

Joint TF-THB and UNODC Project



Joint Project between the Task Force against Trafficking in Human Beings (TF-THB) and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) on Fostering NGO-Law Enforcement Cooperation in Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking in, from and to the Baltic Sea Region

Cooperation between relevant actors

Global problems such as trafficking in human beings can only be successfully tackled through close collaboration with relevant actors, including civil society, state authorities and international organisations. These actors often focus on different aspects of human trafficking and therefore initiate different measures to fight this crime and support its victims. Therefore, to implement a comprehensive strategy for combating human trafficking, it is essential to develop effective cooperation and establish a broad network of actors.

Hence, the TF-THB and the UNODC implemented a joint regional project on Fostering NGO-Law Enforcement Cooperation in Preventing and Combating Human Trafficking in, from and to the Baltic Sea Region. The project focused on formalised and non-formalised cooperation mechanisms and analysed the existence of Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) in the region. The project's long-term aim is to strengthen cooperation between different governmental institutions and nongovernmental actors both within and between the CBSS Member States. It is only through improved cooperation that victims can be adequately assisted and protected and that the crime of trafficking in human beings can be fought.

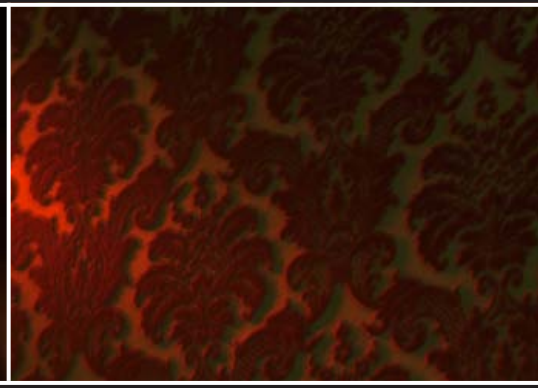
The implementation of the project

During 2009 a consultant collected and analysed the existing data on cooperation models in the 11 CBSS

Member States. A questionnaire was distributed to the TF-THB delegates to gather initial information on anti-trafficking actors in the region, national cooperation mechanisms as well as national and regional cooperation agreements already in place. Furthermore, study visits were conducted across the region to interview the civil society actors and state institutions responsible for victim assistance and the fight against human trafficking. This research and the findings from the study visits were then incorporated into a comprehensive assessment study entitled "Human Trafficking in the Baltic Sea Region: State and Civil Society Cooperation on Victims Assistance and Protection".

The report identified three main areas requiring more attention in the CBSS Region:

1. Formalised cooperation between civil society actors and state institutions needs to be strengthened. Memoranda of Understanding should be developed as a tool to achieve formal cooperation between stakeholders with different mandates in the field of human trafficking
2. Capacity Building Measures should be continuously reviewed and revised to address emerging trends such as human trafficking for labour and other forms of exploitation
3. Existing models and programmes on return, referral and re-integration of victims of human trafficking should be evaluated and new possibilities for regional cooperation should be explored



Stockholm Regional Conference, December 2009

The conclusions from the assessment study and its recommendations were presented and discussed at a Regional Conference on the 7–8 December 2009 at the Prime Minister’s Office in Stockholm, Sweden.

The conference was attended by over 60 participants working to counter human trafficking. All the CBSS Member States contributed and, in addition to the project partners, a number of international organisations also sent experts. Participants came from a diverse range of institutions, including NGOs, social welfare institutions, ministries, labour inspectorates, the national rapporteurs office and law enforcement agencies.

Participants discussed their experience of countering human trafficking and ways to enhance national and regional cooperation to better assist victims.

The participants to the Stockholm Regional Conference formulated a number of recommendations for the CBSS TF-THB:

1. Develop a model MoU for Police-NGO/State service providers;
2. Consider ways to develop MoUs involving other actors, based on the problem areas identified in the CBSS Region;
3. Assess national training programmes on countering trafficking in human beings in order to identify existing capacities, needs and gaps which can be addressed systematically;
4. Develop a regional training programme on labour exploitation involving relevant actors;
5. Re-assess the assistance and safe return programmes;
6. Develop guidelines for risk assessments;
7. Consider how to support closer networking within the region.

In order to enhance its preventive work against human trafficking and to improve the protection of the victims throughout the region, the TF-THB will, where possible, incorporate these recommendations into its activities and develop projects which fit the needs identified for the Region.

“...strategies must be people-centered, bearing in mind that human trafficking is about persons whose basic right to live free particularly from fear and want is under constant threat. We must recognize the dignity of the victims and their right to survival and development”. (Joy Ngozi Ezeilo, UN-Special Rapporteur on Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children, Report dated 20 February 2009)



UNODC

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

