

Changing Paradigms: Social Accelerator for sexually exploited

Program: Erasmus+ KA2 Capacity Building in the Field of Youth

Deadline for partnerships: 05.07.2017

The Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA) has announced a new Call for Proposals for Capacity Building projects under the Education, Training and Youth Programme Erasmus+. Capacity Building projects are transnational cooperation projects based on multilateral partnerships between organisations active in the field of youth.

Motivation behind the project:

Human trafficking is not just a heinous crime but also a recognized serious violation of human rights. Since the dawn of civilisation, the demand for prostitution has always been present. Increasing globalisation, increased opportunities of mobility, internet and advanced technologies added new dimension to the issue of human trafficking for sexual exploitation, especially within the European region and South East Asia. Human trafficking is a flourishing business as it involves low risks and high profits. Most victims are socially marginalized individuals facing high social barriers hence the most crimes are not declared and wrong-doers are rarely brought to justice.

A 2012 ILO report estimates that around 21 million individuals globally, including 11.4 million women and girls are trapped into modern-day slavery. Globally, a staggering 70% of victims of trafficking are women and girls (49% and 21% respectively). From 2004 to 2011, there has been a 11% increase in trafficking of young girls aged 16 to 25 making it a serious issue within the field of youth. The 2014 - 2015, Eurostat's research from the 28 EU countries and the other neighbouring EU countries paint a similar picture. Within EU, 80% of the victims are women and girls (67% and 13% respectively).

Although European Commission and the Government of India have been waging war against human trafficking and ensure human rights and dignity of the sexually exploited individuals still India as well as EU are witnessing a steady increase of trafficked and exploited individuals. In 2016 alone around 20'000 women and girls were trafficked and pushed into forced sex slavery in India. India is also the destination for women and girls trafficked from the neighboring countries e.g. Nepal and Bangladesh. Similarly, Eastern Europe specifically Romania and Bulgaria are the destinations for trafficked women from Asia, South America and Africa.

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The consortium through its network of public authorities and civil societies working in the field has identified both pull and push factors that leads to trafficking of women and girls across countries - poverty, lack of social security, existing gender inequalities, conflicts and violence are some of the push factors contributing to exploitation of women and girls. At the same time, promise of a better job prospects, demand for unskilled labour such as sexual services and better living conditions are among the pull factors.

The project works to gather the existing support systems locally and globally contributing in improving the lives of the sexually exploited individuals; build entrepreneurial capacities and generate social businesses diversifying livelihood options of the target group, sensitizing mainstream society and creating an easily replicable model of society's active participation in integrating sexually exploited individuals into mainstream society.

Problems the project aims to address:

1. Structural/System Support related:

- Lack of **access** to acquire skills and education needed to obtain an alternative occupation;
- Lack of access to financial instruments and seed funding to run small businesses

2. Capacities and skills related:

- Limited skills/capacities required to obtain an alternative occupation;
- Lack of skills, experience and knowledge to establish/run an enterprise;
- Lack of inter-personal skills to lead/advocate/voice for the community issues

3. Societal acceptance:

- Existing social stigma creates barriers and leads to the social segregation of the sex worker community;
- Lack of strong representation/first-person narrative of sex workers in mainstream media;
- Limited number of employers willing to recruit individuals of the community;
- Lack of a community mobilizing platform to ensure contact between the community and the mainstream society

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Innovations/Interventions to be developed during the project:

1.Strengthening Structural Support for sex workers to gain skills

- An ICT-based platform gathering information of existing support systems, upskilling programmes;
- A mobilized global community of supporting institutions exchange of best practices, legal advisory

2.Accelerator to build social businesses - An accelerator program aimed at building social enterprises run by the individuals exploited of the sex industry.

- Curriculum - non-formal learning methodology based programme to build personal and professional capacities of the target group to be employed and/or able to create and manage a business
- Mobilized local, national and global resources to boost social enterprises opened and managed by the target group

3.Innovative Storytelling sensitizing societies - Develop first person interactive narratives using innovative tools of dissemination - slam poetry, audio-visuals, street plays, dance and folklore.

- **Model Cooperation Network Toolkit** - an active engagement framework of voluntary group of representatives from civil societies, target group, public authorities collaborating to integrate the target group into mainstream society. Complete process, stakeholder management, community participatory approaches for easily replicable dissemination.

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Action Agenda for Change 2020

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