

## REPORT

# PROJECT CHANCE AND CHALLENGE-IMPROVE SOCIAL SERVICES PROVIDED TO VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING

**Change and Challenge Improve social services provided to victims of human trafficking**, is a transnational project financed through EEA Grants 2009-2014, NGO Fund in Romania, its implementation started in May 2014 and will end in March 2016, under the coordination of the Romanian NGO Association Pro Refugiu and its Norwegian and Romanian partners (Norway-Pro Sentret Organization; Romania-Association Global Help, Foundation People to People, East European Institute for Reproductive Health., General Directorates for Social Assistance and Child Protection from counties Dâmbovița, Mures, Satu Mare, Salaj, Sibiu, Galati, Bacău, Iasi, Teleorman).

Trafficking is a phenomenon continuing from the earliest period of civilization. The earliest form of trafficking was slave auctions of men and women and children. Currently, human trafficking is a modern form of slavery, a serious violation of the human rights and dignity involving illegal trafficking in persons for exploitation.

This phenomenon is one of the most profitable activities of organized crime worldwide, occupying the second position in the top - after drug trafficking - and on the same level with arms trafficking; human trafficking exists in every region of the world and in all types of industries.

Human trafficking has a direct effect on physical and mental well-being of victims. During the initial phase of trafficking, victims are forced and deceived usually by exploiting their current circumstances, because most victims have a history of abuse and are already living in precarious conditions. Once enslaved, victims typically are forced into unsanitary and stressful living conditions and receive little to no healthcare or basic services. Their movement is often restricted, their personal documentation withheld, and most experience significant physical, emotional, sexual, and psychological violence with major impact on their lives. Escaping from slavery is extremely difficult and dangerous, putting the victim at great

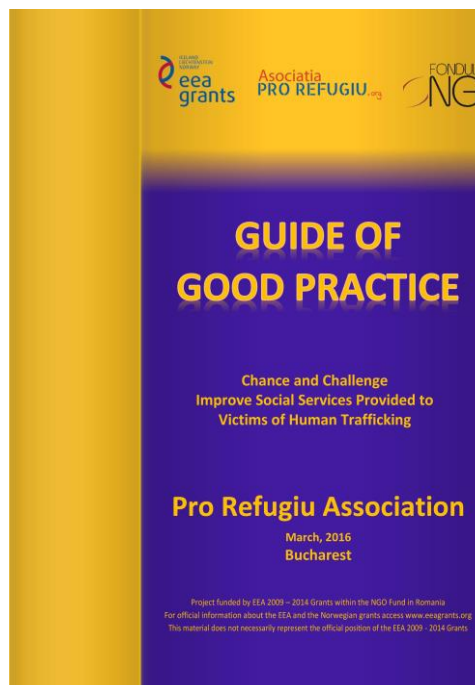
personal risk. If rescued, integration back into society is incredibly difficult because of the shame, stigma, threat of retribution, and trauma experienced during enslavement.

This report is presenting the results obtained during the second year (period June 2015 – April 2016) focused mainly on delivery of social and legal counselling and assistance services for victims of human trafficking by the coordinator and its partners.

- **SOCIAL AND LEGAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

A total number of 40 persons ( 36 adults and 4 minors) benefited from social and legal counselling and assistance from Association Pro Reufigu and Romanian partners Association Global Help, East European Institute for Reproductive Health, Foundation People to People. Sexual exploitation and forced labour (especially agricultural sector) were the most common forms. 60% of the victims were trafficked in destination countries as Spain, Italy and Norway through transnational network of Romanian and foreign traffickers. With the support of social workers and lawyers victims received counselling and assistance in the procedures to access social benefits, identification of jobs, continuing studies, prepare documentation to request social housing, assistance in front of competent judicial authorities in criminal cases in which they were injured parties (police, prosecutor offices, courts), information on the period on reflection before decided if accepting to collaborate with the authorities or not, prepare for the hearing in court phase, support in demanding financial compensations according with the law.

- **GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE**



Elaborated and disseminated among social workers, psychologists, lawyers Romanian and Norwegian from institutions and organisations. Several aspects are approached in the guide such as:

- Human Trafficking phenomenon
- Obstacles in the identification of victims (the hidden nature of the crime, awareness / understanding (of) the phenomenon, perception of victims)
- The needs of human trafficking survivors (shelter, social / psychological / legal support)
- The structure of the management case (contact, interview, identification, assessment of victim's needs, achieving the support plan for recovery and reintegration, monitoring and evaluation).
- Care measures for professionals (specialists who provide services to survivors of trafficking may be affected by their accounts and experiences in a way that would be threaten both their professional activity and the quality of personal life, therefore it is essential they take care of their own health, being careful to those signs that may indicate the presence of ailments such as: the burnout syndrome or vicarious traumatization in which case it is advisable to seek professional help).

- FINAL CONFERENCE

Event organised in April 2016 in Bucharest with 47 representatives from Romanian and Norwegian institutions and organizations with active role in fight against human trafficking, prevention and victims' assistance. The event benefited also from the participation of the Norwegian Embassy in Romania. The results of the project were presented and also interactive discussions took place on issues linked to improve the assistance services, necessity to continue the collaboration between institutions and non-governmental organizations in identification – referral – assistance for victims.





