vulnerable groups, the Presence conducted an Assessment of the Labor Market in three Northern Regions of Albania. Through its project *Public-Private Cooperation in the Prevention of Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation of Minors in Travel and Tourism Industry*, the Presence signed a joint Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Tourism, Culture, Youth and Sports and the Ministry of Interior to promote a *Code of Conduct for Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Tourism*. A series of training courses for business representatives operating in the tourism sector and local anti-trafficking offices, as well as a regional event with key stakeholders for the implementation of the Code were organized. The Presence lobbied for the inclusion of the Global Code of Ethics, part of which is the Code of Conduct, in the Standards and Criteria for Licensing of the Operators in the Tourism Sector, as approved by the Council of Ministers on 13 September 2007.

The Police Assistance Mission of the European Community to Albania (PAMECA)

This European Commission Mission is funded through the CARDS mechanism and managed by the German Federal Ministry of Interior. It has been working in Albania with its current structure since 2004, though the EU has had a police assistance presence in Albania since 1997. PAMECA's activities to assist in the reduction of human trafficking are mainly in the area of Border Management (Training of Border Police in risk analysis and detection of fake or fraudulent documents, Provision of Equipment, Implementation of Integrated Border Management) and Crime Investigation (Practical Guidance, Development of Criminal Intelligence Systems & Witness Protection). In addition a major priority of PAMECA is to enable the Albanian State Police to manage its resources more effectively (Human, Financial and Material) through a series of projects, notably a key Resource Management IT System (RMIS). This is an often overlooked area but is vital. If internal police management is not suited to modern working practices and unable to serve the key functions of the police then this considerably reduces the efficacy of investigations.

United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF)

UNICEF's anti-trafficking efforts in Albania focus on supporting Government and civil society partners to strengthen protection mechanisms for trafficked children and children at-risk, which contributes to strengthening the national child protection system in Albania. UNICEF advised MOLSAEO in drafting of the Revised Strategy on State Social Services. It has assisted the National Reception Centre for Victims of Trafficking to strengthen its child protection components through the development of standards and protocols of care, ensuring a child-safe environment, and building staff capacity in child-centered approaches to care. In addition UNICEF continues to support the Municipal Child Protection Units piloting in Kukes, Elbasan, Korça, Pogradeci, Fieri and Gjirokastra, in which municipal structures work to coordinate local-level response to and case management of children at risk and trafficked.

World Bank

The World Bank, in cooperation with IOM and *Different & Equal*, is implementing the project *Empowering Youth at Risk: Development of a Youth Driven Counter-Trafficking Campaign in Albania*. The objectives of this project are to step up prevention efforts and to address the needs of vulnerable youth in Albania by equipping them with relevant skills and knowledge and allowing them to develop, design and present their own counter-trafficking campaign.

b) Donor Governments

The Austrian Government

The Austrian Development Cooperation (ADC) is currently supporting several projects in Albania related to anti-trafficking. *Cooperation of Police to Combat Trafficking and Smuggling of Human Beings, and Illegal Migration* is a three-year program (December 2005-December 2008) to train top management and specialised experts in the sectors of Organized Crime and Border and Migration. A key purpose of the program is to support integration between Austria and the countries of South Eastern Europe as candidates for EU admission. Key objectives of the project include reduction of the number of illegal migrants in Austria, reinforcement of the 'security belt' around the European Union and Austria, likewise the strengthening of the law enforcement authorities in Southeast-Europe and enhancement of cooperation with them. Since January 2007 ADC has been funding the UNICEF project *Not For Sale: Fighting Trafficking of Women and Girls in Albania Initiative against Trafficking in Human Beings with a Focus on Women and Girls in South Eastern Europe*. This project aims to protect the rights of trafficked women and girls and those at risk and to ensure that they have access to a range of appropriate and quality prevention and protection services in Albania. The ADC is also co-funding the Terre des hommes "TACT III" project.

The Government of Greece

Hellenic AID is one of the donors to *Terre des hommes* for the third phase of the project Transnational Action Against Child Trafficking (TACT III) that is implemented in 15 districts in Albania and includes coordinated transnational activities against trafficking in children (prevention, protection, repatriation, reintegration, coordination). Hellenic AID has been supporting the operation of the ARSIS Office in Tirana for the implementation of additional anti-trafficking activities such as the summer activities for street children conducted in the Rinia Park of Tirana, street-work activities of ARSIS and Terre des hommes in Tirana and psychosocial assistance to the detected children on national and transnational (Albania-Greece) level.

The Italian Government

The Italian Development Cooperation has been supporting several programs in Albania, aimed at assisting civil society, mainly focusing on minors and minorities at risks of trafficking, smuggling, and irregular migration. All the projects have been undertaken in partnership with local authorities and civil society organizations. Related funds have been allocated to Italian NGOs or Italian local authorities and international organizations promoting the initiatives and responsible for the implementation of the envisaged activities. Three projects have been implemented in Tirana and Duresh aiming to prevent school abandonment and foster education for vulnerable girls and minors. Among other activities it is providing institutional and capacity building support to local authorities, in order to assist in the elaboration and implementation of social policies and activities aimed at improving living conditions of marginal groups and people at risks. In addition, the Italian government is providing equipment and training to Custom and Border Police.

The Government of the Netherlands

Through September 2006, the Embassy of Netherlands in Albania funded the IOM-Albania project entitled *Expanding and consolidating reintegration assistance to former Albanian victims of trafficking*. The aim of the project was to provide training and capacity building to the staff of the NRC and support to *Different and Equal* for assistance and reintegration services as well as the long-term follow-up of former victims of trafficking.

The Government of Sweden

Since January 2007 the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) has been supporting IOM-Albania anti-trafficking projects through a regional grant to IOM-Geneva for the implementation of the *IOM Regional Counter-trafficking Project Europe*. It is currently funding Save the Children Norway for its *Regional Trafficking Response Program, Southeast Europe*, in which Albania is one of the participating countries. During this time SIDA has continued its support to the *MTV Anti-trafficking in Persons Pan-European Campaign*, implemented by MTV Networks Europe that has produced anti-trafficking information as TV spots, features, campaigns and offered to broadcasters worldwide, free of charge and rights-free, *Inhuman Traffic*, a 30-minute documentary designed to highlight the critical human rights issue of people trafficking across Europe, particularly the trafficking of women for sexual exploitation.

The Government of Switzerland

The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) has been supporting a number of activities and initiatives in Albania to improve social justice. Since 1998, SDC has financed the Albanian NGO *Help for Children* (NPF) to implement a development project entitled *Classes for Alternate Education and Vocational Training* in the cities of Korça, Elbasan, Berat, and Tirana. It aims to reintegrate street children between 12 and 18 years old, especially those coming from the Roma and Egyptian communities, into schools, to reduce risk of child delinquency and prostitution, and to prevent them from being trafficked. SDC has supported the Ministry of Interior to raise awareness on the use of the toll-free help line, contributing thus to prevention of trafficking and domestic violence. Currently SDC is co-financing with the CAAHT program a transit shelter for victims of trafficking managed by the *Gjirokastra Community Center*.

The Government of the United Kingdom

The British Embassy in Tirana, through a UK Government centrally administered funding program, is financing the IOM project entitled *Promoting Safe Migration and Preventing Human Trafficking* from February 2006 to January 2007. This project is part of a broad program of assistance and technical co-operation between the UK and Albania helping the Albanian authorities to tackle organized crime, and human trafficking in particular. This program included an Embassy-sponsored visit by a delegation from the National Anti-Trafficking Unit within the Ministry of the Interior to the UK to study UK best practices and exchange ideas with British counterparts in this area.

The Government of the United States of America

The US Government has been a major contributor to overall anti-trafficking efforts in Albania through the Department of State, USAID, the Department of Justice (through ICITAP and OPDAT), and the Department of Labor. The US Embassy has a political officer assigned to monitor human trafficking issues and to cooperate with the Government of Albania on issues of mutual concern. The Embassy-run Democracy and Governance grants program provides support for initiatives of local NGOs in their efforts to advance democratic development, fight trafficking, and promote women's empowerment. Through the U.S. Department of Labor (USDOL), the US government is also supporting a three-year, 3.5 million US Dollar (USD) ILO-IPEC regional project to combat the trafficking of children for labor and sexual exploitation. This project was renewed in September 2006 for another three years. The project is being

implemented by ILO-IPEC and works in partnership with the Government of Albania and local organizations. Project activities include distributing educational materials and training teachers in 12 regions and youth representatives to use the materials in local communities to raise awareness on combating child labor.

United States Agency for International Development (USAID)

USAID/Albania supports a broad range of anti-trafficking efforts in Albania that focus on prevention and protection. Currently USAID funds two major anti-trafficking initiatives - *The Albanian Initiative: Coordinated Action Against Human Trafficking* (CAAHT) and *Transnational Action against Child Trafficking* (TACT) project (See page 23 for further information about the TACT project). Both of these activities began in 2003, and were renewed for an additional three years in 2006. CAAHT and TACT share similar components of prevention, reintegration and coordination, and are focused on addressing the issue of trafficking from a victim's and/or child's rights perspective. Both projects are further illustrated in the course of this report. In late 2006 USAID/Washington began a regional project entitled *Transnational Referral Mechanisms* that supports the establishment of comprehensive, effective, and institutionalized transnational referral mechanisms for the protection of victims of trafficking in South Eastern Europe, including Albania. The project, which is being implemented by the International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), maintains a country liaison in Albania who consults with government and civil society actors in developing the referral mechanism guidelines.

International Criminal Investigative Training Assistance Program (ICITAP)

ICITAP supports the professional development of the Albanian National Police. Current support includes development assistance in the areas of integrated border management, combating organized crime, reforming the police academy and training, developing merit-based personnel management, and installing and implementing a complete law enforcement information management system. Specifically with anti-trafficking, ICITAP has supported the establishment, equipping and staffing of the joint Responsible Authority (RA) within the Ministry of Interior (MOI). At the local level, ICITAP has supported the formation of Regional Anti-trafficking Committees of local government officials, police, social services, and NGOs to work with the RA at the prefecture level on victim assistance and follow-up. ICITAP has accomplished the above through the deployment of a full-time advisor based in the National Coordinator's office. In July 2007, partly as a cost saving measure and as a way to consolidate strategic policy development and implementation at border crossing points, ICITAP merged anti-trafficking and border management responsibilities into a single advisory position, the Integrated Border Management (IBM) Advisor.

Office of Overseas Prosecutorial Development, Assistance and Training (OPDAT)

In the last two years, OPDAT has organized and conducted a series of trainings for prosecutors and judges throughout the country, on issues including witness protection, organized crime, and investigative means. OPDAT works particularly closely with prosecutors in the Serious Crimes Prosecution Office, with an emphasis on these same issues. The OPDAT resident legal advisor chairs the Legal Reform Working Group of the International Consortium, participates in the Witness Protection Working Group, and has provided assistance in the drafting of important pieces of legislation. OPDAT has also sponsored the attendance of the staff of the Witness Protection Unit at several training conferences, enhancing the capacity of the Unit and enabling necessary contacts to establish regional witness protection agreements. OPDAT, working in cooperation with the SECI center and the FBI, is in the process of donating videoconferencing equipment to the Serious Crimes Court, the prosecutor's office, and the police in order to enable witness testimony from remote locations with identity disguised.

Chapter 3

The Albanian Initiative: Coordinated Action Against Human Trafficking (CAAHT)

The Albanian Initiative: Coordinated Action Against Human Trafficking (CAAHT) began in October 2003 as a three year program implemented by Creative Associates International, Inc. for USAID-Albania to support Albanian civil society and government efforts to reduce the number of trafficked persons in Albania and increase the number of victims successfully reintegrated into their communities. Accomplishing these objectives involves increasing the capacity of local groups to combat the incidence and effects of trafficking, while facilitating increased collaboration among the NGO, donor and government communities. Building on its initial USD 4.48 million investment, in August 2006 USAID awarded an additional USD 3 million contract modification extending this program to September 30, 2009. The objective of the Initiative is to strengthen the ability of Albanian community leaders, NGOs and Government of Albania entities (national, regional and local) to improve programs that deter trafficking in human beings, and services which assist and reintegrate the victims and reduce re-trafficking.

In the first phase of the program, CAAHT grant fund provided over USD 2 million supporting 23 grant projects implemented by 19 national NGOs and two international NGOs between March 2005 and July 2006. An additional USD 700,000 has been added to the fund to support NGO programs during 2007 to 2009. Over the past year, the CAAHT program has committed a total of USD 407,120 (36,640,857 Lek) in grant awards to 13 Albanian NGOs to support local anti-trafficking efforts. Between April 2007 and August 2008, these USAID funds will be supporting a wide variety of anti-trafficking initiatives in local communities of 11 of the 12 *qarqe* of Albania. Activities span awareness raising programs, prevention services for women and children vulnerable to trafficking, assistance, and reintegration services for children and women who are victims of the crime of trafficking, as well as training of trainers and other capacity building efforts to improve local efforts contributing to the national effort to fight trafficking in human beings. More information about each of these projects may be found in the next section of this report.

These CAAHT grants build on the experience and knowledge of NGOs that have been active partners as grant program implementation and in CAAHT coordination forums such as Regional Cluster Groups, Annual Conferences and technical working groups. Over the last year, representatives of these NGOs have met together several times to consult each other about the development of their projects and to identify ways in which their programs can cooperate to maximize the use of grant resources and improve the quality of all of their anti-trafficking efforts. The CAAHT will continue to facilitate such technical discussions and collaboration throughout the life of the CAAHT grant program.

In mid 2006 as the program was moving into its extension phase, the CAAHT commissioned two evaluations to assess the impact of the anti-trafficking awareness raising activities it has funded and of its coordination strategies on desired project outcomes. Several anti-trafficking awareness raising campaigns have been conducted in Albania by a variety of actors. However, in discussions with organizations such as the IOM and OSCE, the CAAHT program learned that no systematic impact assessments of these activities have been conducted. The CAAHT program established two indicators by which to measure the impact of the awareness raising activities conducted by its grantee organizations. One is the level of retention of anti-trafficking messages by participants in awareness raising activities. The second is what actions they took because they gained this new knowledge. The Institute for Development Research and Alternatives (IDRA) in Tirana was contracted to conduct a survey of over 3,500 children and adults who participated in CAAHT-supported awareness raising activities across the country.

The results of the survey were published in a report entitled *Impact Assessment of Activities to Prevent Trafficking in Persons Conducted by NGOs funded by the USAID/CAAHT Program*. The results of this survey show

- 84% of respondents reported that the activity *addressed* a specific message to them.
- 100% of respondents recalled *at least one* anti-trafficking message delivered in the activity.
- 26% of the respondents had taken at least one action after participating in the activity; most of these *had undertaken a minor activity* such as talking to friends, colleagues, or relatives about the activity. However,
- 21 participants of those who had taken an action, *had identified a case at risk of being trafficked* and had offered their help.

The report provides descriptions of the particular campaign techniques used by each of the 15 grantee organizations, offering models of good practices for future awareness raising campaigns. The full report may be requested from the CAAHT office or downloaded from the CAAHT web site in PDF format at [www.caaht.com/CAAHT project activities/CAAHT reports](http://www.caaht.com/CAAHT_project_activities/CAAHT_reports).

The report entitled *A Mid-term Assessment of the Coordination Component of the CAAHT Program* assesses the impact of coordination as a core strategy of the CAAHT program on grantees, beneficiaries and other key stakeholders who have participated in the Albanian Initiative. Evaluation findings confirmed that CAAHT has had tangible and significant impact on its stakeholders through collaboration and coordination. Due in large part to CAAHT's activities, NGOs are beginning to move away from a competitive mindset in which coordination was not particularly valued to a more collaborative approach. Not only do meetings, conferences and trainings bring various actors together, but the exchange of information and the networking that are created at such events serve in turn to increase the organizational capacities of the individual players. The report provides an overview of the CAAHT program and a detailed description of the qualitative findings regarding the ways in which CAAHT has made a difference in stakeholders' use of the coordinated approach. The full report may be requested from the CAAHT office or downloaded from the CAAHT web site in PDF format at [www.caaht.com/CAAHT project activities/CAAHT reports](http://www.caaht.com/CAAHT_project_activities/CAAHT_reports).

The 2006 CAAHT Annual Conference was convened 16 and 17 November 2006 at the Sheraton Hotel in Tirana. Over 130 program stakeholders gathered for two days of model sharing and discussions among government and civil society leaders, especially those involved with the newly formed *Regional Committees in the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings*. This second annual conference maximized sharing of information and good practices between government and civil society as well as across geographic and administrative divisions of the country. Presentations on their anti-trafficking work were made by 17 local and central government officials and 17 Albanian NGO representatives. Participants asserted that they valued the conference most for the opportunities it provided them to learn more about a) good practices, b) specific new anti-trafficking program ideas, c) the NGO community, and d) collaboration between government and civil society. The conference methodology itself was highlighted as one of the most important aspects of the meeting.

As the CAAHT program undertook its planning for the three year contract modification period, a key question is: "how can the CAAHT continue to support the development of the Regional Committees in the Fight Against Trafficking in Human Beings?" In December 2006, the CAAHT program disseminated a needs assessment questionnaire to all the members of the 12 *qark*-level Regional Committees as well as to the CAAHT NGO partners. The purpose of the questionnaire was to identify what types of technical assistance and support the CAAHT program could provide to the Regional Anti-trafficking Committees and Technical Working Tables to assist them to improve the quality, depth, and breadth of anti-trafficking

work in Albania. Responses to the questionnaire revealed that the members of these committees and technical working tables are finding it difficult to identify and conduct specific activities, due to the broad and non-specific roles and responsibilities asserted in the Administrative Order from the Prime Minister. Therefore, the CAAHT program drawing upon its expertise and work with its governmental and civil society partners over the past three years, developed a report with key findings from responses to the questionnaire and with the ideas and recommendations for concrete programming and activities that would assist Regional Committees and their Technical Working Tables in elaborating more precisely their individualized plans of action and programs that will most effectively address the phenomenon of trafficking as it manifests in their own *Qark* area. The full report is attached in Annex I.

In May 2006, the CAAHT program first convened the directors and staff of the five residential service provider signatory organizations to the National Referral Mechanism.⁹ Through a series of eight meetings convened under the auspices of the CAAHT program, these organizations have developed a commitment to join together as a coalition of anti-trafficking service providers. In July 2007, the directors of these organizations signed a Memorandum of Understanding to establish *Interactive Shelter Coalition to Support and Protect the Victims of Trafficking in Albania*. Its members moved towards this coordinated approach in response to their increasing concerns about issues such as improving services offered to victims of trafficking through coordination and collaboration amongst shelters and other partners, the dramatic decline in the number of cases referred by police, and for the purposes of lobbying as a coalition to the responsible state structures and to other stakeholders. The coalition is working on a joint plan of actions. Its presidency will be shared by the members of the coalition on a rotational basis.

⁹ These are five governmental and NGO residential service providers are: the National Reception Center for Victims of Trafficking (MOLSAEO); Different and Equal; Vatra Psycho-social Center; Another Vision (Elbasan); and the *Life and Hope* transit shelter managed by the Gjirokastra Community Center.

Chapter 4

Recent and current anti-trafficking activities conducted by civil society in Albania

Civil society organizations (NGOs) in Albania play a leading role in implementing practical initiatives to combat human trafficking and to provide support to victims of trafficking. In many cases their services are the practical implementation/realization of the policies and programs asserted as program objectives in the NAP and other government anti-trafficking strategies. While in some areas, this demonstrates a good partnership between government and civil society, assessment and strategic planning processes should investigate what areas of anti-trafficking remain overly dependent on civil society initiatives, making up for lack of capacity or commitment on the government side to deliver appropriate services to vulnerable communities and/or individuals.

The following is a summary of some of the most important national and international NGO activities related to anti-trafficking awareness raising, prevention services and assistance/reintegration of victims of trafficking.

a) NGOs currently supported by CAAHT grant funds

Beginning in April 2007, the CAAHT Grant program began its fourth phase of grants, supporting thirteen Albanian NGOs conducting a variety of activities for anti-trafficking awareness raising, prevention services to reduce vulnerability of women and children to the threat of being trafficked, assistance and reintegration services to restore the lives of those who are victims of the crimes of trafficking, and capacity building for local government partners. Eleven of these ¹⁰13 organizations were funded under the third phase of the CAAHT grant program¹¹, which ended in July 2006. During the interim period between the third and fourth phases of the CAAHT grant fund (August 2006 to March 2007) several of the previous CAAHT funded NGOs continued to conduct anti-trafficking related activities with support from other donors or intergovernmental organization.

Another Vision

Another Vision provides recovery services and activities for social integration of minors who have been trafficked or are at-risk. From August 2006 to July 2007 the organization served 37 at-risk and trafficking children through prevention assistance, residential services, educational assistance and vocational training. Another Vision implements its services working with children's families and with the governmental social services structures in the *qark* of Elbasan. The organization also is working to improve coordination for joint anti-trafficking actions, especially at the local level, to increase social support for trafficking victims. Another vision is being supported by phase four CAAHT grant funds for the period of 1 May 2007 to 30 April 2008

¹⁰ Two organizations that do not have substantial prior experience in anti-trafficking work have been awarded CAAHT grant funds in phase four, but will not begin their projects until September 2007, so are not described in this report. They are *Agritra Vision* in Peshkopi and *Women with a Development Focus* in Kucove.

¹¹ More information about the CAAHT grants program and the grants awarded can be found on the CAAHT web site at www.caaht.com/grants.htm.

Community Center of Gjirokastra

Through funding provided by the CAAHT program in the Community Center opened the *Life and Hope* transit shelter in October 2005. The shelter provides initial support services to suspected victims of trafficking primarily identified at the Kakavija and Tre Urat border crossing points. When the initial CAAHT fund was completed in July 2006, the shelter was funded through support from the governments of Norway and Canada through November 2007. Afterwards, due to lack of funding Community Center of Gjirokastra suspended its sheltering activity until it secured new funding in July 2007 from the CAAHT program and the Swiss Development Corporation. This program is being implemented in close cooperation with local police and other government offices as well as other shelter and social service agencies, governmental and non-governmental, throughout Albania.

Different and Equal

D&E provides standardized and sustained shelter and reintegration services to Albanian victims of trafficking, and contributes to the full implementation of the National Strategy on Trafficking in Albania. Between August 2006 and July 2007, D&E provided a total of 65 women and girls and 21 children with assistance and reintegration services. These services include accommodation, medical assistance, psychological and legal counseling, vocational training, job placement, education, etc. D&E is being supported by phase four CAAHT grant funds for the period of April 2007 to March 2008.

In Help of Urban and Rural Women, Berat,

In July 2007, In Help of Urban and Rural Women started up its new CAAHT-funded activity. The project builds on the success of a project that was supported with CAAHT funding in 2005 and 2006 to conduct community and school-based awareness-raising activities and vocational training to vulnerable women and young girls in Berati, Kuçove and nearby communes. This project will continue and expand these activities, especially linking awareness raising for girls and women with vocational training and job placements. The organization continues to cooperate with the Regional Anti-trafficking Committee to strengthen the communication among governmental structures, community, civil society and business to promote sustainable, community-based awareness and prevention programming to reduce the vulnerability of women and girls with high risk of trafficking in the prefecture of Berati.

Institute of Gender Applied Policies (IGAP)

With new funding from CAAHT, IGAP is replicating in Milot and Fushe-Kruje the activities it developed under previous CAAHT fund to educate at-risk girls and young women in the rural areas about how to protect themselves from trafficking and sexual exploitation. Project activities include house-to-house information campaigns, school-based awareness campaigns, and development of local anti-trafficking networks to help sustain and expand community capacities to combat trafficking of women and children.

Intellectual Women of Pogradeci (IWP)

IWP continued to provide assistance to vulnerable children in the municipality and surrounding communes of Pogradeci after completion of its CAAHT-funded project in 2006. Through house-to-house visits, the organizations continued its efforts to support and follow-up individual children and monitor their school performance. In cooperation with the Child Protection Unit in the municipality of Pogradeci and *Mothers of Orphan Children* organization, IWP conducted a survey to assess the impact of its previous CAAHT-funded project and to identify problems and needs in other areas of Pogradeci. The findings from this survey were used to develop a new CAAHT-funded project, which puts special emphasis on assisting street children,

through educational and entertaining activities that help improve their behavior and their attitude towards themselves, their classmates, their family members, and school. The organization is collaborating with the Child Protection Unit of the municipality of Pogradec for the implementation of its project activities.

Murialdo Social Center (MSC)

MSC provides vocational training for minors especially vulnerable to trafficking. Through street and family outreach, the organization staff identify minors who may be especially vulnerable to trafficking because they live in difficult economic conditions and under social marginalization, particularly minors from the Roma community. The activities of Murialdo during the reporting period have primarily focused on providing individual counseling support and participation in school or vocational training, illiteracy courses and awareness raising activities. MSC's new CAAHT funded project begins 1 August 2007.

Vatra Psycho-social Center

The Vatra Psycho-social Center provides accommodation and support to at-risk, vulnerable clandestine, and trafficked women and girls for average periods of six months to one and a half years. The shelter offers a safe and friendly surrounding for beneficiaries and enables them to recover from their traumas and restore themselves to normal life. Between August 2006 and July 2007, Vatra provided 75 beneficiaries with accommodation, vocational training, medical and psychological counseling, legal assistance, vocational training, job placement and education. Vatra is being supported by phase four CAAHT grant funds for the period of May 2007 to March 2008.

Women in Development (WID) - Shkodra

After completion of its first CAAHT funded project in July 2006, WID cooperated with the Social Services in the municipality of Shkodra to implement a World Bank-funded project "Social Services to women and Children in need" which provided social services for vulnerable women & children, including psychosocial, juridical, and medical assistance and also informative sessions on topics related to domestic violence, illegal migration, trafficking, etc. . WID's new CAAHT funded project begins 1 August 2007.

Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA)

The YWCA-Albania has implemented a project under European Commission, which contributed at improving the conditions of human rights of one of the most vulnerable and marginalized communities in Albania – Roma and Egyptian communities. It consisted in working with minority communities as well as educating the so-called the majority and change their perceptions and views about disadvantaged minorities and other ethnic groups, creating an inclusive society. The major components of this project were the establishment of children's clubs. Between July 2006 to June 2007, YWCA organized two professional training courses (childcare providers and janitors) with victims of trafficking girls at the *Different and Equal* shelter. With new CAAHT funding beginning July 2007, the YWCA will continue the anti-trafficking education work with women, children, and men from Roma and Balkan-Egyptian communities in Tirana. Anti-trafficking awareness-raising activities and vocational training for women, children and adolescents will be provided to increase knowledge about trafficking and reduce their vulnerability by improving their economic status.

b) Other national NGO and Coalitions

Center of Integrated Legal Service and Practices

During 2006 and 2007, the Center (formerly entitled the Legal Clinic for Minors) continued to provide psychological and legal assistance to minors, including children who have been victims of trafficking or are "at risk". The Center cooperates with the National Reception Center for Victims of Trafficking, the "Don Bosko" organization, police commissariats, prosecutor's office, and courts. It is also a member of BKTF.

Children's Human Rights Center of Albania (CRCA)

Since 2005, the CRCA has focused its work on combating child labor and child trafficking through lobbying and advocacy, capacity building and awareness. In April 2007 the CRCA and a group of members of parliament presented to the Albanian Parliament amendments to the Criminal Code aiming to criminalize the sale of children, child pornography on the internet and protection of children from abuse. The amendments are awaiting approval of the Parliamentary commissions before being approved formally.

Counseling Center for Women and Girls

The main office of the Center is located in Tirana, with branches in Shkodra, Pogradec, and Berat. These offices offer vulnerable women with psychological and social counseling and family mediation. Key activities of the organization's work include: a) on-the-phone, individual face-to-face, and group counseling, as well as psychological, social and health support to victims of violence against women and trafficking; b) awareness raising activities targeting potential victims of women trafficking and the public at large and c) advocacy efforts for the advancement of women's rights in Albania

Help for Children (NPF)

NPF works 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 also works to prevent forced labor of children. Approximately 80% of NPF beneficiaries belong to Roma and Egyptian Communities. They are placed in special integrated classes where they learn the school curricula. Based on their performance, they are then integrated in the normal education system or go to vocational training courses.

Human Dimension

Human Dimension in Shkodra has conducted various activities related to prevention of human trafficking, awareness raising, psychosocial support to victims of trafficking and domestic violence. Currently, this organization is starting to implement a project funded by the Norwegian Government. Under this project, Human Dimension will conduct awareness raising activities, recovery activities for victims of trafficking, as well as vocational training.

Korça Women

During 2007, this organization cooperated with the anti-trafficking police office in Korça to assist five Roma girls who had been trafficked. It cooperated with the Regional Employment Office to find employment for them.

Victims of Mines and Weapons (VMA) Kukes)

Thanks to funding from UNICEF, VMA provided training in June 2006 to the staff of the Child Protection Unit in the municipality of Kukes, social administrators and staff of local NGOs. The focus of this training was identification and referral of children who have undergone different forms of abuse or are at risk of trafficking. VMA continues to provide support to the Regional Anti-trafficking Committee and has organized a few informative sessions on anti-trafficking with students of the high school in the municipality of Kukes.

Several NGOs have been listed in this section in previous years, and were invited to send updated information for this year's report. No information was provided and therefore no updated information is provided concerning their activities. Please see the previous annual reports issued by CAAHT for further information about these organizations. They include: *BKTF* (All Together Against Child Trafficking), the *Citizens' Advocacy Office* (CAO), *Council of Social Services Associations* (CSSA), *International Social Service - Albania* (ISS) and *Refleksione*. CAAHT welcomes new partners in anti-trafficking work.

If your organization is implementing anti-trafficking programming in Albania and is not listed in this section, please contact the CAAHT office to introduce your organization and program to us.

c) International NGOs

ARSIS

ARSIS began operating in Tirana in November 2005 within the framework of *Nathalie – A project for the Support of Unaccompanied Children Victims of Trafficking and Exploitation*, financed by Hellenic Aid. Since June 2006 ARSIS' structure in Tirana falls under the TACT project (see below), while its activities continue to be financed by Hellenic Aid. The main objective of the structure has been the establishment of a transnational network between Greece and Albania to protect children's rights and facilitate procedures for the best interest of the children. The target group of ARSIS' intervention in Tirana is street children who are victims of trafficking and exploitation, and their families. ARSIS is also supported by World Learning – USAID and European Commission Delegation in Albania; both agencies finance ARSIS for micro – projects implemented within schools, at public locations and on the premises of the organization.

Save the Children (SC)

Save the Children - Albania activities against child trafficking in Albania are carried out in the wider context of a joint program of *Save the Children* Norway, UK, US, Italy and Sweden. The project is managed by SC Albania and works with and through partners and implemented field programs providing training or education on child rights. Building on its first Regional Child Trafficking Response Program begun in 2002, Save the Children began a second phase of the regional project in 2005 involving a combination of research, direct interventions, capacity building, coordination, and advocacy in Albania, Kosovo, Montenegro, Serbia and Romania, Bosnia Herzegovina and Bulgaria. The second phase work in Albania is designed to prevent trafficking of children and advocate for positive changes in policies and actions of key anti-trafficking actors. It is being carried out in cooperation with municipalities of Cerrik and Kuçova and the Tirana based NGO *Children of the World and of Albania*. The major activities include: support for two youth – run centers in Cerrik (Elbasan) and Kuçova and a socio-educative centre for reintegration, in Kinostudio/Tirana. Additional work was initiated in 2007 to establish a Child Protection Unit (CPU) in Kuçova in partnership with the Municipality. This is part of a joint effort of *Save the Children* and *Terres des Hommes* to establish CPUs in several regions as a pilot project. Other activities include research on risk/resiliency factors for child trafficking, which was completed in June 2007. The research report will be published and disseminated in September 2007. Save the Children also continues its advocacy work through participation in the BKTF coalition.

Terre des Hommes Mission in Albania (Tdh)

In cooperation with Arsis, Tdh is implementing phase III of the project *Transnational Action Against Child Trafficking* (TACT), a comprehensive and coordinated project designed to fight trafficking of Albanian children to Greece. This bilateral initiative, funded by several donors, is being implemented in cooperation with BKTF members and other partner NGOs and public stakeholders. The project, which is co-funded by USAID through 2009, has entered its third phase (2006 - 2009). The TACT project is developed within Albania through three axes of intervention, i.e. prevention, protection, coordination, and advocacy. The project aims to build up local capacities and create sustainable child protection mechanisms within municipalities, schools, and communities. Besides working to create a sustainable safety net for children, the TACT project advocates at all levels for child rights and changes in laws and policies. Moreover, TACT still ensures direct assistance and protection to victims, families, and witnesses in Albania and Greece, in conformity with the local legislation.

ANNEX I

The Albanian Initiative:



Nisma Shqiptare:



Report on the Findings from the CAAHT Technical Assistance Needs Assessment for Regional Committees in the Fight Against Trafficking

Introduction

A core component of the CAAHT program is its effort to encourage extensive and sustainable coordination of NGO activities with those of local government. Consistent with this intent, since 2004 the CAAHT program has convened key local government and NGO actors in Regional Cluster Groups. Participants in these forums have repeatedly emphasized the importance of establishing coordination bodies at the *qark* level that would bring together the same (and greater) mix of government authorities and civil society agencies to enable practical program decisions and cooperation at the *qark*, municipality, and commune levels. Based on this consultative process, earlier in 2006, the CAAHT program advised the new government that regional committees were needed to combat more effectively trafficking in humans in Albania. CAAHT produced an advisory paper with information and recommendations about the purpose and structure of these regional anti-trafficking committees, which were reflected in the Prime Minister order, No. 139, dated, 19.06.2006 for the establishment of the Regional Anti-trafficking Committees.

In July 2006, CAAHT staff provided technical and financial assistance to the office of the National Coordinator, to prepare and conduct three Regional Orientation Workshops for prefects and the members of their committees to orient them to their roles and responsibilities and assist them in beginning to organize their work together.

Purpose for the Report

USAID has tasked the CAAHT program over the coming three years to continue our efforts to assist government structures in their critical role as key partners in the fight against trafficking. This includes providing technical assistance to increase the capacity of local anti-trafficking structures and support the implementation of the Regional Anti-trafficking Committees.

To that purpose, CAAHT developed a Needs Assessment Questionnaire aiming to identify what types of technical assistance and support the CAAHT program could provide to the Regional Anti-trafficking Committees and Technical Working Tables to assist them to improve the quality, depth, and breadth of anti-trafficking work in Albania. The responses provided to the questionnaires revealed that the members of the Regional Committees and Technical Working Tables have only general impressions about the ways in which they can meet the responsibilities designated in the Administrative Order. Therefore, in this report the CAAHT program has also drawn upon the work with its governmental and civil society partners over the past three years to describe specific types of activities that Regional Anti-trafficking Committees could undertake in order to meet their responsibilities.

Methodology

The CAAHT program distributed a six-page questionnaire to 152 CAAHT governmental and non-governmental partners on December 5, 2006. Fifty-two responses were sent back to CAAHT office, including representatives from Technical Secretariats, Employment Offices, Education Offices, Social Services, and Anti-trafficking Police, Prosecutor's Office and non-governmental organizations. Interviewees were selected based on participation in the Regional Orientations Workshops, CAAHT Annual Conferences, and other coordination activities.

The questionnaires were designed to collect information on the work of the Regional Anti-trafficking Committees in the following areas:

- mapping the trafficking situation in the qark;
- community awareness raising about trafficking in human beings;
- identification of vulnerable individuals, families and groups, and programs to reduce their vulnerability;
- assistance and reintegration of children and women who have become victims of trafficking; and
- monitoring and supporting investigation and prosecution of traffickers.

In addition to Needs Assessment Questionnaires, the CAAHT program organized a Focus Groups meeting, with the assistance of two key experts from Encompass - a Washington D.C. based consulting company - comprising a sample group of members of Regional Anti-trafficking Committees. The purpose of this meeting was to assist the CAAHT program in furthering the needs assessment process and to explore together how the CAAHT program can assist Regional Committees to fulfill more effectively their roles and responsibilities. The eleven participants were selected based on the qualitative and quantitative level of their responses, diversity of representation, and geographical distribution. Meeting participants included nine members of the Regional Committees, which included representatives from Technical Secretariats Anti-Trafficking Police, and the Departments of Education, Regional Social Services, and Health, as well as a municipality Child Protection Unit, two NPOs¹, and two members from the National Coordinator's Office and six CAAHT staff members. Participants were guide through a process of generating ideas and suggestion in areas related to their anti-trafficking work as members of the newly established committees: a) identification of the most important actions for the committees; b) what is their vision of the greatest contribution of the Regional AT Committees in five years, and c) identification of the needs for capacity building and training.

Overview of findings

While the administrative order of the Prime Minister provides the general layout under which the Regional Committees shall operate, the responses to the Needs Assessment Questionnaires demonstrate that it is not clear yet to Committee members how to accomplish their responsibilities. In 45% of returned questionnaires, governmental respondents for the most part replied to each open-ended question with only one or two sentences, generally asserting that his or her Committee is achieving the purpose for which it was created. The very fact that 42 governmental Committee members make the effort to respond signals their good intentions, but reveals that they have limited ideas about what they can actually do and achieve. On the other hand, the non-governmental organizations generally responded at more length and in more depth to the questions, expressing more

¹ NPO is the acronym for Not for Profit Organization. This is the Albanian legal term for what is commonly known internationally as NGO – non-governmental organization.

precise expectations and visions for what the Committees can and should do. In particular, they call for a more operational role for the Committees and claim that Regional Anti-trafficking Committees and Technical Working Tables are not making full use of their knowledge and expertise.

The responses show, and the Office of the National Anti-trafficking Coordinator (ONC) confirms, that the Regional Anti-trafficking Committees and Technical Working Tables are constituted in all 12 *qarqe*. The Committees have produced their first reports for the ONC. But these reports do not represent a comprehensive analysis of the trafficking situation; rather they comprise mainly information that is collected by the various departments/ministries represented on the Committee for the purposes of their own Ministries. There is little demonstration of use of this data to analyze the local conditions of trafficking in human beings nor recognition that other data may also be needed for this purpose.

Some respondents from government institutions do report specifically on anti-trafficking work conducted within the framework of their individual institutions such as awareness raising activities in schools, identification and referral of victims of trafficking by police, vocational training and employment assistance for at-risk cases and re-integrating victims of trafficking, etc. These are all important contributions to the fight against trafficking of women and children, which can be improved through the development of *qark*-level action plans that help link and integrate these individual ministry initiatives and build more collaboration with experienced actors in civil society to improve the programming.

In general, the responses and assessment indicate that there is a need for training and capacity building for local government structures in order to assist them to accomplish their tasks under the Prime Minister's order. While the structures are in place, more work needs to be done before the Committees are fully prepared to take leadership roles in ensuring coordination and cooperation among the main actors involved in the fight against trafficking in persons in the *qarqe* and in implementing effective programs on anti-trafficking.

The responses reveal that despite meetings and establishment of responsibilities and task, there is disconnection between structures in the Regional Anti-trafficking Committees. This is, also, confirmed by few respondents who advocate for the appointment of full time, dedicated anti-trafficking coordinators in each of the 12 *qarqe*, responsible for facilitating the work of his/her own Committee as well as improving connection and coordination among all the Regional Committees and Technical Working Tables. Both governmental and non-governmental respondents repeatedly emphasize that there are insufficient human and financial resources available to enable the Committees and Technical Working Tables to undertake their required tasks and responsibilities. The great need for capacity building to these same ends is also evident throughout the responses.

Ideas for practical work by Regional Committees and Technical Working Tables

During the first three years of the program, CAAHT staff has had the opportunity to meet with a wide variety of governmental and non-governmental actors, Albanian and international, who are interested in seeing Albania continue to improve its national and local capacity to effectively combat trafficking of women and children as well as better assist and reintegrate those Albanians who have become victim to this crime. This section of the report provides an extract of the ideas and recommendations that have been gathered through this on-going consultative process. These suggestions are directed specifically to Regional Committees and their Technical Working Tables to assist them in elaborating more precisely

their individualized plans of action and programs that will most effectively address the phenomenon of trafficking as it manifests in their own *qark* area.

In addition, this report includes an annex/bibliography of some good models and practices from anti-trafficking programs implemented by international organizations and national non-governmental organizations, including grantees of the CAAHT program, that offer practical tools for the Regional Committees to identify programming ideas in the areas of prevention and awareness raising, as well as victim assistance and reintegration. It should be recognized that each *qark* is different in terms of the trafficking vulnerability of its populations and their needs in shaping anti-trafficking responses, and not all models are equally appropriate in all parts of Albania. The CAAHT staff is available for consultation, if Regional Committees would like our assistance in considering which methods might be most effective in their locations.

- **Constitution of Regional Committees and Technical Working Tables**

Trafficking is a complex phenomenon that requires a complex and cross-sector response from all involved institutions. The Regional Anti-trafficking Committees should be a instrument through which different government agencies and institutions can gain a greater awareness and understanding of each other's function and how they can work together to be more effective in combating human trafficking. Hence, Regional Committees should ensure that all anti-trafficking stakeholders in their *qark* are identified and invited to be part of this coordination and implementation structure. Together, these stakeholders can best define and share roles and responsibilities for individual agencies and organizations within the framework of the Administrative Order.

In recent years non-governmental organizations have been at the forefront of a wide range of anti-trafficking activities. The knowledge and human as well as financial resources that they are able to mobilize provide government authorities unique opportunities to find partnerships through which they will be better positioned to meet their responsibilities. Partnership with and incorporation of non-governmental organizations, with statistical expertise and detailed local community knowledge, in the Regional Committees and Technical Working Tables, will help the latter to improve knowledge of vulnerable communities/groups, as well as actual and potential trafficking situations in their areas including numerical and statistical data about identified and assisted victims. At the same time, they are well placed to advise in the formulation and targeting of public awareness efforts towards at-risk communities, and on the development of regional action plans.

Most of the questionnaire respondents pointed out the lack of human and financial resources at local levels. This is a serious concern that needs to be more thoroughly considered and addressed by both central and local governmental institutions. However, it is also true that considerable local expertise and knowledge exists within both governmental and non-governmental actors in the *qarqe*. The challenge is to channel these resources into concrete plans of action that maximize coordination and collaboration to most effectively use the available resources. In addition, better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of each institutions and increased coordination among stakeholders would improve allocation and use of available resources. Regional Committees that demonstrate the ability of *qark*-level actors to make effective use of their resources are likely to build confidence in their Committee and attract more support from outside public and private institutions.

- **Mapping the trafficking situation in the *qarqe***

In a first attempt to conduct a mapping of the trafficking situation in the respective *qarqe*, the Committees have analyzed the information provided from individual members. But through insights gained by CAAHT staff in discussions with some Prefects and Committee members, the staff of ONC, and from the questionnaire responses, it is not evident how this information has been used, or how this information differs from what these structures provide to the ministries. Gathering of information should go beyond the current reporting structures in order to adequately map and monitor the trafficking situation in the *qark*.

Consolidation of relevant data at the *qark* level has two purposes: 1) providing disaggregated and comparable data to the ONC in order to create a credible and comprehensive view of the state of trafficking of women and children in the country and the efforts to prevent the phenomenon; 2) providing key leaders in each *qark* local information that enables them to make better decisions and choices to ensure that sufficient local programs and mechanisms are in place to combat trafficking in humans through prevention, prosecution, protection and assistance to victims. In addition, it will help Regional Anti-trafficking Committees better define roles and responsibilities of the different governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.

A thorough analysis of the current anti-trafficking situation in the *qark* is important in order to develop effective and well-targeted measures on trafficking in human beings and will also provide relevant baseline data for future assessment of the accomplished tasks. This analysis should contain an overview of the situation in the *qark* which realistically describes the extent and nature of the problem. It is important to understand the particularities of recruitment and forms of trafficking in the *qark* and how/where trafficking is prevented. Groups or communities which are particularly vulnerable to trafficking should be brought to the attention of the Committee, without violating the confidentiality of individuals.²

In addition, the analysis should examine the social and economic context of trafficking; identify the problems accompanying the spread of this crime, and also an analysis of the existing anti-trafficking measures and resources in the *qark* aiming at identifying accomplishments and gaps of current work. It is also important for all parties to engage in an open dialogue to reach agreement about how to appropriately apply definitions related to anti-trafficking, such as classification of vulnerable or at-risk groups/communities, identification of victims and prevention activities, etc.

A comprehensive understanding of anti-trafficking situation in *qark* will facilitate the process of developing concrete programs to combat trafficking in humans in the areas of prevention, prosecution, protection and assistance to victims and will help Regional Anti-trafficking Committees to define roles and responsibilities of the different governmental and non-governmental stakeholders.

Effective mapping and analysis is best achieved through a participatory process, including all potential stakeholders in the *qark* who are either directly involved with anti-trafficking related issues or have knowledge about trafficking in persons. In addition to the existing data from the local governmental structures, a lot of information can be obtained through inclusion and membership of experienced NPOs in each *qark*, who have accumulated the necessary information and expertise through working with vulnerable groups and communities. International inter-governmental organizations and NPOs³ which have a variety of expertise

² In order to protect the rights and confidentiality of citizens, the names of specific individuals or families who are considered vulnerable to trafficking, have been identified as victims of trafficking and/or are suspected of being involved in trafficking should never be reported or discussed in Regional Committees. Such personal identifiers should only be revealed on a specific "need to know" basis for direct reasons of case management, service provision and/or criminal investigation, as established in rules of conduct by the Technical Working Table.

³ See annex for a list of international inter-governmental organizations and NPOs which can provide more detailed anti-trafficking resources.

related to trafficking of women and children and may provide direct support to local organizations implementing anti-trafficking programs and activities. Annex I of this report provides a bibliography of key anti-trafficking reports, publications and websites which may assist Committees to identify targeted materials relevant to their concerns.

Because the nature of trafficking in persons is secretive, special effort must be made to reach out to a wide variety of community leaders and actors in order to build a more comprehensive understanding of where trafficking may be occurring in the *qark*. Conducting a survey could be a very good instrument to this purpose, since it can be shaped according to the specifics of each *qark* and it reaches out a larger audience. In all cases, a specific group of experts, consisting of representatives from governmental and non-governmental structures, should be tasked to take the lead in this data gathering process and to prepare the overall findings and conclusions. In order to prepare a comprehensive document, it is recommended that the findings are shared with all respondents or participants (sources of information) to consolidate them and get any additional feedback.

Some questions to consider in mapping the trafficking situation at the *qark* level include:

- ✓ Which communes and neighborhoods of municipalities have the highest rates of migration? Is it seasonal migration? Do families migrate together? What proportion of these migrants are adult and adolescent females? What proportion are children (boys and girls)? Who enabled the migration? Are “tutors” involved?
- ✓ When girls, women and children are away from their families for periods of time for work or study (in Albania or abroad), are they in regular contact with their families? Are their family and friends confident that they are safe?
- ✓ How many children and adolescents (male and female) have abandoned school this year? Why? Where are they? What might help them return to school?
- ✓ Do women’s/children’s assistance groups, social workers, teachers, and/or school psychologists have indications of problems of domestic violence in certain families or communities? How do these compare to families and communities with high rates of female/ child migration and school abandonment?
- ✓ What do the police, educators, social workers, NPOs, and local community leaders report are the primary trafficking and migration recruitment techniques currently being used in *qark*? If the techniques reported by these sources are different from each other, how are they different and why?
- ✓ Which are the vulnerable or at-risk groups/communities?
- ✓ What is the level of the adult population’s awareness of trafficking related issues? What about adolescents? What about children? Are the levels of awareness different? Are they appropriate to the ages and the life choices they must face?
- ✓ How many adult and child victims of trafficking from the *qark* were identified in the current quarter? In 2006? In 2005? Do different institutions and organizations report significantly different figures? If so, why?
- ✓ What can be known about the profiles / backgrounds of these victims (without violating their confidentiality) that can help the Committee better understand the patterns of trafficking in the *qark*?
- ✓ What kinds of services/resources are available in the *qark*? Are programs for assistance and reintegration of victims of trafficking linked to national referral sources?

- ✓ What anti-trafficking projects have been implemented and by whom?
- ✓ What anti-trafficking projects are planned for the coming year and by whom?
- ✓ How many cases of trafficking in persons are under investigation in the *qark*? How many cases have been investigated in the past five years?
- ✓ Does police investigation indicate the trafficking in persons is linked to other areas of criminal activity in the *qark*? How can the efforts to combat these crimes best be combined? What type of support do the police need to improve their ability to investigate cases?
- ✓ How many cases of trafficking in persons are under prosecution in the *qark*? How many cases have been prosecuted in the past five years? What type of support do the prosecutors need to improve their ability to prosecute cases?

Mapping of the (anti-) trafficking situation in the *qark* is important not only to assist the newly established Committees in developing their regional action plans, but also to establish a data baseline against which to monitor and evaluate the accomplishment of the goals and objectives set out in the respective action plans. Data baselines and databases should be created in coordination with the national databases on trafficking in persons being established in the Office of the National Coordinator. Inclusion of non-governmental organizations in the design of the mapping and data baseline (and database) will help to establish greater consistency between anti-trafficking reports and analysis created by government offices and non-governmental organizations. Given the ever-changing nature of trafficking in persons, it is especially important that this data be frequently updated with the activities/actions of the members of the Regional Committees and Technical Working Tables, and also with information from other stakeholders related to anti-trafficking issues. All actors should agree on a mechanism to enable exchange of this data and information, through which the Committees will be able to monitor performance, identify accomplishments, needs and gaps, and most important, continue to set goals and objectives for future action.

- **Community awareness raising about trafficking in human beings**

Awareness raising activities aim to educate to the Albanian population at large, as well as particularly vulnerable or at-risk groups (e.g. impoverished minority groups, adolescent and young adult females, school leavers, etc.) about the causes, mechanisms and consequences of human trafficking. An important part of awareness raising is to improve people's understanding of the experience of the victim of trafficking and to de-stigmatize them and their experiences. Many victims of trafficking, especially girls and women who have been sexually exploited, are reluctant to return to their families and communities. They have reasonable fears that they will be rejected and punished rather than welcomed home and helped to return to normal, healthy, happy lives. Three major purposes for anti-trafficking awareness raising are to:

- 1.) generate community attitudes of "zero tolerance" to trafficking that will help create an environment in which traffickers find it hard to conduct their business;
- 2.) build the skills of individuals and families to better protect themselves from trafficking and make better life choices/decisions; and
- 3.) encourage attitudes of understanding and acceptance for victims of trafficking that will increase their ability to return to their communities and will decrease their re-trafficking.

Anti-trafficking information and messages can be conveyed through many channels such as media (print, television and radio), community meetings, training and educational/information

sessions with at-risk populations, dissemination of brochures, leaflets or posters, and house-to-house outreach. In addition to the public at-large, awareness raising activities should target all actors that deal directly with victims, such as police, prosecutors, judges, social workers, psychologists, teachers, especially to prevent re-victimization and stigmatization of victims.

Types of awareness raising activities that may be useful in each *qark* include:

- Information campaigns to more effectively inform and educate the population, especially women, schoolchildren and high-risk groups, about the dangers and contributory causes of trafficking, and suggest viable alternatives for safe migration.
- Production and dissemination of awareness raising materials for the general public, such as posters, leaflets, brochures, etc., with anti-trafficking messages;
- Age-appropriate tailored educational/informative sessions with students and teachers;
- Campaigns in the local media on awareness raising for the general public (round-tables, debates, press coverage of the anti-trafficking activities in the *qark*, etc);
- House-to-house outreach in vulnerable communities;
- Development of public awareness programs to educate the population on the consequences of trafficking for the victims, the traffickers, and society as a whole, including health issues (STDs, HIV/AIDS);
- Encourage religious leaders to speak out publicly against trafficking and address the myths of trafficking and trafficking victims (including social stigma, blame, and gender stereotypes); and
- Ensure publication of reliable official information to the media on trafficking arrests and convictions.

In order to develop a comprehensive awareness raising program it is important to identify the vulnerable / at-risk communities, review previous activities, identify best practices and models, and have clear understanding of the trafficking phenomena and its consequences. Many NPOs have years of experience conducting outreach programs for various types of awareness raising, sometimes including anti-trafficking. They offer substantial human and knowledge resources for conducting this work. Care should be taken to ensure that awareness raising information and techniques are shaped appropriate for the particular audience. Additional skills building and professional information should be provided for front-line workers such as police, social workers, teachers, psychologist, community mediators and journalists. Youth and student government groups are important partners, with the special potential to increase message dissemination and retention through peer-to-peer work.

Anti-trafficking awareness raising has been underway in many parts of Albania for several years now. A growing body of useful resources – books, pamphlets, posters, training modules, etc. – have been produced by governmental and non-governmental institutions. See the bibliography in Annex I for more information about how to locate this information. Thanks to these efforts as well as the increasing attention of the Albanian media to this urgent issue, the awareness and knowledge of the population has improved. However, continued awareness raising programs are needed to maintain public vigilance as well as to keep people attuned to the changing nature of the trafficking techniques. Hence, it is important that Regional Committees review previous awareness raising activities in their

respective regions and use this analysis to develop more effective and targeted outreach programs for the large community and specific groups.

- **Identification of vulnerable individuals, families and groups and prevention interventions to reduce their vulnerability**

One of the purposes for the mapping of the trafficking situation in the *qark* should be the identification of the vulnerable individuals and groups, which will help to determine the level of vulnerability to trafficking of different areas, communities and individuals within the *qark*. More precise recognition of vulnerably locations and people enables improved targeting and effectiveness of social services delivery as well as other awareness raising and prevention techniques. It is widely recognized that women and children represent the most high-risk/vulnerable groups for trafficking in human beings. But gender and age alone are not the main indicators. Identification of a more complex set of indicators will enable anti-trafficking actors to better target who within the *qark* may be more at-risk of being trafficked.

Amongst adolescent girls and women, the most vulnerable people (to either being trafficked or possibly enticed into cooperating with the trafficking of their children) include poorly educated young women without stable income sources, mothers with a large number of children, single mothers (regardless of family size), victims of domestic violence, young women living in problematic families, girls who are married against their wish at a young age through arranged marriages, etc. In the case of children, the most vulnerable may include those from families in crises (for example, divorced parents, homeless or impoverished families, single-parent families, parents with drug or alcohol addiction, etc.), orphaned children without care, neglected children, school abandoners, and especially children who do not have birth registration and consequently do not have legal identity. In families with strong traditional, “old fashioned” (from the perspective of the young) roles and expectation, children may feel trapped and react by taking rash decisions to seek their “freedom” that can make them especially vulnerable to trafficking and exploitation.

Local government structures, especially the police and the departments of social services, employment, and education, carry many responsibilities to identify and assist many of the individuals with the types of problems described in the previous paragraph. While much is known through these offices about the needs of and opportunities for these people, often government officials express concern that they lack sufficient infrastructure and resources to assist these people in finding long-term solutions to resolve their vulnerability. In many communities, local government, NPOs and local community leaders have established strong relationships of cooperation that combine their knowledge, services and resources to provide a more comprehensive approach to supporting and protecting people, families and communities who are most vulnerable to the crime of trafficking.

Vulnerability to trafficking is best reduced through interventions that address the underlying causes of the social, economic and psychological factors creating the at-risk situation. Different measures and activities are appropriate depending of the nature of the characteristics of the at-risk individual, family or community. The following list offers suggestions for programs and actions to decrease vulnerability to trafficking and to improve the living opportunities and chances for social inclusion for at-risk groups and individuals.

- ✓ Develop economic empowerment and employment programs by providing vocational training and ensuring adequate access to the labour market,
- ✓ Enforce legislation on obligatory education and take relevant measures to improve children’s access to educational opportunities. Increase the level of school attendance, especially for girls. Some NGOs provide after-school or other complementary education and study programs to support underachievers in schools.

- ✓ Provide remedial education/vocational training for male and female school dropouts and adults who may never have had sufficient access to schooling. (Second Chance classes).
 - ✓ Ensure provision of appropriate legal documentation for birth.
 - ✓ Develop awareness raising activities against domestic violence and promoting gender equality.
 - ✓ Develop programs that provide education and support for family development and against domestic violence.
 - ✓ Enable appropriate use of government programs on poverty reduction, social assistance; employment, and children's rights, giving priority access to those most vulnerable to trafficking or other forms of exploitation/abuse.
 - ✓ Ensure adequate dissemination of information with regard to employment opportunities.
 - ✓ Mainstream anti-trafficking curricula and programs in schools for pupils and students of all ages.
 - ✓ Conduct awareness raising activities directed specifically to "at-risk" people and groups in order to inform them of the dangers associated with trafficking. Recognize, encourage, and support their own abilities to take preventive measures to lower their risk of being trafficked and protect others in their families and communities.
- **Assistance and reintegration of children and women who have become victims of trafficking**

Regional anti-trafficking responses should include comprehensive measures for the protection, assistance and reintegration of victims of trafficking, based on human rights principles and ensuring that victims have access to adequate programs and services. The identification of trafficked persons is a prerequisite for their recognition as victims. Most victims of trafficking are identified through a formal process of interviews conducted by police and prosecutors, often with the assistance of trained NPO social workers. Some victims of trafficking are identified more informally by family, friends, or themselves. This may be identification through reports or information provided by the individual her/himself, family, friends, or other caring people to police, social services or educators as well as NPOs such as anti-trafficking shelters, community centers, women and children groups, religious organizations, etc.

Upon identification as a victim of trafficking, the person's access to social support, assistance and protection must become a primary consideration, irrespective of their willingness to cooperate with law enforcement authorities. Such programs should be tailored to the specific needs of the individual victim of trafficking. At minimum, these should include safe accommodation, psychosocial counseling and support, health and medical care, and may also require legal assistance, education and vocational training and employment opportunities. In addition, in the cases when victims of trafficking have children, municipalities and communes need to ensure that they have access to affordable and permanent housing, which may need to include direct government payment/subsidy for a period of time. Accomplishment of the above represents a government responsibility to its citizens and to meet international standards. Meeting these obligations to the victims often also best serves the interests of authorities responsible for investigation and prosecution of criminals because well-supported victims may be more willing and able to cooperate with the justice system.

Effective and comprehensive support for reintegrating victims of trafficking must include a wide range of actors, such as local government structures, police, social workers, experienced NPOs, health and medical staff, labor and education officials, and local community leaders. Regional Committees should ensure that various combinations of these actors focus on the following measures:

Equipping qark leaders to identify and assist victims of trafficking

- ✓ Ensure cooperation and regular sharing of information between relevant government structures, NPOs and other actors who may get in touch with victims.
- ✓ Conduct trainings with relevant structures and actors to prepare them to identify and refer victims of trafficking.
- ✓ Conduct awareness raising campaigns throughout the community in order to educate citizens about the profiles of traffickers and people vulnerable to trafficking in order to enable communities to be more alert to potential criminals profiting from human trafficking/exploitation, and to promote understanding and compassion for those who suffer consequential pain and stigmatization in addition to the crime(s) already committed against them..

Initial assistance for identified victims of trafficking

- ✓ Ensure that NPOs and social workers have adequate access to victims.
- ✓ Ensure that safe accommodation is available for victims, even in the first hours and days of identification.
- ✓ Ensure that cooperation of victims of trafficking with the police is entirely voluntary, and in no way linked to their right and opportunity to receive appropriate and sufficient assistance and services.
- ✓ Ensure that qualified social workers conduct individual needs assessments for and with each victim in order to maximize her/his access to appropriate and adequate services.
- ✓ Ensure that victims are informed promptly about their rights and available services.
- ✓ Ensure that victims identified in the *qark* are fully informed of the services available at the specialized nationwide shelters, that they have been given sufficient opportunity to make use of these and other services, and that they are fully involved in determining which services and service providers or other related services to which they are referred.

Longer-term support and re-integration of victims of trafficking

- ✓ Ensure that victims identified in the *qark* are fully informed of the services available at the specialized nationwide shelters, that they have been given sufficient opportunity to make use of these and other services, and that they are fully involved in determining which services and service providers to which they are referred.
- ✓ Ensure that service providers cooperate and coordinate to develop tailor-made support programs in accordance to the specific needs and age of victims.

- ✓ Ensure that sufficient social and health services as well as social and psychological counseling are provided for victims.
- ✓ Facilitate mediation and reconciliation between individual victims and their families and/or communities.
- ✓ Ensure that educational services and vocation training are available for victims.
- ✓ Ensure inclusion of victims in social assistance and employment programs/job placement.
- ✓ Promote cooperation among government entities, NPOs, community leaders, religious communities, business associations, etc., to ensure social inclusion of victims in the community life.
- ✓ Ensure legal support, physical security, and personal data protection for victims.

Conclusions

Although the establishment of the Regional Anti-trafficking Committees and the Technical Working Tables is an important step forward, these *qark*-based structures have a long way to go in order to accomplish what is envisaged in the Prime Minister's order. While political will is crucial to ensure success of anti-trafficking efforts in each *qark*, it must be associated with concrete plans and actions. This is essential to ensure that anti-trafficking policies, programs and services will impact vulnerable individuals, families and communities.

In order to move forward in the most positive and effective direction with *qark* anti-trafficking initiatives, it is important to recognize that every actor can have only limited impact if their actions are taken in isolation or fail to coordinate with broader regional/national objectives and programs. Only sustainable and institutionalized responses will succeed in combating trafficking in persons in Albania through a multi-sector, multifaceted approach to this issue. While the role of the local government structures is primary, there are significant skills and experiences within civil society that are indispensable to enhance capacities in these efforts. NPOs, with their particular competencies, are key partners in these efforts – especially in the areas of assistance and prevention.

In the last three years the CAAHT program has supported and coordinated with a large number of NPOs in Albania involved in a wide-ranging set of anti-trafficking programs that span from awareness raising and other prevention programs to cooperation with law enforcement officers for immediate assistance when they identify victims of trafficking and continuing on to the complex and challenging process of successful reintegration of children and women victims into their families and communities. Thus, we are well-positioned to identify some good models and practices that we can share with members of the Regional Anti-trafficking Committees.

The CAAHT program has great respect for the efforts made to date in the creation of the Regional Committees and Technical Working Tables. This report is offered as a further contribution towards the full achievements of the goals and objectives of these Committees. We look forward to continuing partnership with the Office of the National Coordinator and the leaders and members of these important new entities in Albania's ongoing fight to end trafficking of women and children in the country. For further information about how the CAAHT program may support the work of the Regional Committees and/or Technical Working Tables, please contact Mr. Dolor Tozaj, CAAHT Local Program Coordinator by email at DTozaj@al.caii.com or the office address noted at the bottom of the first page of this document.