

External Evaluation of

SDC's COUNTER-TRAFFICKING

PROGRAM IN MOLDOVA

Commissioned by the division Europe & CIS, Departement of Humanitarian Aid
of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC)

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Berne, March 2004

I Evaluation Abstract

DONOR	SDC Department Humanitarian Aid (as well as other donors)
REPORT TITLE	SDC/HA Evaluation of the Counter-Trafficking Program in Moldova
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AUTHORS	Martin Andreas Wyss
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TYPE OF PROJECT	bilateral
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TYPE OF COOPERATION	Humanitarian Aid (HA)

Subject Description

The overall objective of Switzerland's international efforts in the area of trafficking in persons is as follows: Switzerland makes a significant, visible and proven contribution to the prevention of trafficking in persons as well as to the protection of its victims at the international level.

Since the opening of the International Organisation for Migration's (IOM) Chisinau office in January 2001 with SDC funds, counter-trafficking activities have mushroomed in Moldova. Given the ever-growing scope of counter-trafficking projects and the exceptionally dynamic counter-trafficking project development and implementation context, it was important to evaluate SDC's support for this comparatively new area of intervention, in particular activities related to the reintegration of victims of trafficking who have returned from abroad. A historical perspective was maintained throughout the evaluation in order to achieve a sensible and empathic description of the main findings. Despite of the brevity of the visit to Moldova, it is believed that retrospection and contextualisation have benefited the conclusions and recommendations.

Evaluation Methodology

This evaluation is based on data collected and interviews made in and around Chisinau between the 10th and the 17th of April. It is preceded by Ch. Jakob's preparatory field visit in November 2002. In the wake of his visit the focus of the evaluation underwent significant changes. One of these changes was the decision to widen the focus of the evaluation from operational aspects of the project to the overall counter-trafficking context in order to identify lessons learned and to list strategic considerations for future interventions in Moldova, the region and elsewhere. The outcomes of the evaluation, the lessons learned and the recommendations, should benefit future planning and the development of a strategy for SDC/HA counter-trafficking Programs.

Major Findings

By enabling IOM, which is leading counter-trafficking efforts world-wide, to open an office and a Rehabilitation Centre in Chisinau in 2001, by contributing to the reintegration of victims of trafficking returning *from all countries*, by raising awareness about the dangers of trafficking with a highly successful and much debated theatre production, and by materially creating alternatives to dubious job offers abroad for selected risk groups, SDC has initiated significant and important steps to attack the problem head-on with new approaches and become a model for other donors. As a consequence IOM is supported by all main donors and well-funded. It is about to consolidate its activities on the three counter-trafficking fronts: prevention, prosecution and assistance to victims.

The repeated touring of the SDC theatre production was subsequently co-funded by both the US and the EU. SDC plans to sponsor further tours in Belarus and the Ukraine. Moreover SDC was the first donor to contribute to the reintegration of victims of trafficking in the form of (untied) funds for all victims (regardless of the country from where they were repatriated). This example has been followed by the US Government.

SDC has started a small pilot project with an Italian and a local NGO to create alternatives to the risky jobs offered abroad for a number of selected women, thus adding a new dimension to counter-trafficking prevention work by offering material alternatives rather than continuing to do prevention only via awareness raising and information campaigns. Clearly this approach should serve as a model to other interested and willing donors.

II Evaluator's Final Report

SDC/HA Evaluation of the Counter-Trafficking Program in Moldova

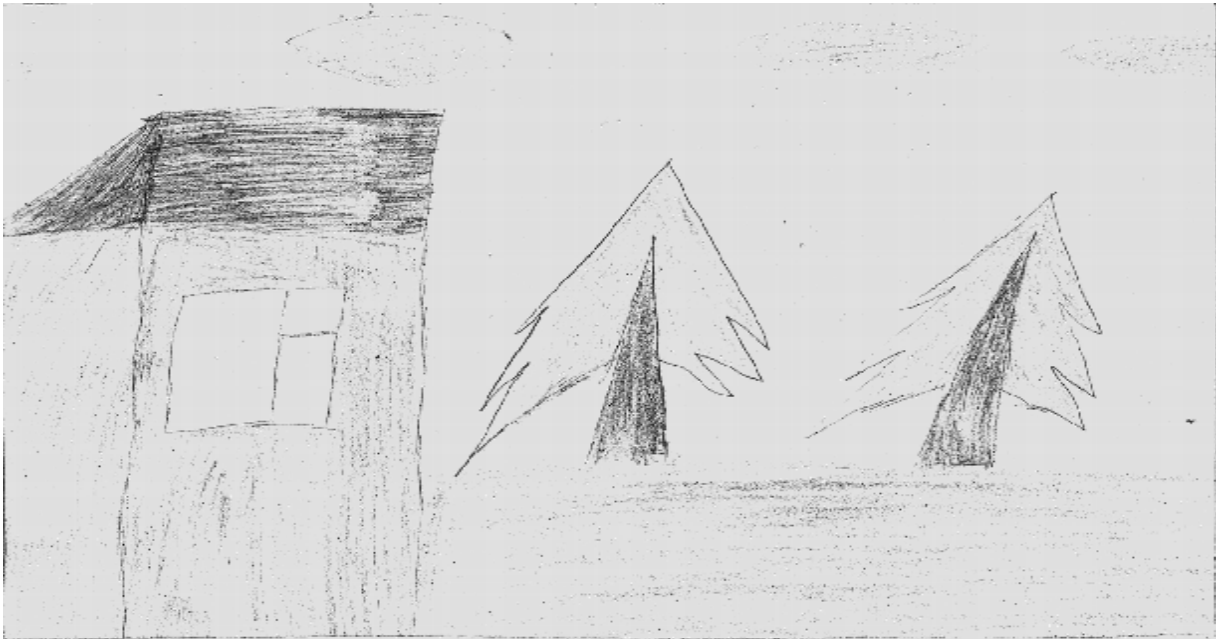
Commissioned by the division Europe & CIS, Department of Humanitarian Aid
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Martin Andreas Wyss

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Many victims of trafficking have been subject to domestic violence. The trafficking experience reinforces psychological disorders and traumas, which are apparent in drawings made in the Rehabilitation Centre run by IOM. Note the typical absence of persons in a drawing entitled “My Family” (Natalia, 16).

Preliminary Remarks

This evaluation is based on data collected and interviews made in and around Chisinau between the 10th and the 17th of April. It is preceded by Ch. Jakob's preparatory field visit in November 2002.

In the wake of his visit the focus of the evaluation underwent significant changes. One of these changes was the decision to widen the focus of the evaluation from operational aspects of the project to the overall Counter Trafficking (CT) context in order to identify lessons learned and to list strategic considerations for future interventions in Moldova, the region and elsewhere¹.

Since the opening of the International Organisation for Migration's (IOM) Chisinau office in January 2001 with SDC funds, CT activities have mushroomed in Moldova. Given the ever-growing scope of CT projects and the exceptionally dynamic CT project development and implementation context, it is important to maintain an historical perspective in order to achieve a sensible and empathic valuation of the main findings. Despite of the brevity of my visit to Moldova, it is hoped that retrospection and contextualisation will benefit the conclusions and recommendations, and that they will bestow additional explanatory power upon them.

¹ The outcomes of the evaluation, the lessons learned and the recommendations, should benefit future planning and the development of a strategy for SDC/HA Counter Trafficking Programs in Moldova and the region (see Terms of Reference Annex 1).

Executive Summary

SDC's contribution to counter-trafficking programs in Moldova is based on two of Switzerland's foreign policy priorities, namely the alleviation of poverty and the promotion of human rights. They are also in line with the guidelines elaborated by the Swiss Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MoFA):

„The overall objective of Switzerland's international efforts in the area of trafficking in persons is as follows: *Switzerland makes a significant, visible and proven contribution to the prevention of trafficking in persons as well as to the protection of its victims at the international level.*”

By enabling IOM, which is leading CT efforts world-wide, to open an office and a Rehabilitation Centre in Chisinau in 2001, by contributing to the reintegration of victims of trafficking returning from all countries, by raising awareness about the dangers of trafficking with a highly successful and much debated theatre production, and by materially creating alternatives to dubious job offers abroad for selected risk groups, SDC has initiated significant and important steps to attack the problem head-on with new approaches and become a model for other donors. There are a number of spin-off effects of SDC's CT activities, in particular its initial sponsorship in favour of IOM:

- IOM is supported by all main donors and well-funded (cf. Annex 2). It is about to consolidate its activities on the three counter-trafficking fronts: prevention, prosecution and assistance to victims.
- The repeated touring of the SDC theatre production was subsequently co-funded by both the US and the EU. SDC plans to sponsor further tours in Belarus and the Ukraine.
- SDC was the first donor to contribute to the reintegration of victims of trafficking in the form of (untied) funds for all victims (regardless of the country from where they were repatriated). This example has been followed by the US Government with an additional grant of 125'000 \$.
- Finally, SDC has started a small pilot project with an Italian and a local NGO to create alternatives to the risky jobs offered abroad for a number of selected women, thus adding a new dimension to CT prevention work by offering *material* alternatives rather than continuing to do prevention only via awareness raising and information campaigns. Clearly this approach should serve as a model to other interested and willing donors.

IOM's rehabilitation strategy and implementation is adapted to the operating environment and complements the other components of its counter-trafficking program. It must be said, however, that making the different pillars of its strategy – preventing trafficking from happening, combating the traffickers and assisting the victims – truly complementary to each other has not been found to be of major importance, as in many ways each pillar has its own priorities, its own focus, its own interlocutors and universe of discourse. Moreover, IOM was under tremendous pressure to implement as quickly as possible what it had agreed upon with the donors. There was little time for introspection or self-evaluation, as implementation was steaming ahead.

The pervasive lack of economic alternatives is particularly acute in Moldova, hence her social misery and overall poverty. To create new and additional alternatives to address the reintegration of trafficked woman in the specific context of Moldova would require a comprehensive reintegration package. More funds and time are needed to design just such a package. There exists an immediate need for longer-term shelter options going beyond the average rehabilitation phase, particularly for minors, mentally retarded and mentally ill victims.

While there is overall complementarity among the different agencies in the counter-trafficking field in Moldova, there is some overlapping – particularly in the public awareness-raising segment. This is in part due to the rapid growth of the NGO sector. However, overlapping has not been found to be a problem. An important issue that needs to be addressed is co-operation with the Government, which has been identified as an obstacle to successful project implementation. The Government's views on the reasons for trafficking, the role of the victims and the measures that need to be taken to combat it, differ significantly from the view of the donor and NGO community. This is the principal reason why significant parts of the program cannot be handed over to the Government at this point in time. As in most destination countries victims of trafficking are seen as immoral youths who have no one else but themselves to blame for their predicament. Many officials seem to profit in one way or another from trafficking. The fight against corruption, presently supported through a UNDP project, is still a tentative endeavour.

However, since co-ordination mechanisms among donors and between donors and the government have been put in place, the *basis* for open discussions and improving co-operation exists. Given its mandate and political influence, the drive for improved co-operation should be led by OSCE in Vienna and Chisinau. Despite of the known difficulties in Moldova, it should be kept in mind that a slow step taken *together with the Government* is more sustainable than two hasty-ones without it.

SDC's pioneer role in funding IOM in 2001 has encouraged other donors and agencies to get involved in the counter-trafficking field in Moldova. The key-elements for replication in other countries can be deduced from the most important lesson learned: careful identification of a priority gap and making a difference by investing in a targeted way. This should lead to the desired multiplying and spin-off effects. In addition, the set-up of the rehabilitation centre already has served as an example in the Ukraine. In any given country of origin, reintegration funds should be made available to all returning victims - regardless of the country they were repatriated from.

1 Coverage and Impact: Reaching the Victims of Trafficking

As the program is only reaching the trafficked women returned to Moldova by IOM (identified as victims of trafficking in the foreign countries ²), what could be done to assist the victims of trafficking deported by foreign countries as illegal immigrants, and not identified as victims of trafficking ³?

While the program has been *open* to all victims⁴, it assisted only about 10% of clients outside IOM's mission to mission referral network. Non-IOM referrals were made by the Police, the SECI Centre in Bucharest, borderguards, Moldavian Embassies, NGOs, journalists etc. A few survivors returned on their own and contacted IOM without intermediaries.

Starting in the summer of 2000 up to 10 April 2003, IOM assisted 1'043 trafficked women in Moldova⁵. 90% of Moldavian Victims of Trafficking (VoTs) have been almost exclusively referred to IOM Chisinau by IOM missions in the Balkans. In retrospect it can be stated that the reintegration programs in countries of origin such as Moldova are a logical follow-up of IOM's protection, reception (shelters) and assisted voluntary return (AVR) projects in favour of survivors of trafficking in the Balkans.

While all victims identified inside and outside Moldova returning to their country of origin are entitled to benefit from the programme, a hitherto unknown, but potentially huge number is falling through the cracks. According to the undated Stability Pact « Moldova Assistance Fact Sheet », 1'375 women and girls have been deported by boat from Turkey via Istanbul to the Ukrainian port of Odessa since January 2002 alone. 54% and by far the most of them are Moldavians, followed by Ukrainian nationals (32%). So far the programme has not reached these women. IOM Kiev together with the international NGO « La Strada » Ukraine and a local NGO « Love, Faith and Hope » is working on developing Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for a referral system in co-operation with the relevant Ukrainian and Moldavian authorities.

Besides the important caseload of deportees from Turkey, where IOM has a mission (Ankara) and an office (Istanbul), there are other regions from where VoTs have returned by themselves or with the help of other entities besides IOM.

² Countries of origin: Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia / Transit Countries: The Balkans

³ Countries of destination: Western Europe, Russia, Turkey, Arab Emirates etc.

⁴ Instead of „victims“, IOM increasingly uses the term survivors.

⁵ Until the opening of the SDC financed IOM office in January 2001, IOM missions relied entirely on the Moldavian NGO « Salvati Copiii » (Save the Children), when returning Victims of Trafficking. “Salvati Copiii” continued to be responsible for the reintegration of IOM returned VoTs up to September 2001.

Based on interviews with the staff of the rehabilitation centre, it can be concluded that there is a significant number of VoTs in Russia, particularly in Moscow and St. Petersburg. As a rule, the Russian Police only expel minors; therefore the actual number of victims in Russia is unknown. Given the strong linguistic, cultural and economic ties between Moldova and Russia and the important general migration to Russia, it can be deduced that the figure must be high. The pull towards Russia among ethnic Russians from Moldova is comparable to the migration to Turkey from the Autonomous Gagauzia Region, where a Turkish dialect is spoken. Although traditionally an Orthodox region, it has been noted that heads of families have recently switched to Islam in preparation of their emigration. Based on information made available in the rehabilitation centre, Russian owners and clients of trafficked women seem to treat the victims in a particularly cruel way and without scruples. To buy women to be literally used as sex slaves for a group of men is not uncommon. Minors are preferred.

Moscow also seems to function as a connecting point for trafficking to the Middle East and Israel via Cairo. This region continues to be somewhat of a black spot on the CT map. Besides testimonies of victims and individual stories of escapes and rescues with the help of NGOs and the Moldavian embassies, very little is known about the fate of VoTs in this part of the world.

EU countries and Switzerland: despite of the fact that both the EU and Switzerland are main donors of Moldavian CT projects, the return of VoTs from Western countries is patchy, irregular and uncoordinated. Interestingly, IOM does not have significant or exclusive programmes in favour of VoTs in the countries of its donors. In the case of Italy, there is an IOM return project along side a project managed by a Catholic NGO with direct reception and reintegration referrals to Salvati Copiii.

In the case of Switzerland, more needs to be done for IOM to improve co-operation with the Police, as there have been trafficking cases from Moldova in the Canton Ticino. There is an urgent need for action based on the following premise: the Swiss MoFA guidelines are meant to be *complementary* to the report of the interdepartmental working group on Trafficking in Human Beings, which makes clear recommendations as to the protection needs and return procedures of VoTs. It is inconsistent to promote and finance the humane return of VoTs and the subsequent reintegration from countries in the Balkans, while ignoring the issue at home, particularly given the widely presented and discussed recommendations to the Federal Council, which spell out in detail, what protective actions should be taken (cf. Report of Working Group Annex 3).

A look back will explain at least in part this uneven focus on IOM referred VoTs from the Balkan region. IOM's post-conflict presence in the Balkans helped lead to the development of protection and return projects as Governments in the region began dealing with VoT cases and as journalists reported on the heinous abuses which occur in the forced prostitution business. The presence of SFOR and KFOR troops, while contributing to the problem, helped to raise awareness of the phenomenon and lead to a public outcry. Many of the first victims were escapees without any means to return to their home countries. They were identified by IOM, the SECI Centre in Bucharest and Interpol. Watched by the international community, the Police started to ask IOM for support in the repatriation of the VoTs. Previously the victims were literally "dumped" across the border as it appears is still done by Turkey (s. above). This practice has demonstrably led to re-trafficking. In certain cases it happened with the connivance or the participation of the Police.

In June 2000 IOM in Macedonia approached the SDC office with a request for 18'000 USD for the protection and return of 20 VoTs. Within less than two months the money was spent on 38 victims. 70% of them came from Moldova (!) (cf. Annex 4⁶). Most sending IOM missions had some reintegration grants included in their project proposals. Initially 150 USD were budgeted per victim. This money was to be disbursed in monthly instalments through IOM missions in the countries of origin or through local NGOs (the files with the disbursement track sheets are still available at Salvati Copiii). The spacing of the payments was deliberate in order to give the victims an incentive to stay in touch with IOM. Originally, a short monitoring report was to be written after each encounter with the victims in order to satisfy IOM's and the donor's follow-up, monitoring and information needs. The idea of having individual files for each victim with a summary report based on a standard form was not developed further, it appears. If it had been put in practice, the reintegration stories could be summarised and depicted in charts, akin to the victims profiles based on the questionnaires filled out by the sending missions.

Historically IOM's reception and reintegration projects in the countries of origin of the VoTs developed from reintegration packages "attached" to the returning victims. The questionnaires filled out together with the victims were also prepared by sending missions and have largely remained the same. Below the need for a « delinking » of reintegration packages from the sending countries will be discussed and arguments will be put forth in favour of a *new focus* on the victims as returnees in their countries, rather than from the point of view of their first encounter with IOM in the countries of destination. These observations could have a positive influence on the compilation of the data of the victims and therefore on the monitoring of the victims' socio-economic reinsertion and the reporting about the reintegration process.

Co-operation with IOM missions *outside the Balkans* (e.g. IOM in Turkey, Russia and Switzerland) and with non-IOM referring partners needs to be stepped up. An example of a co-operation initiative are the presently established "Standard Operating Procedures" among the stakeholders in Odessa, the most urgent area of intervention.

The awareness of donors, the OSCE and Governments needs to be raised in order to:

Inform IOM missions regularly before expulsions occur and

Receive contributions of *untied* reintegration funds for the IOM missions in countries of origin. In Moldova, this was done so far only by Switzerland and the US.

⁶ The first SDC CT contribution in Europe is Kleinaktion 7F 00878.01.

2 Effectiveness and Efficiency

2.1 Reaching the Programme's Objectives

Based on the report submitted by IOM to SDC⁷ about the first donation of 150'000 CHF and based on the extraordinary development of CT activities by IOM and other agencies in the country, it must be said that the objectives for the first period have been surpassed by an important margin. It is indeed difficult to imagine a more effective use of start-up capital or seed money in the context of CT activities or any other humanitarian intervention context for that matter.

The grant allowed IOM to open a presence in Moldova on 1 January 2001 and to finally have a complementary structure of its own for the reception of VoTs. It should be kept in mind that Moldova is the country from where the highest number of IOM's VoT cases - both in per capita and in absolute terms - originate in Europe.

In the year 2000, 308 VoTs were repatriated by IOM to Moldova *without an existing IOM reception infrastructure*.

In 2001 349 VoTs were repatriated by IOM (almost 50% from Macedonia). Because of SDC's financed IOM presence in the country, the victims profited from significantly improved services, which previously could not be delivered through the existing NGO channels (cf. IOM Chisinau / Counter Trafficking UNIT, 2003 Reintegration Program and Updated Health Status Statistical Breakdowns, based on over 300 assisted WVT from Sept.'01 to Dec '02 in Annex 5).

It is difficult to measure the outputs of the project, as they were not detailed in the original project document. Nevertheless, an expenditure chart is attached to the Project Report tracking the use of the funds up to 31.12.01. By the end of the project implementation and the first reporting period, IOM had spent 76'650 USD or 85% of SDC's funds on staff, office, direct reintegration and reintegration infrastructure costs. Habitually SDC missions control project expenditures on the basis of submitted reports and other documents. Therefore, it must be assumed that the remaining 15% have been fully accounted for.

For the second SDC contribution of 57'138 USD allocated for 2002, the report is still in preparation, however, it appears that most of the "Activities" outlined in the Project Document, which needed to be carried out to produce the listed "Outputs" for the "Immediate Objective" have been undertaken. This could be verified in situ. An expenditure chart for the second SDC contribution will document the use of the allocated funds.

⁷ The report erroneously refers to the reporting period as 1.1.01 to 31.12.02.

2.2 Efficiency: Advantages and Disadvantages of IOM as implementing partner

The Swiss contributions profited significantly from IOM's capacity to raise donor interest as well as additional funds, and to manage new, complementary projects, thus strengthening and widening the original objectives. In terms of practical CT expertise, IOM has no competitors.

Identified disadvantages are largely due to IOM's disparate capabilities to adapt to changes on different levels. While changes in the field and at a lower level were incorporated or made in a supple and needs-based way, more strategic changes take longer: the EU pointed out that IOM's Moldova mission should now that it is staffed with an international officer « come of age » and become a mission in its own right. Monitoring, follow-up and reporting on individual returning VoTs need to be improved (cf. below). Finally, a change away from the "sending mission perspective" on the VoTs needs to be built up as suggested further below.

It should also be said that IOM has in a sense become the victim of its own success as it was and is forced to simultaneously manage many new areas of intervention and project acquisitions.

Note: these disadvantages should, however, not be interpreted as *comparative* disadvantages as there appear no organisations capable of delivering IOM's services.

2.2.1 Alternative Reintegration Approaches that may be more effective/ appropriate/ feasible

The „last leg“ of the VoTs journey home is so far the least investigated, developed and documented. There are three conditions to designing a more comprehensive package of reintegration alternatives:

- In order to put more emphasis on the reintegration and the personal futures of trafficking survivors, - rather than emphasising their status as victims - the focus needs to be shifted away from the work carried out in the countries of destination to the work done in the countries of origin.
- Research on reintegration options and best practices⁸
- Significant additional funds

⁸ Ch. Jakob in his report mentioned that the International Catholic Migration Commission (ICMC) in Belgrade had put together best practices on reintegration. ICMC in Geneva has, however, denied this. IOM is preparing a CT Training Manual, which will entail a section on best „Return and Reintegration“ practices.

Originally reintegration funds were part of the protection and return projects IOM initiated in the Balkans. As the focus increasingly shifted to the countries of origin, delinking Protection/Return (destination countries) from Reception / Reintegration (countries of origin) was discussed at length within IOM. This process needs to be completed enlarging the existing questionnaires to include questions pertaining to the situation of the VoTs after their arrival and particularly during the reintegration phase. Thus giving the victims a chance to „speak their minds“ with a case worker who explains the rehabilitation and reintegration services and options in their own country⁹.

The present questionnaire is useful for general data and statistics. It is, however, necessary to double-check some of the data upon arrival (family, trafficking story etc.). Besides new questions regarding the reintegration process, it should include a section on „lessons learnt“ by the victims with questions such as:

- whether and how they have kept in touch with family and friends
- how they have coped/survived the ordeal
- how they have managed to escape - if applicable
- what they have learnt, what they would say to other women considering leaving to work abroad
- what needs they think trafficked women have, and how they could best be met etc.¹⁰

It is emphasised that the questionnaire should include more details about the VoTs reintegration plans and wishes. This is not only necessary because it is missing presently, but also in order to improve the database and the reporting documentation. This data cannot be collected prior to departure in the countries of destination.

Should SDC continue to support IOM's reintegration services, the issue of data gathering and service quality control should be reconsidered along two distinct lines (1) inclusion of specific questions concerning the socio-economic reintegration process, which need to be recorded during the vocational orientation session(s) and later on the basis of obligatory monitoring reports, and (2) a short questionnaire controlling the service quality during the rehabilitation phase, as suggested by Ch. Jakob.

⁹ More attention should be paid to the context in which data is gathered from the victims. Reliable data should be collected in the best possible environment. The conditions in which the VoTs are encountered in the countries of destination are not conducive to disclosure as the victims often suffer from posttraumatic symptoms. (cf. L. Kelly, Conducting Research on Trafficking, IOM, 2001). When writing the report, the Office of the Inspector General in IOM was conducting an external evaluation of a major Counter-Trafficking programme in the Mekong Region. The report should be made available on IOM Web site by third quarter 2003

¹⁰ From L. Kelly, Conducting Research on Trafficking, IOM, 2001

2.2.2 Advantages and Disadvantages of IOM Running the Rehabilitation Centre

There is no alternative to IOM running the Centre, at least not at the moment. There are no apparent disadvantages to IOM running the Centre. The concept of the Centre was developed by IOM. It is unique in offering such a wide range of services. It is a „one-stop-shop“ and an „all-under-one-roof-operation“. The followed procedures are clear and continuously adapted based on experiences made along the way. The most important advantage lies in IOM guaranteeing continuity from the first point of encounter to repatriation and from there to the Centre and onward on the way to reintegration. Security is guaranteed.

The rehabilitation process with its medical and psychological services needs to be separated more clearly from vocational counselling, vocational training and other aspects of the socio-economic reintegration process.

The distinction between rehabilitation and reintegration should also be shown in the statistical charts. The information about the socio-economic reintegration process is insufficient in comparison with the available details about the medical status of the VoTs.

2.3 Is the selection of the beneficiaries for the programme transparent and effective ?

Yes, but see also *1. Coverage and Impact* above.

3 Operating environment and reintegration strategy option for the future

3.1 Is the reintegration programme adapted to the frame of the trafficked women problem in Moldova ?

Yes, but a number of points need to be kept in mind. IOM's reintegration strategy was conceived on the basis of interventions, which are necessary during the first contact with the victims in destination countries.

From this developed a reversed order of priorities: first protection, followed by shelter and return, which lead to reception in the country of origin, followed by rehabilitation including medical care and counselling and finally reaching reintegration.

As the overall CT effort develops further, it should change its focus from the intensive emergency, repatriation and rehabilitation phase to sustainable and successful socio-economic reinsertion and reintegration.

Further research in the individual causes of trafficking and the typical concomitant preparatory steps leading to victimisation prior to departure needs to be undertaken. By convincing donors to invest more in prevention with concrete and material employment alternatives, this research, in part, could be based on work with groups at risk.

Proactive engagement in prevention with employment alternatives will enable the donors and their partners to learn more about the many facets of the trafficking and victimisation context to which individuals at risk are exposed. This in turn should provide useful, additional information for the development of new reintegration approaches.

It should also be kept in mind that according to IOM up to 80% of the VoTs, have been victims of domestic violence prior to leaving the country¹¹. This is documented partly in the drawings made by the VoTs upon request by the psychologist working in the IOM shelter (cf. Annex 6). The rehabilitation centre's caseload is extremely difficult and many victims need long-term care; in particular minors, mentally handicapped and psychologically severely affected victims for whom interventions involve humanitarian and social care rather than micro-enterprise management skills.

In order to identify victims with long-term needs, *individual* monitoring should be improved. In general better reporting on the problems and successes of the reintegration process of the individuals is necessary (cf. Ch. Jakob's proposal of a questionnaire for which there was no time to develop yet, although IOM had planned to have such a questionnaire as well as a reintegration data base to better monitor reintegration 6 months into the process).

¹¹ This figure could not be confirmed independently. Please note that IOM uses it in the most widely distributed information sheet about the SDC co-sponsored program. SDC Chisinau should have a copy of this document („Updated Health Status Statistical Breakdowns, based on over 300 assisted WVT from Sept.'01 to Dec '02“).

IOM could start to exchange experiences among its country of origin missions in the Ukraine, Rumania and Bulgaria, in view of developing best practices in the area of reintegration of VoTs. IOM already possesses such know how in other domains. It is felt that this area should be further developed on the following basic premise: given the victims' psychological, social and economic profiles, it is evident that reintegration work is particularly needed for the most vulnerable caseload, but vulnerability is a bad precondition and a weak basis for successful reintegration. This complicates the task of supporting the reintegration of VoTs.

In a first step, the contradiction between vulnerability and reintegration is dealt with by grouping victims according to their abilities. IOM is already doing this by selecting victims for income generating projects who are less vulnerable and better prepared.

3.2 Handing over Strategies (ex. local NGO, Local Authorities)

As clearly stated in IOM's report, many NGOs are not prepared yet to be solely responsible for given CT activities. IOM's interventions, particularly in the realm of reception and rehabilitation assistance to victims, originally had the character of emergency interventions. It must be recalled that it was the Swiss donation, which made a significantly improved delivery of services to the victims of trafficking possible by enabling IOM *to take over from Salvati Copiii (!)*. Less than two years into IOM's reception and reintegration program, it is therefore definitely *premature* to hand over (or hand back) significant parts of the program. It would quite simply amount to "changing horses in midstream", particularly as IOM is still in the process of improving certain parts of the reintegration program.

The security of the VoTs in Moldova is of special concern to IOM and its partners. A prerequisite to guaranteeing the security of the VoTs and the staff working with them is independence from governmental partners, particularly during the vulnerable phase just after the return of the VoTs.

On the other hand, IOM has partnered up with many different entities. Particularly successful seem co-operation arrangements with ICS (Italian Consortium of Solidarity), La Strada, Compasiune and the Ministry of Labour.

It is felt that both IOM and SDC already are exploring possible ways to cooperate with the present partners. The recommendation is therefore to continue and wherever possible to intensify co-operation in view of handing over tasks and responsibilities to selected partners.

3.3 Parts of the programme which are replicable in other contexts (other countries) and what is specific to Moldova?

Most parts are replicable and already replicated in similar country of origin contexts. New initiatives in Moldova and elsewhere in the region depend on (1) donor priorities, (2) government co-operation and priorities, (3) IOM's capacity to adapt to significantly bigger programmes and to make use of lessons learned, and (4) the existence of gaps and opportunities in a given country specific counter trafficking context.

It is difficult to identify Moldova's specificity beyond the fact that it is the source country of trafficked women par excellence in Europe. Given its geopolitical standing and position, it attracts little international attention and falls regularly through the cracks. This is also due to its strategic insignificance compared to Belarus and the Ukraine, which possess more weight due to their size, their location and their history. Russia's strategic importance, on the other hand, may contribute that matters pertaining to trafficking can be overlooked.

Recommendations for replication are made below.

4 Organisational and institutional Framework

4.1 Potentials and obstacles of co-operation between the main partners

No obstacles for the co-operation among the main partners could be found, which would impede IOM's work significantly beyond the issue of the co-operation with the Government.

There were not sufficient opportunities to investigate the potential and real problems concerning the co-operation between NGOs and the international community on the one side and the government on the other.

During a brief encounter with Moldova's Head of the Counter Trafficking Unit, it became apparent that the Government feels that the massive awareness raising campaigns against the dangers of trafficking seem a bit out of proportion in view of Moldova's overall socio-economic state.

SDC has implemented a humanitarian project („Occupational Therapy in three Social Institutions“). In the conclusions of the final report several problems with the authorities are listed :

- Bureaucratic barriers created by the ministries, while money transfers directly to the institutions;
- Inadequate attitude from some directors of institutions;
- Absence of responsibility to present the reports in due time.

IOM was considering „cash for work“ reintegration programs. Such projects usually involve priority *public* works identified by the authorities and the donors. Should such works materialise, they would have to be based on a solid co-operation between the government and its partners.

4.2 Possibility of working with other partners, donors

IOM is already working with the following partners:

Government

- National Committee for Combating Trafficking in Human Beings
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs
- Ministry of Interior
- Ministry of Justice
- Ministry of Labour and Social Policy
- Border Guard Troops Department

- State Department for Youth Policy, Sports and Tourism
- State Service for Information and Security
- General Prosecutor's Office
- The Supreme Court
- State Chancellery
- Law Enforcement Agencies
- Members of Parliament
- Republican Society for Social Protection of Minors and Young People
- Deputies of Parliament
- Local Government Officials

NGOs

- La Strada
- Centre for Trafficking Prevention
- Association of Women Lawyers
- Italian Consortium of Solidarity
- Caritas
- Salvati Copiii
- Compasiune
- ABA CELI

International Organisations

- OSCE / ODIHR
- UNICEF
- UNDP

There may be possibilities to partner up with more NGOs, but it is felt that IOM is very much aware of the potential of each one, as it has undertaken to publish a very useful summary document introducing fifteen NGOs engaged in the fight against trafficking¹². In addition, IOM is working with all relevant embassies.

4.3 Involvement of Local Authorities

During my visit to Moldova, it could be ascertained that the local authorities are occasionally involved in trafficking and - according to IOM - have been hostile to the SDC financed Theatre Tour in some cases.

¹² NGOs in Combating Trafficking in Women in the Republic of Moldova, IOM, August 2002

Some knowledge about the possible role of local authorities could be gathered during the visit in Costesti where the local NGO Compasiune has successfully confronted and co-opted the local authorities. IOM and SDC have certainly chosen the right partner and this co-operation, which could serve as an example, if similar capacities exist elsewhere, should be followed.

Willing and co-operative partners need to be selected to expand CT activities for future co-operation efforts between local authorities and NGOs outside Chisinau, as recommended below.

5 Key questions and findings

Q1 Is IOM's rehabilitation strategy and implementation adapted to the operating environment and to complementary components of its counter-trafficking program (prevention, awareness, law-enforcement) ?

Key findings:

IOM's rehabilitation strategy and implementation is adapted to the operating environment and to the complementary components of its counter-trafficking program.

Socio-economic reintegration work after the rehabilitation phase needs more attention (research ?), staff, inputs and funds.

Q2 Are there alternatives to address the reintegration of trafficked woman in the specific context?

Key findings:

Yes, there are alternatives, which depend on more funds for each individual to be reintegrated and a complete package of reintegration options developed on the basis of a comprehensive study.

Q3 What are the programs of other agencies (NGO's, IO's, Government) in the counter-trafficking field in Moldova (assessment). Do the programs overlap or are there specific gaps? What are the co-ordination mechanisms?

Key findings:

There is a plethora of CT projects in Moldova (cf. the list prepared by OSCE in annex 7¹³). There is some overlapping in the public information campaigns and the hotlines. Overlapping is not a problem. Co-ordination exists and functions. IOM is leading the way on all CT fronts, except preventive creation of employment alternatives.

Gaps have been identified in the referral mechanism, the monitoring of post-rehabilitation reintegration and the creation of employment alternatives as a prevention strategy.

¹³ The OSCE list includes some 80 projects totalling 300 to 400 activities. SDC is mentioned in only one project.

Q4 Has SDC's pioneer role of funding IOM in 2001 encouraged other donors and agencies to get involved in the counter trafficking field in Moldova? What would be the key-elements for replication in other countries?

Key findings:

1. *SDC's CT activities, in particular its initial sponsorship in favour of IOM, have served as an example and have encouraged the donor community to become more proactive in the field of counter trafficking in Moldova.*
2. *By far the strongest policy recommendation for Moldova and for replication elsewhere is made in favour of „Material Prevention“ or „Prevention through Employment Alternatives“¹⁴:*
 - *Prevention by providing in-country employment alternative.*
 - *Prevention by providing employment alternatives outside the country.*
 - *Prevention by injecting a youth and gender bias in all aid investments (mainstreaming).*

¹⁴ Please note that SDC and ICS have developed functioning procedures to target and select beneficiaries among potential risk groups. Given the close cooperation between IOM and ICS these procedures are known to IOM.

6 Recommendations

Based on the answers to the questions above, the following recommendations are submitted to SDC, the Swiss Co-ordination Unit against the Trafficking of Persons and Smuggling of Migrants and to IOM:

Humanitarian assistance and development co-operation

Moldova, like no other country in Europe, needs humanitarian assistance for abandoned children, orphans, the elderly and vulnerable women who could become victims of trafficking etc. Development agencies such as SIDA, USAID and others have incorporated CT projects in their portfolios. They have also invested in projects, which contribute to the prevention of irregular migration and they have undertaken efforts to “gender-mainstream” their non-trafficking projects.

Given the social misery and the psychological damage from which individual returning VoTs suffer, it can be stated that assistance to victims is a classical humanitarian endeavour. Development actors should, to the extent possible, design their projects and interventions to include significant gender and youth biases. They should also, in conjunction with relevant partners (Federal Office for Refugees ?), engage in the creation of temporary legal migration alternatives, possibly with working holidays visa schemes (cf. below).

- **Given Moldova’s insufficient social structures and its near absence of functioning state structures, humanitarian assistance should continue.**
- **Humanitarian assistance and development aid programmes cannot and should not be separated from each other in Moldova.**
- **It is strongly recommended that future SDC and/or FOR interventions be preceded by consultations with SIDA representatives, as Sweden is Moldova’s most committed donor.**

SDC Policy - key elements in the field of counter-trafficking in Moldova and the region

Prevention by providing material alternatives:

By far the strongest policy recommendation made in this evaluation is in favour of „Material Prevention“ or „Prevention through Alternatives“. This approach should be pursued on three axes:

1. In-country employment generation as presently done and tested through a SDC pilot project implemented by ICS and Compasiune.
2. Gender and Youth Mainstreaming of all development projects - for possible co-operation with the development branch of SDC.
3. Prevention by providing material alternatives outside Moldova - or possible initiatives in conjunction with the Federal Office for Refugees.

a) Continuation of in-country alternative employment generation:

The most obvious level of intervention is represented by SDC's pilot project for the prevention of illegal migration and trafficking of vulnerable women from the biggest village in Moldova's central region (Costesti). SDC implements this project with excellent partners: the Italian NGO ICS (Italian Consortium of Solidarity) and the local NGO „Compasiune“. The effectiveness of this project should be evaluated as soon as possible in order to draw conclusions and to make new proposals with a significantly wider, mostly rural coverage.

As IOM collaborates with the same NGOs for its income generating reintegration projects, there are ample opportunities to learn from the experiences made in the realm of reintegration in favour of projects for selected vulnerable risk groups. The project should include a strong research component continuously evaluating the project's implementation difficulties in order to fine-tune the project to the needs of its clients. It must be mentioned that the term Prevention used in the context of CT activities does not explicitly include this type of approach yet, but it is hoped that it will in the future and that the distinction between „verbal“ prevention through awareness raising (and information campaigns) and „material“ prevention through the creation of alternatives will become firmly established.

b) Gender and Youth Mainstreaming of all Development and Humanitarian Projects:

Trafficking exists largely because of economic, social and gender inequalities between and within countries. High rates of poverty, unemployment, low pay, and labour practices, which discriminate against women all contribute to its spread¹⁵. Moldova does not only suffer from pervasive poverty, but women are affected disproportionately by economic hardship and social injustice. Even the option of irregular migration is more closed to women than to men. Most donors have focused their attention on injecting a gender bias into their programs. It is difficult to imagine a context where gender mainstreaming would be more justified in Europe. In the MoFA/SDC Guidelines it is stated that „One of the causes of trafficking in women and girls is the lack of gender equality - political, economic and social discrimination of women is an important hotbed for trafficking. Promoting gender equality, a major aim of Switzerland's international co-operation, is thus one way of contributing to combat trafficking in persons”. It is recommended that all humanitarian and development projects take the aspect of preventing irregular migration into account and that where such a link does not exist, projects be mainstreamed in order to directly or indirectly, but specifically, contribute to improving the socio-economic conditions of women in general and young women in particular.

c) Prevention by providing material alternatives outside Moldova (working holidays visas):

UNHCHR recommends that ways of increasing opportunities for legal, gainful and non-exploitative labour migration be examined¹⁶. One out of four to five Moldavians live and work abroad. Remittances are of vital importance to support those remaining in Moldova.

While Moldova mainly exports illegal migrants, there are a number of countries, which have bilateral agreements for regular labour migration, such as Portugal and Italy. Awareness needs to be raised with the government and representatives of labour importing countries to include quotas and positions for Moldavian women, when such agreements are negotiated. Unfortunately no figures were made available, but given the economic sectors for which such agreements are worked out (agriculture and construction), it is highly unlikely that women have been sufficiently considered and included so far. Within the EU, migration policies are still decided upon by individual member states, therefore the EU in Moldova is in no position to make specific proposals. A Swedish Member of Parliament has, however, started to lobby for temporary labour permits for risk group women. Sweden is the most important and most devoted bilateral EU donor in Moldova. It plans to step up its development investments in the next few years.

The Swedish MoFA is the only bilateral EU partner participating in the so-called Berne Initiative, which was initiated and which continues to be lead by the Swiss Federal Office for Refugees.

¹⁵ OSCE Economic Forum, Ioannina 2003

¹⁶ See also the ILO report on Trafficking from Moldova „Irregular labour markets and restrictive migration policies in Western Europe“, 2002.

This renewed attention given to migration and its management - beyond the processing of asylum seekers - should present an opportunity to further explore this much needed and logical area of intervention. From a legal migration point of view, Moldova is so marginalised that even the acquisition of the Romanian nationality constitutes an improvement of migration chances for Moldavians.

Researching the causes of trafficking beyond poverty as a root cause:

Investigative research is still lacking and necessary on trafficking „triggers“ and contexts in Moldova. The social environment of many VoTs is such that it appears that victimisation regularly occurs inside the country *before* trafficking abroad takes place. Too little is known about internal trafficking (which exists), legal protection against domestic and other abuses, which seem to be common in Moldova and routinely precede the trafficking story¹⁷. Impunity for personal criminal acts particularly against women is pervasive. If the most typical elements of heightened vulnerability could be identified, all preventive actions would benefit. During interviews with victims in Chisinau, it could be ascertained that the psychological and mental state of the victims significantly determined whether they (1) were easily lured by false promises, (2) resisted giving up their free will, (3) were capable of planning their escape and mustered the courage to negotiate or organise their liberation.

Recommendations for the region:

Given the limits of the assignment, there was no time to scrutinise the most important gaps in the region. Some of the policy recommendations made for Moldova, however, apply to the region, too:

Prevention by providing material alternatives inside and outside Moldova:

A policy recommendation is made in favour of „Material Prevention“ or „Prevention through Employment Alternatives“. This approach could be pursued in the region (Moldova, Belarus and the Ukraine). The US Embassy in Belarus is actively engaged in legal migration options for risk groups. Possibly, lessons could be learned from the American experience.

¹⁷ This information is based on a number of concrete examples given by the NGO „Compassiune“ in Costesti. According to L. Kelly (op. cit.), research is i.a.sorely needed about patterns of in-country trafficking and how these are linked to international movements.

Improving IOM's referral system in the region:

SDC should support all relevant actors (IOM Kiev and partner NGOs, IOM Moscow, IOM Ankara, IOM Chisinau with La Strada and OSCE) to immediately improve the referral system between Turkey, Russia, the Ukraine and Moldova. Initiatives are under way; more needs to be done urgently.

Reintegration (recommendations for IOM):

Should SDC support IOM or other actors in reintegration work in favour of VoTs in other source countries of the region, the recommendations for IOM should be taken into account, particularly with regards to the monitoring of the reintegration process and the reporting about the same (cf. below). The issue of data gathering and service quality control should be reconsidered along two distinct lines (1) inclusion of specific questions concerning the socio-economic reintegration process, which need to be recorded during the vocational orientation session(s) and later on the basis of obligatory monitoring reports, and (2) a short questionnaire controlling the service quality during the rehabilitation phase, as suggested by Ch. Jakob.

Collaboration with IOM:

SDC should continue its close collaboration with IOM in Moldova and the region. As was done so far, the selection of projects should be done on the basis of carefully analysed needs. Lack of voluminous funding possibilities should continue to be compensated with high quality interventions (cf. above).

IOM should, however, not be seen as a „provider of solutions“ to a given analysed problem. Rather it is a reliable, resourceful partner with significant political clout and a solid basis of accumulated, practical experience. Particularly new interventions require the active involvement, participation and presence of the donor.

IOM-NGO joint ventures and co-operation in Moldova are encouraged (ICS, Compasiune, La Strada). Since SDC has its own NGO grant project, NGOs with CT capacities in the areas mentioned above and which are known to SDC should receive continued support. La Strada in the Ukraine has a lot of experience and an excellent reputation.

Areas for which no interventions are recommended:

Prevention through information campaigns and awareness raising should not be a priority for several reasons: (1) a lot has been done and continues to be done (overlapping, crowding, danger of overkill), (2) so far no data is available indicating that information campaigns have kept women from wanting to go abroad (by far the most inquiries – almost 75% - the hotline received are for information regarding how to find a job abroad), (3) to pass the message about the dangers of trafficking once or twice is justified, to do it many more times is comparable to telling a hungry person about the dangers of fishing in a crocodile infested lake without giving him or her an alternative, (4) the Head of the national CT Unit questioned the usefulness of spending so much money on information campaigns in view of the fact that the Police is regularly kept from intervening, because it cannot pay the gas for its vehicles. Finally, Info Campaigns are relatively easy „project sales“ to donors for IOM. SDC should concentrate on carefully selected niches and novel approaches, rather than jump an already crowded bandwagon.

Prosecution and criminalisation are areas, which should be left to other donors: Switzerland should not open a new CT front by getting involved in the area of prosecution, except, evidently, in Switzerland. But here, it is not an SDC responsibility, but the task of the police and the judiciary. The national interest is hardly existent, our exclusion from EUROPOL a bad basis and given strong individual donor interest (due to hoped for spin-off benefits in the fight against other types of organised crime), this area does not leave significant gaps to be covered.

Recommendations for Switzerland (Co-ordination Unit)

Despite of the fact that both the EU and Switzerland are main donors of Moldavian CT projects, the return of VoTs from Western countries, including Switzerland, is patchy, irregular and uncoordinated. Interestingly, IOM does not have significant or exclusive programmes in favour of VoTs in the countries of its donors.

In the case of Switzerland, more needs to be done to improve co-operation with the Police, as there have been cases of VoTs from Moldova e.g. in the Canton Ticino. There is an urgent need for action based on the following premise: the Swiss MoFA guidelines are meant to be *complementary* to the report of the interdepartmental working group on Trafficking in Human Beings, which makes clear recommendations as to the protection needs and return procedures of VoTs. It is inconsistent to promote the humane return of VoTs and the subsequent reintegration from countries in the Balkans, while ignoring the issue at home, particularly given the widely presented and discussed recommendations to the Federal Council, which spell out in detail, what protective actions should be taken.

Recommendations for IOM

Referrals of VoTs have to become more regular, particularly in countries with an IOM presence (Switzerland, Turkey, Russia and the Middle East etc.). IOM missions should impress upon their partner Governments to inform IOM missions regularly before returns or expulsions occur.

Monitoring, follow-up and reporting on individual returning VoTs need to be improved. Finally, a change away from the "sending mission perspective" on the VoTs needs to be built up, as described above.

Short monitoring reports should be written for each case on a regular basis in order to satisfy IOM's and the donor's follow-up, monitoring and information needs. The idea of having individual files for each victim with a summary report based on a standard form needs to be developed further. If it had been put in practice, the reintegration (success-) stories could be summarised and depicted in charts, akin to the victims profiles based on the questionnaires, which need to be filled out in the country of the victims origin.

The rehabilitation process with its medical and psychological services needs to be separated more clearly from vocational counselling, vocational training and other aspects of the socio-economic reintegration process. The distinction between rehabilitation and reintegration should also be shown in the statistical charts. The information about the socio-economic reintegration process is insufficient in comparison with the available details about the medical status of the VoTs.

It is recommended that IOM change its present practice of doing in-depth interview prior to the return of the VoT to doing it after the victim's arrival. In addition, the questionnaire should include more details about the VoTs reintegration plans and wishes – to which additional information can be added as the reintegration process develops. This is not only necessary because it is missing presently, but also in order to improve the database and the reporting documentation. This data cannot be collected in the countries of destination prior to departure.

IOM could start to exchange experiences among its country of origin missions in the Ukraine, Rumania and Bulgaria, in view of developing best practices in the area of reintegration of VoTs. IOM already possesses such know how in other domains. It is felt that this area should be further developed on the following basic premise: given the victims' psychological, social and economic profiles, it is evident that reintegration work is particularly needed for the most vulnerable caseload, but vulnerability is a bad precondition and a weak basis for successful reintegration. This complicates the task of supporting the reintegration of VoTs. More needs to be known about it.

III Stand on Recommendations

1. Responses to the Recommendations by SDC (Desk and COOF)

1.1 Humanitarian assistance and development cooperation

It is an undisputed fact that the increasing poverty in Moldova justifies the continuation of humanitarian aid and the extension of technical assistance in the future. Furthermore, it is also a sad fact, that children, elderly and women are and will probably remain the most vulnerable segments of society. Children suffer the risk of being trafficked or of being abandoned when their parents see no other way out of economic misery than migration. Therefore, it is necessary, as suggested by the evaluator, to focus (“mainstreaming”) in future projects on gender and youth issues as much as possible and reasonable. The creation of temporary but legal migration alternatives such as seasonal work abroad needs lobbying at HQ level towards political decision makers.

SDC coordinates its activities in the counter-trafficking sector by participating regularly at the Donor Meetings on Anti-Trafficking and at the Technical Coordination Meetings, chaired by OSCE. SIDA¹⁸ is a committed donor, but as matter of fact, it is not (yet) very visible in the counter-trafficking sector. In view of the substantial funds donated by the EU to IOM and the imminent commitment of the US Embassy/USAID, all - SIDA, the EU as well as the US - must be considered equivalent partners for future coordination and exchange of experiences. For obvious reasons, it can only be of particular relevance to be an European donor when it comes to discussing approaches and measures to be taken in the countries of destination (countries “receiving” trafficked persons).

1.2 SDC Policy – key elements in the field of counter-trafficking in Moldova and the region

Prevention by providing material alternatives

- Continuation of in-country alternative employment generation

The results of the pilot projects will be evaluated 3 and 6 months after the end of the project by ICS. A second phase is planned to start latest in October this year in another rural location. The project puts a stronger focus on psychosocial activities with the aim to strengthen women empowerment . This became obvious during the pilot phase. Further fine-tuning may follow depending on the upcoming conclusions and findings.

¹⁸ Swedish Agency for international development

To fully appreciate the effectiveness of the project scheme, the data of the pilot phase seems to be too scarce and it might be too early to draw significant conclusions. Taking into account the amount of money invested in this project, an evaluation going beyond ICS' evaluation cannot be justified at this stage. Only after the second phase an external evaluation might be considered for making the experience and the acquired knowledge accessible to a wider group, be it within SDC (also including COOFs in the neighbouring region such as Ukraine and Belarus) or the donor community in Moldova.

Wider coverage of the rural areas of Moldova with this kind of project is certainly desirable but needs most probably the support from FOR¹⁹.

- **Gender and youth mainstreaming of all development and humanitarian aid projects**

A gender and youth mainstreaming of SDC projects should be kept in mind and implemented wherever possible. However, the majority of Moldova's population is affected by the increasing poverty, especially children, elderly and handicapped people. SDC's policy is to target the most vulnerable groups of society and cannot just concentrate on one specific group. Nevertheless it is certain that the migration of women in general – not only trafficking – has a huge effect (but so far little accounted for) on society (family break-ups, neglected children etc.)

Researching the causes of trafficking beyond poverty as a root cause

Although many – more or less founded - assumptions exist as to the social environment and psychological frame of the women before their trafficking experience, little has been done so far to research the root causes of trafficking. Most of the assumptions are taken for facts by the actors in the anti-trafficking sector, but it would be important and to the benefit of all counter-trafficking activities to have a more profound analysis on the most typical elements of heightened vulnerability.

However, the methodology to achieve this goal is not so clear. It must always be kept in mind that the returned women are traumatised and, therefore, reluctant and very often not in the psychological condition to be interviewed on their past experience. Investigation on their social context and psychological and mental state before the trafficking experience might give some clues on heightened vulnerability and characteristics of women especially prone to being trafficked. Questions with regard to their behaviour during their confinement does not allow any conclusions on the root causes of trafficking. Therefore, especially questions 2 and 3 are rather not relevant as to deciding on the most appropriate and effective preventive measures.

¹⁹ Federal Office for Refugees

Interviews with the victims outside their psychological counselling must be limited as much as possible. Having to re-live the past events will not make it easier for them to overcome their trauma. As much as it is desirable to have more indications on why they could be trafficked in the first instance, the good intention to prevent other women to suffer the same does not justify to retard the rehabilitation of the returned victims. And at the bottom line it all leads to one conclusion: They were trying to escape the poverty and looking for an income to support themselves and their families.

Recommendations for the region

Coordination of SDC activities in the region, including transit/destination countries such as Macedonia and Kosovo should be envisaged and is strongly recommended. A regional seminar could facilitate the exchange experiences and might result in duplication of models such as providing material alternatives.

IOM Moldova has proven to be a reliable and competent partner for the Rehabilitation component, though monitoring and reporting aspects should be improved. New intervention models and a stronger focus on reintegration aspects beyond IOM's core competencies are likely to require a closer cooperation and involvement of the respective donor.

Areas for which no interventions are recommended

Even though SDC's awareness campaign in form of a theatre play was considered to be a innovative, efficient and effective intervention, prevention through information campaigns and awareness raising is covered sufficiently by other organisations and does not need further contribution of SDC at the moment. Prosecution and criminalisation is not a field of activity of SDC HA and is being promoted by other donors with relevant experience and the corresponding mandate. While more interventions in this field are required, it will not be useful to further diversify SDC's counter-trafficking activities.



IOM International Organization for Migration
OIM Organisation Internationale pour les Migrations
OIM Organización Internacional para las Migraciones

2 IOM reaction and consequent action to Swiss evaluation

Referrals in countries such as Turkey, Russia, Switzerland, the Middle East, are difficult to establish regularly since in some of those countries there is no counter-trafficking legislation or there is no governmental structure to make referrals.

IOM has developed the Counter-Trafficking Module (CTM) within the Migrant Management and Operational System Application (MiMOSA). It is an operational database on return and reintegration assistance for victims of trafficking to be developed worldwide. In year 2003 further revisions has been done. A newly revised counter trafficking in-depth interview questionnaire is introduced.

The database has further developed new components to evaluate the sustainability of return. Individual files for each assisted victim with a summary report is developed and included. The rehabilitation and reintegration processes are clearly separated in the database. The reception and the long-term reintegration are now separated as processes.

IOM has during autumn 2003 developed a handbook/manual for IOM staff assisting trafficking victims. The handbook consists of five chapters: 1. Screening and Assistance to Victims, 2. Health 3. Return and reintegration, 4. Law enforcement cooperation, and, 5. Database.

The purpose is to provide IOM staff with a step-by-step guide on how best to assist screened and identified victims of trafficking, through to their referral and reintegration process. The manual should provide an extensive review of various assistance options and guidelines. It must be stressed that each case must be dealt with on a case-by-case.

The chapter concerning referral describe and outline operational procedures for the safe and dignified referral of victims, whether from abroad or from within their home country. All procedures must be similarly followed between the receiving mission and the referring organization as would be followed between two IOM missions. Pre-departure reintegration planning should be limited to a basic individual assessment based on need, wants, possibility and motivation and including a basic medical assessment. The IOM mission or other agency in the country of origin responsible for the reintegration assistance should do the creation of a full-fledged reintegration plan. A standardized interview form is used. The interview form should be electronically forward to CTS, IOM Headquarters in Geneva for inclusion in the main database. The referring mission's copy of the interview form should then be included in the password-protected database.

The re-integration section purpose is to provide IOM staff with a thematic guide on how to deal with victims of trafficking from the first point of contact with the victim by the receiving mission following through the whole reintegration process. The aim of the reintegration process is to provide for a victim's safe, dignified and sustainable re-insertion into society and normalised life. The reintegration assistance to victims of trafficking can include a full range of services, from shelter assistance, medical and psychological health care, social and legal counselling, to reintegration grants and vocational trainings.

Building upon the individual and situational assessments a comprehensive reintegration plan can be developed. The reintegration plan must be developed as a written plan between the assisting organization (IOM, NGOs, Government authorities etc.) and the VoT. The actual reintegration plan will also functions as a tool for monitoring and evaluation purposes.

3 Political division, PA IV Humanitarian Policy & Migration

Comments to the Evaluation by the Political Division IV

The Republic of Moldova is, to a most tragic extent, faced with the scourge of human trafficking. Tentative counter measures taken by non-governmental organizations at the beginning of the year 2000 have, in the mean time, found strong support by the international donor community. The IOM office in Chisinau was instrumental for spurring this development.

SDC's financial support for the IOM office in 2001 and the subsequent opening of a shelter in Chisinau has initiated a line of action which was taken up and broadened by other organisations: anti-trafficking measures in Moldova are now comprehensively targeting victim protection, prevention, legislation, and child trafficking. A National Anti-trafficking Coordinator is concerting interventions in these four fields backed by the Government whose commitment to fight human trafficking and assist victims of trafficking is to be commended. Political will is crucial for the effectiveness and sustainability of projects that have been set up with the support of the international donor community.

Switzerland considers trafficking in human beings a serious human rights abuse. The Federal Department of Foreign Affairs has issued guidelines to prevent human trafficking and protect victims of trafficking. The guidelines set out the areas on which Switzerland focuses its engagement: prevention and the protection of victims, in particular women and children.

In 2003, the Swiss Confederation and the cantonal authorities have set up a Coordination Unit against Trafficking of Persons and Smuggling of Migrants. The main task of this unit is to act as a clearing house, to facilitate cooperation between law enforcement and NGOs and to foster anti-trafficking measures. Parliament is currently discussing a new federal alien's law and revisions to the asylum law which, if adopted, respectively provide the legal basis for voluntary return assistance programs and may grant victims of trafficking temporary residence.

In order to effectively combat human trafficking, Switzerland concert its measures internationally with respective UN organizations, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, and the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe. On the operational level, both the Directorate of Political Affairs and the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation provide support for a variety of anti-trafficking activities abroad.

The project support in Moldova may illustrate Switzerland's engagement in fighting human trafficking. The SDC/HA evaluation report sets out particular strengths and features of this engagement and will contribute to direct it to the most pressing needs in areas as, for instance, prevention, child trafficking and reintegration. Gender sensitive income generation projects in rural areas as well as women empowerment form a crucial part in any prevention as well as reintegration strategy and should, as emphasized in the SDC/HA evaluation report, receive more attention.

In assessing the counter trafficking measures in Moldova, the SDC/HA evaluation report succinctly highlights the multifaceted problematic of human trafficking in Moldova and offers recommendations for further interventions that may also apply for other countries.

Switzerland will continue its engagement to combat human trafficking which destroys the lives and livelihoods of girls and women by exploiting and abusing them under slave-like conditions.

Annexe

Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference

SDC/HA Evaluation of the Counter-Trafficking Program in Moldova

1 Background

1.1 Situation

Because of its geographical location and economic circumstances, Moldova has emerged as a major source country of trafficked women. In 2001 SDC funded a local Theatre Production as an awareness campaign. In the same year SDC funding enabled IOM to open a presence in Moldova on January 1, 2001 to work on the project for reintegration of the victims of trafficking. In 2002 SDC started to fund ICS to implement a small grant project (prevention of trafficking).

IOM, as SDC's main partner in the field of counter-trafficking in Moldova during 2001 and 2002, has developed a strategy²⁰ to address 3 integrated and interrelated aspects:

- a) Prevention through the dissemination of information to further increase public awareness (funded by USA in 2001 and 2002).
- b) Criminalization by supporting law enforcement and judiciary structures. (funded by Sweden in 2001 and 2002)
- c) Return assistance and reintegration support to victims of trafficking (funded by SDC in 2001 and 2002).

The aim of the project is to provide reintegration assistance to victims of trafficking who have returned to Moldova largely through the network of IOM Missions in countries of destination of Moldovan trafficking victims.

In 2001, 350 women have returned to Moldova through IOM Missions from Macedonia, Kosovo, BiH, Albania, Italy and other countries.

1.2 Evaluation

- The evaluation shall give answer to the questions mentioned below and provide the base for SDC/HA planning future Counter-Trafficking programs in Moldova and the region.
- The evaluation shall be planned beginning 2003. The results should be available latest end of May 2003.

²⁰ IOM Project proposal, Combating trafficking in women: the Republic of Moldova

2 Description of the Evaluation

2.1 Objective of the Evaluation

- The evaluation should bring answers and recommendations on the intervention strategy of the SDC in the field of combating the trafficking of persons in Moldova and the region and on the use of IOM as a main partner .
- The evaluation will be based on a deep analysis of the IOM-SDC funded programme in Moldova, on an analysis of IOM overall intervention strategy in the country, as well as an assessment of activities of other agencies in the counter-trafficking field in Moldova.

2.2 Key questions are:

Is IOM's rehabilitation strategy and implementation adapted to the operating environment and to complementary components of its counter-trafficking program (prevention, awareness, law-enforcement) ?

Are there alternatives to address the reintegration of trafficked woman in the specific context?

What are the programs of other agencies (NGO's, IO's, Gouvernement) in the counter-trafficking field in Moldova (assessment). Do the programs overlap or are there specific gaps? What are the coordination mechanism?

Has SDC's pioneer role of funding IOM in 2001 encouraged other donors and agencies to get involved in the counter trafficking field in Moldova? What would be the key-elements for replication in other countries.

2.3 Specific questions are:

2.3.1 Coverage and Impact

- Is the programme reaching the returned trafficked women?
- As the program is only reaching the trafficked woman returned to Moldova by IOM (identified as victims of trafficking in the ²¹foreign country), what could be done to assist the victims of trafficking deported by ²²foreign countries as illegal immigrants, and not identified as victims of trafficking.

²¹ Countries of origin: Moldova, Ukraine, Belarus, Russia / Transit Countries: The Balkans

²² Countries of destination: Western Europe, Turkey, Emirates

2.3.2 Effectiveness and efficiency

- Have programme objectives been reached?
- In terms of efficiency, what are the advantages/disadvantages of IOM as implementing partner? - Is there other alternative (s) reintegration programmes that may be more effective/ appropriate/ feasible?
- What are the advantages-disadvantages, that the rehabilitation Centre is run by IOM? (security?)
- Is the selection of the beneficiaries for the programme transparent and effective?

2.3.3 Operating environment and reintegration strategy option for the future

- Is the reintegration programme adapted to the frame of the trafficked woman problem in Moldova ?
- Do handing over strategies exist (ex. local NGO, Local Authorities)?
- What parts of the programme are replicable in other contexts (other countries) and what is specific to Moldova?

2.3.4 Organisational and institutional Framework

- Potential and obstacles of the co-operation between the main partners?
- Possibility of working with other partners, donors?
- How are local authorities involved?

Based on the answers to the above mentioned questions, recommendations towards HQ SDC and toward the programme management shall be made:

- What should be the key elements of the policy of SDC/HH in the field of counter-trafficking in Moldova and the region?
- Should SDC/HH continue its close collaboration with IOM and or directly with other partners; eventually initiating new projects in other countries (Ukraine, Belarus, Russia)?
- Which is the part of the “humanitarian assistance” in the counter-trafficking field? What are the other parts, to be covered by development or other actors?

Lessons learned and recommendations

The outcomes of the evaluation, the lessons learned and the recommendations, should be presented being a base for future planning and strategy of SDC/HH Counter Trafficking Programs in Moldova and the region.