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**PROJECT**

**STRENGTHENING MULTIDISCIPLINARY COOPERATION TO ENSURE AN EFFECTIVE REFERRAL, ASSISTANCE, RIGHTS PROTECTION FOR VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING**

**JUST/2015/JACC/AG/VICT/9221**

**TRAINING**

**7-8 DECEMBER 2017**

**Location Sofia city, Bulgaria**

**Event organizer Center for the Study of Democracy**

**Legal framework**

Mr Vladimir Nikolov, prosecutor from the Regional Prosecutor’s Office in Pleven, acquainted the participants with the main definitions, related to human trafficking, as well as the leading international standards in the area. Special attention was paid to the national legal framework on combating trafficking and observing the rights of victims. Victims’ status was looked from the viewpoint of the anti-trafficking legislation, criminal procedure norms, as well as the national referral mechanism for victims of trafficking. Mr Nikolov also showed participants a short film about how women fall prey to traffickers for sexual exploitation.

Ms Miriana Ilcheva, research fellow with the Law Program of the Center for the Study of Democracy, presented the main ethics codes and norms, regulating the treatment of victims by judges and prosecutors, police, social workers, psychologists and medical professionals.

**Secondary victimisation**

Ms Diyana Videva, project co-ordinator at the Demetra Association, presented to participants the main situations during criminal proceedings, where secondary victimisation may occur, and the main attitudes by authorities, causing such effect. The main characteristics of post-traumatic stress disorder were presented, as well as the key elements and tendencies in treating it in cases of trafficking victims.

A role play was presented, including a victim of labour trafficking, a supporting psychologist from a crisis center and a prosecutor, interviewing the victim. The prosecutor attempted to represent the main elements, causing traumatization of the victim, as well as the hostility towards the support person, frequently experienced by social workers and psychologists. Participants were then invited to comment on those elements and note and show where the prosecutor might have acted differently.

Led by Ms Videva, participants were then invited to discuss in pairs and then comment on a case study of a 40-year-old woman who was returned from France after being trafficked for exploitation for begging, was placed in a trafficking victims’ shelter but stated she found no use in co-operating with institutions. Among the questions asked were whether the victim showed PTSD symptoms and what actions should be taken to avoid the victim’s repeat and secondary victimisation.

**Role of psychologists and social workers**

Ms Diyana Videva, project co-ordinator at the Demetra Association, presented to participants the main negative psychological factors, present in the background of trafficking victims, and the role of the psychologists and social workers in mitigating those factors upon first contact with the victim and also during the criminal proceedings. The main benefits of psychological and social intervention for the victim and for the trial were also discussed.

Led by Ms Videva, participants were then invited to discuss in pairs and then comment on a case study of a 29-year old woman, placed in a trafficking victims’ shelter after being trafficked for sexual exploitation and sham marriage and staying in a psychiatric hospital. During a routine walk, she falls into an angry aggressive state. Participants were asked what actions supporting professionals should take to reach emotional regulation of the victim and prepare her for participating in the proceedings.

**Multidisciplinary work**

Ms Diyana Videva, project co-ordinator at the Demetra Association, presented to participants the main principles of multidisciplinary work in national and transnational cases, as well as the factors determining the successful work of the multidisciplinary team. The main stages and steps in victims’ referral were discussed.

Ms Tanya Gyunova, secretary of the local anti-trafficking commission in Pazardzhik, related to participants a successful and a not so successful case in the work of the commission, where victims, respectively, were taken out of the trafficking environment and stayed in the trafficking networks. The importance of the close links among the professionals involved were discussed.

Led by Ms Videva, participants were then invited to discuss in pairs and then comment on a case study of a 38-year old woman, placed in a shelter. She was previously trafficked to France for prostitution and awaits for compensation after the traffickers’ trial. Her return was facilitated by a French NGO and IOM. Participants were asked which professionals should take part in the victim’s protection and support for successful reintegration and what actions should be taken by them.