METHODOLOGY FOR STUDYING THE COSTS OF VICTIM ASSISTANCE

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BACKGROUND

European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the United Nations
The aim of the study

➤ To map how the three Baltic countries cover the costs of specialized assistance to victims of trafficking.

➤ To develop a pilot methodology and a simple data collection questionnaire for estimating the concrete and tangible costs occurred.

➤ Building on the findings of the STROM I project, assess the role of municipalities in assisting victims of trafficking.

Why evaluate the costs?

➤ Information on the costs of victim assistance can provide:
  • More tools for policy makers to identify what measures are most needed.
  • Whether NGOs have sufficient resources to carry out these measures.
  • How municipalities and the state could ensure that the (often) limited resources are effectively utilized.
Methodology

➤ Thematic interviews (face-to-face, email and telephone)
  • NGOs who are official service providers to victims of trafficking.
  • State actors in charge of coordinating the funding for NGOs providing specialized services to victims of trafficking.
  • Municipal actors involved in the STROM-project.

➤ A total of 21 persons were interviewed in the three countries (13 in Estonia, 4 in Latvia, and 4 in Lithuania).
 GENERAL FINDINGS

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Findings: Funding

- Data on the State and NGO budgets was easily available.
  - Difficult to assess the exact contents of the services provided to victims.
- NGOs emphasized that State are not sufficient
  - NGOs need to fundraise
- Only some of the budgeted state funds are used to assist victims
  - Why: Formal identification, only certain services included, length of assistance.

There is a need to improve the role of municipalities in supporting victims of trafficking.

Findings: Public procurement model

- Pros:
  - Victims prefer NGOs rather than state actors.
  - The competition improves quality of services.
  - Flexibility for the contractor.
- Cons:
  - Uncertainty for contractors, contractees, and victims = sustainability of services.
  - Uncertainty regarding planning and development.
  - Labourous tender process.
  - Losing tender = losing staff and expertise.
  - Power struggles between service providers.
  - Government representatives may favour some NGOs.

Longer contracts mitigate risks.
Findings: Role of municipalities (1)

➤ Support to victims of trafficking not a priority among municipal actors.
➤ Municipal actors lack information and awareness of human trafficking.
   → not sufficiently aware of the specific needs of victims
   → do not recognize victims that come to their attention
   → do not provide victim-sensitive services

Awareness and training for municipal actors

➤ Many victims come from disadvantaged communities; a lack of preventive work at the municipal level

Awareness raising campaigns should be aimed at addressing the root causes of trafficking

Findings: Role of municipalities (2)

➤ Much of the work relies on active individuals rather than on institutionalised structures; suspicion between actors

Establish municipal, multi-agency coordination mechanisms, incl. NGOs; formalized agreements

➤ There is a lack of publicly funded, long-term support to victims of trafficking:
   · Those not admitted, those who are removed, and those with longer-term needs.
   · Housing, long-term psychological support, reintegration, educational and employment programmes for THB victims.

Develop a wider network of care
Findings: cost calculation/estimate

➤ Lack of coherent data on types of provided services: how much time is spent on service provision and planning.

➤ The data illustrates needs and related costs:
  - The services meet some, but not all needs.
  - Problems in assisting victims who have needs that do not readily fit within the services included in the governmental contracts.
  - Unclarieties in the division of responsibilities when it comes to the role of municipalities in assisting victims.

More in-depth studies needed; national researchers

Conclusions

➤ A well-organised and comprehensive victim support mechanism will lead to economic benefits in the long run.

➤ Adequate, specific and care that is provided as long as the victim needs help, will ultimately be more economically sound than not providing victims with the help they need.

➤ Municipalities should play a much larger role in rehabilitation, reintegration and in providing longer-term support than they currently do.
Thank you

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