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## Who Funds Re/integration? Ensuring sustainable services for trafficking victims

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### Abstract

This article discusses the critical importance of re/integration services in the lives of trafficked persons and as central to an effective anti-trafficking response. It outlines how support and resources for re/integration services have so far not been widely available and the impact of this on trafficked persons. The article also discusses different strategies used within one re/integration initiative—the Trafficking Victims Re/integration Programme (TVRP)—to promote sustainable re/integration services given the limited (and now declining) funding for re/integration in the Balkans. These strategies, which have met varying degrees of success, include: (1) advocating for government funding; (2) leveraging private-sector funding and contributions; and (3) establishing social enterprises to fund re/integration services. The article concludes by advocating greater attention to re/integration services for trafficked persons, including working creatively and collaboratively with civil society, government, the private sector and donors, to ensure that re/integration services are conceptualised, implemented and funded in ways that are sustainable and, thus, offer critical support to trafficked persons.

**Key words:** re/integration, trafficking, funding, donors, sustainability, social enterprises, government, private sector, Balkans

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## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

A great deal of money has been spent on anti-trafficking efforts in the Balkans since the late 1990s. Funding has come, most commonly, from international donors aimed, to a large extent, at trafficking prevention and supporting law enforcement and the criminal justice response. Less funding has been available for victim protection, particularly long-term re/integration services for trafficking victims. Yet this aspect of the anti-trafficking response is critical in terms of addressing the severe consequences of human trafficking as well as preventing re-trafficking and continued vulnerability.

Against this backdrop, in 2007 the King Baudouin Foundation (KBF) in Belgium initiated the Trafficking Victims Re/integration Programme (TVRP), to fund non-governmental organisations (NGOs) working on re/integration of trafficked persons in the Balkans. The intention was to support and enhance the technical capacity of organisations, while at the same time ensuring longer-term sustainability of re/integration services. Given the dearth of resources for re/integration work (from bilateral and private donors and national governments), the priority was to ensure that trafficked persons have access to long-term, ongoing services needed to recover and move on from trafficking and re/integrate into their families and communities.

This article discusses the critical importance of sustainable, long-term re/integration services in the lives of trafficked persons and as central to any effective anti-trafficking response. Re/integration is a long-term, multi-year and complex process, which requires many mutually reinforcing services and ongoing case management. As a consequence, re/integration is very costly and thus necessitates adequate and reliable funding. And yet these funds have not been forthcoming for various reasons, including: a failure to distinguish between (short-term) assistance and (long-term) re/integration; the complex, messy and unpredictable nature of re/integration work; the risk of failed re/integration; the high cost of re/integration services and case management; lack of budget allocation from national governments; a lack of interest in re/integration from international donors and foundations and so on.

Given the limited funding for re/integration services, different strategies have been used within the TVRP to promote sustainability—namely, (1) advocating for government funding of re/integration services; (2) leveraging private sector funding and contributions; and (3) establishing social enterprises to fund re/integration services. These strategies have met with varying degrees of success (and failure), impacting sustainability of re/integration services and, by implication, the lives and recovery of trafficking victims. While the importance of re/integration has been

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<sup>1</sup> This article reflects our experiences (and sometimes frustrations) while working to enhance re/integration support for trafficked persons in the Balkans, within the framework of the Trafficking Victims Re/Integration Programme (TVRP), funded by King Baudouin Foundation (KBF) and the German Development Cooperation Agency (GIZ), commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Thanks are especially due to TVRP partners for their ongoing efforts in this field of work: Different and Equal (Albania), Tjeter Vizion (Albania), Vatra (Albania), Medica Zenica (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Zemlja Djece (Bosnia and Herzegovina), Animus (Bulgaria), Nadja Centre (Bulgaria), Centre for Protection of Victims and Prevention of Trafficking in Human Beings, PVPT (Kosovo), Hope and Homes (Kosovo), Adpare (Romania), Young Generation (Romania), Atina (Serbia), Centre for Youth Integration (Serbia), Open Gate and Equal Access. We would also like to acknowledge the contributions to the TVRP of our colleagues at KBF, GIZ and NEXUS Institute. Thanks also to Rebecca Napier-Moore and Mike Dottridge for their research of anti-trafficking funds and their editorial review.

highlighted in other studies,<sup>2</sup> it remains largely under-studied, under-theorised and a low priority for most donors. We stress again the importance of re/integration services as part of any anti-trafficking response, drawing on our experiences from the TVRP in the Balkans over several years. Examples are drawn from direct interviews with trafficking victims assisted through the TVRP, as well as from the 2006 assessment, TVRP partner-organisations' reports, TVRP issue papers and the 2011 TVRP programme evaluation.<sup>3</sup> We have also drawn on empirical research on re/integration of trafficked persons to enhance the argument and balance our internal and potentially biased perspective on the issue, due to our involvement in the project.

## The importance of re/integration

Re/integration<sup>4</sup> refers to the process of recovery and economic and social inclusion following a trafficking experience.<sup>5</sup> It goes beyond direct assistance. 'It provides for a victim's safe, dignified and sustainable reinsertion into society and a normalised life.'<sup>6</sup> This commonly involves receiving a range of services over time, including shelter or other accommodation options, medical care, psychological assistance, legal

<sup>2</sup> See: L Bjerkan, *A Life of One's Own: Rehabilitation of victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation*, Fafo, Oslo, 2005; A Brunovskis and R Surtees, *A Fuller Picture: Addressing trafficking-related assistance needs and socio-economic vulnerabilities*, Fafo and NEXUS Institute, Oslo and Washington, DC, 2012; A Brunovskis and R Surtees, *No Place Like Home? Challenges in family reintegration after trafficking*, Fafo and NEXUS Institute, Oslo and Washington, DC, 2012; A Brunovskis and R Surtees, 'Coming Home: Family reintegration of trafficked women and girls', *Qualitative Social Work*, 2012; A Brunovskis and R Surtees, *Leaving the Past Behind? When victims of trafficking decline assistance*, NEXUS and Fafo, Washington, DC and Oslo, 2007; NB Busch-Armendariz, MB Nsonwu and HL Cook, 'Human Trafficking Victims and Their Children: Assessing needs, vulnerabilities, strengths, and survivorship', *Journal of Applied Research on Children*, 2011; T Caouette and Y Saito, *To Japan and Back: Thai women recount their experiences*, International Organization for Migration (IOM), Geneva, 1999; A Derks, *Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking in Cambodia*, IOM, Geneva, 1998; A Lisborg, *Re-thinking Reintegration: What do returning victims really want and need?* GMS-07 SIREN report, United Nations Inter-Agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP), Bangkok, 2009; A Lisborg and S Plambeck, *Going Back – Moving On: A synthesis report of the trends and experiences of returned trafficking victims in Thailand and the Philippines*, International Labour Organization (ILO), Bangkok, 2009; S Miles, H Sophal, L Vanntheary, O Long Heng, J Smith-Brown and D So, *The Butterfly Longitudinal Research Project. A Chab Dai study on reintegration*, Chab Dai Coalition, Cambodia, 2012; R Surtees, *After Trafficking: Experiences and challenges in the (re)integration of trafficked persons in the Greater Mekong Sub-region*, UNIAP and NEXUS Institute, Bangkok, 2013; R Surtees, *Listening to Victims: Experiences of identification, return and assistance in SEE*, ICMPD, Vienna, 2007; Terre des Hommes, *Supporting Child (Re)integration, A Terre des Hommes policy paper*, Tdh, Lausanne, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> R Surtees, *An Evaluation of Victim Assistance Programmes in SE Europe*, KBF and NEXUS Institute, Brussels and Vienna, 2006; R Surtees, *Life Beyond Trafficking: Lessons from the King Baudouin Foundation's Trafficking Victims Re/integration Programme*, KBF and NEXUS Institute, Brussels and Washington, 2011; R Surtees, *Re/integration of Trafficked Persons Series*, including six studies: *Handling 'difficult' cases*, 2008; *How can our work be more effective*, 2008; *Developing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms*, 2009; *Supporting economic empowerment*, 2012; *Ethical principles in the re/integration of trafficked persons*, 2013; *Working with trafficked children and youth*, 2014, KBF and NEXUS Institute, Brussels, Vienna, Washington.

<sup>4</sup> Re/integration includes settlement in a stable and safe environment, access to a reasonable standard of living, mental and physical wellbeing, opportunities for personal, social and economic development and access to social and emotional support. Successful re/integration centres around empowerment, assisting trafficked persons to become independent and self-sufficient. See: R Surtees, *Re/integration programmes in SE Europe – A background paper for the King Baudouin Foundation*, KBF and NEXUS Institute, Brussels and Vienna, 2006. The *Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings* refers to reintegration in requiring State Parties to make their best efforts 'to favour the reintegration of victims into the society of the State of return, including reintegration into the education system and the labour market, in particular through the acquisition and improvement of their professional skills.' Art. 16(5), *Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings*, 2005, CETS No. 197. This article and the TVRP use the term 're/integration' (elsewhere as (re)integration) to accommodate both re/integration into a familiar community and integration into a new community or country.

<sup>5</sup> Trafficked persons are those who have suffered the crime of human trafficking as outlined in the *United Nations Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons*, 2000.

<sup>6</sup> Direct assistance is short-term and generally includes temporary accommodation, the provision of temporary documents, travel grants to allow victims to return home, and basic or emergency healthcare. IOM, *The IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Trafficking*, IOM, Switzerland, 2007, p. 81.

assistance, education and/or professional/vocational training, economic assistance, livelihood opportunities (e.g. job placement, income generation), family mediation/counselling and support to secondary beneficiaries.<sup>7</sup> Re/integration is a long-term process because, in addition to addressing physical and psychological impacts of trafficking, it must address limited livelihood options at home (which often triggered the initial migration)<sup>8</sup> and complicated family and community environments. As one trafficked woman explained: ‘We have to start a brand new life, that’s why we need so much help and for a long time.’<sup>9</sup> The time required for re/integration (up to three years),<sup>10</sup> the myriad services required (including different services over time) and the need for long-term case management (i.e. staff) means that re/integration is costly and complex.

Re/integration services are often key to trafficked persons’ abilities to recover and move on with their lives. For some, re/integration services are their primary (and sometimes sole) source of support, as one woman explained:

As I am alone, without family support, without a place to live, starting life from the beginning, it is very important for me to have long-term support. In addition to training, I needed a place to live and, in my opinion, rent support is something that makes us feel well and secure, at least to give us time to save some money from salaries and be able to start to pay rent. All of that costs a lot. But there is no other way to economically re/integrate a [trafficking victim].<sup>11</sup>

By contrast, some trafficking victims go unassisted and struggle not only to recover but also, sometimes, to survive.<sup>12</sup> One young woman, trafficked for prostitution, considered entering street prostitution after escaping trafficking because she did not receive assistance and her family could not support her: ‘When I was at home with my parents we did not have enough to eat and I used to look out on the street and think about the choices I had. And the street looked like a way to make money.’<sup>13</sup> Lack of re/integration services is an abdication of responsibility by the state to protect trafficked persons under international human rights law. It has serious and long-term implications for trafficked persons, their families and communities.

## Background of the TVRP

A 2006 evaluation of anti-trafficking efforts in the Balkans, commissioned by the KBF, found that, in spite of donors spending millions of euros to combat human trafficking,

<sup>7</sup> See: R Surtees, *Monitoring Anti-Trafficking Re/Integration Programmes: A manual*, KBF and NEXUS Institute, Brussels and Vienna, 2010, p. 28; IOM, *The IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Trafficking*, 2007.

<sup>8</sup> See: Brunovskis and Surtees, *A Fuller Picture*; Brunovskis and Surtees, *Coming Home*; Brunovskis and Surtees, *No Place like Home*; Lisborg, *Re-thinking Reintegration*; Lisborg and Plambech, *Going Back - Moving on*; and Surtees, *After Trafficking*.

<sup>9</sup> See: Surtees, *Life Beyond Trafficking*.

<sup>10</sup> TVRP organisations provide re/integration support over a period of up to 36 months—the crisis phase (0–3 months); transition phase (4–12 months); and re/integration phase (13–36 months). While not all services are offered in all phases, the combination of services at these different stages cumulatively contributes to sustainable re/integration. See: Surtees, *Monitoring Anti-Trafficking Re/Integration Programmes*, p. 24.

<sup>11</sup> Surtees, *Life Beyond Trafficking*.

<sup>12</sup> These instances differ from victims who decline services, for various reasons. See: Brunovskis and Surtees, *Leaving the Past Behind*.

<sup>13</sup> Surtees, *Listening to Victims*, p. 189.

re/integration services were underdeveloped, with limited funds for organisations working on long-term re/integration.<sup>14</sup> What funds were available for assistance were generally short-term (one- to two-year project cycles, although re/integration takes years), in limited amounts (in spite of re/integration being labour intensive and involving multiple, ongoing and costly services)<sup>15</sup> and focused on shelters (often high-risk closed shelters, rather than open shelters and community-based re/integration responses despite the fact that re/integration takes place in people's families and communities).<sup>16</sup> Observations from NGOs interviewed in 2006 are illustrative:

Although there are a number of donors, the funding resources are limited, especially concerning grants, which are getting smaller and mainly are funding short-term projects with a duration of six months to one year.

Survivors are in a bad state when they come to us and they need longer-term care but the institutional support is limited. We want to concentrate on re/integration but no one wants to provide funding for this and so we do an array of activities.<sup>17</sup>

One of the largest donors in the region was the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA), which funded assistance for trafficked persons, largely through the International Organization for Migration (IOM) throughout much of the 2000s. While the scope of this protection effort was significant,<sup>18</sup> it was evaluated in 2003 as generally providing short-term 'Band-Aid' assistance, not sustainable re/integration support.<sup>19</sup> It also raised questions about the high cost of funding through an international organisation and the impact on sustainability. Similarly, a 2010–2011 evaluation of IOM counter-trafficking programmes funded by the Norwegian Agency for Development and Cooperation (NORAD) noted that IOM did not routinely collect information on the longer-term impacts of their programmes, including re/integration. The same evaluation recognised that the short project time frames made it difficult to assess outcomes and that no information was found about the lasting impact of assistance services.<sup>20</sup>

European Union (EU) funds for re/integration have been minimal. The main potential EU funding source for re/integration is through the DAPHNE programme, initiated by the Directorate General Justice for projects to assist victims, including for human trafficking. However, no current TVRP organisations report having received DAPHNE funds for re/integration programming. Some re/integration organisations in the Balkans have been funded through other EU programmes—e.g. Community Assistance for Reconstruction, Development and Stabilisation (CARDS) and Instrument for Pre-

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<sup>14</sup> R Surtees, *Evaluating Anti-Trafficking Victim Assistance in Southeastern Europe: A strategic planning paper for the King Baudouin Foundation*, KBF and NEXUS, Brussels and Vienna, 2006.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 31.

<sup>16</sup> One reason some trafficking victims declined assistance was because they did not wish to stay in a shelter; therefore they only accepted community-based support. See: Brunovskis and Surtees, *Leaving the Past Behind*.

<sup>17</sup> Surtees, *Evaluating Anti-Trafficking Victim Assistance in Southeastern Europe*, p. 20.

<sup>18</sup> C Wennerholm and E Zillen, *IOM Regional Counter-Trafficking Programme in the Western Balkans*, SIDA Evaluation 03/37, Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency Department for Central and Eastern Europe, 2003, p. 10, retrieved 13 November 2013, <http://www.sida.se/Publications/Import/pdf/sv/IOM-Regional-Counter-Trafficking-Programme-in-the-Western-Balkans.pdf>

<sup>19</sup> Wennerholm and Zillen, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup> J Berman and P Marshall, *Evaluation of the International Organization for Migration and its Efforts to Combat Human Trafficking*, Report 11/2010—Evaluation, Oslo, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation, 2011, pp. 54–55.

accession Agreement (IPA)—but these are pre-EU accession programmes that cover a range of issues beyond human trafficking. Other programmes are only indirectly related to trafficking (e.g. AENEAS is for migration and asylum; EIDHR<sup>21</sup> is about democracy and human rights), and these can be hard to fit with re/integration programming. One NGO spoke about their experience of seeking EU funds: ‘We have applied for funds for vulnerable groups or for human rights under EIDHR but we haven’t seen any funds for reintegration from the EU.’<sup>22</sup> The bottom line is that there is no specific funding for re/integration work, which means organisations often need to squeeze their projects into criteria that do not necessarily apply to their work, or expand their work beyond their expertise and mandate.

Even when assistance is funded, it is rarely allocated to actual services, as one organisation explained:

Lately we are facing the challenge of finding donors that support [re/integration] services....Donors are more interested in financing activities connected to the creation of policies, networks and platforms, lobbying for changes in the law. This makes it even harder for NGOs that work on re/integration to secure funds.<sup>23</sup>

Furthermore, in 2006, when the KBF evaluation was conducted, a number of donors were pulling back from assistance work, insisting that as governments in the region stabilised politically and economically, responsibility for service provision (for trafficked persons and the population generally) must increasingly be taken up by national governments. While certainly there was a need to encourage the assumption of state responsibility for social services, such an approach was seldom accompanied by a well-planned transition or exit strategy. For example, following accession to the EU in 2007, NGOs working on re/integration in Romania and Bulgaria found it difficult to access funds for their re/integration work. Large donors, like the United States Agency for International Development, withdrew and EU funds did not fill the gap, nor did governments allocate adequate funds for re/integration services. The Council of Europe Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA) reports that, while the Romanian government provided public funding to NGOs for assistance to trafficking victims in 2007 and 2008, there was a substantial drop in funding from 2009 by both foreign donors and the Romanian government.<sup>24</sup> In 2011, one TVRP partner organisation reported no improvement in funding opportunities for re/integration services.<sup>25</sup> In 2013, an official of the Romanian National Anti-Trafficking Agency reported a ‘legal impediment’ to government funding of NGOs that assist trafficked persons.<sup>26</sup> In sum, re/integration services (by the state or NGOs) remain inadequate, with governments not yet assuming responsibility for this work.

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<sup>21</sup> From 2000 to 2006: ‘European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights’; since 2006: ‘European Instrument for Democracy and Human Rights’, European Commission, retrieved 12 December 2013, <http://www.eidhr.eu/>

<sup>22</sup> Email correspondence with TVRP-funded NGO, December 2013.

<sup>23</sup> Email correspondence with TVRP-funded NGO, December 2013.

<sup>24</sup> Group of Experts on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings (GRETA), *Report concerning the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings by Romania*, First evaluation round, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, 2012, p. 31.

<sup>25</sup> Internal report, TVRP, 2011.

<sup>26</sup> ANITP (Agenția națională împotriva traficului de persoane, National Agency against Trafficking in Persons) *Presentation to Round-table to follow-up Council of Europe (GRETA) recommendations*, Bucharest, 3 October 2013.

## Aiming for Sustainability: Ensuring access to re/integration services

Recognising the significance of re/integration services and, equally, the limited and declining funding available for this, KBF implemented the TVRP to improve the quality and sustainability of re/integration services in the region. The TVRP primarily assists country nationals to re/integrate into their families and communities, although in some cases services also supported foreign nationals who were staying (temporarily or permanently) in the country where they were exploited. Most of those assisted are women and girl victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation, the most commonly identified trafficking victims in these countries. However, services are available to victims of all forms of trafficking regardless of nationality, sex and age, and organisations have increasingly recognised and sought to assist trafficked men and boys, as well as victims of other forms of exploitation like labour and begging.

The TVRP initially funded nine NGOs in Albania, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Macedonia, Romania and Serbia. Funding local NGOs (rather than international organisations working with NGO partners) was a carefully considered decision, especially in terms of long-term sustainability.

From 2007 to 2011, KBF provided grants totalling EUR 875,000 (USD 1,170,000).<sup>27</sup> Since 2011, the programme has been co-funded by GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit or German Development Cooperation Agency) commissioned by the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) in the framework of its Regional Programme on Social Protection and Prevention of Human Trafficking (SPPHT), in Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia, four of the five TVRP countries.<sup>28</sup> From 2011 to 2014, grants to re/integration NGOs totalled: EUR 763,870 (USD 1,023,586).<sup>29</sup> While the GIZ programme is not exclusive to re/integration of trafficked persons,<sup>30</sup> it does include re/integration as part of social protection work and the pooling of KBF and GIZ resources increased the financial scope of the TVRP, allowing more NGOs to be supported and to extend the programme to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The TVRP has, since 2011, funded eleven NGOs in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia and Serbia. The KBF/GIZ support is, in all cases, only partial funding for re/integration services, an average amount of EUR 25,000 (USD 33,500) per organisation per year. TVRP partners' annual budgets range from EUR 35,000 (USD 46,900) to EUR 350,000 (USD 469,000—for operating costs); expenditures specifically for re/integration services range from EUR 25,000 (USD 33,500) to EUR 180,000 (USD 241,200). While this was a function of KBF being a relatively small donor, it was also a conscious decision to provide consistent funding over time and in amounts consistent with current and anticipated funding levels. Nonetheless, KBF (and more recently BMZ through GIZ's SPPHT Programme) was, for most organisations, providing, in addition to technical assistance, core funding and continuity over time, backstopping when

<sup>27</sup> Surtees, *Life Beyond Trafficking*.

<sup>28</sup> The large budget and overlapping mandate of the SPPHT and TVRP had the potential to create (or further exacerbate) competition between NGOs and lead to duplicative (and/or an oversupply) of re/integration services.

<sup>29</sup> A total of EUR 1,630,000 (USD 2,184,200) was provided in grants to NGOs between 2007 and 2014. R Surtees, *Re/integration of Trafficked Persons: Working with children and youth*, KBF, NEXUS and GIZ, 2014. An exchange rate of EUR 1= USD 1.34 was used to convert all currencies in this article on 6 August 2014.

<sup>30</sup> SPPHT aims to develop a comprehensive age and gender sensitive social service system, catering to the needs of people affected by or at the risk of human trafficking. SPPHT is commissioned by BMZ from December 2010 until November 2015.

agencies were unable to access other funds for re/integration services.

The TVRP also engaged NGOs in strategising the long-term sustainability of re/integration services, with varying degrees of success.<sup>31</sup> Strategies included: (1) advocating for government funding of re/integration programmes and services; (2) leveraging private-sector funding and contributions; and (3) establishing social enterprises to fund re/integration services. However, this was not uncomplicated. Some organisations faced funding crises, with staff and beneficiaries left to absorb the impact. One organisation, in 2009, managed to ensure uninterrupted services only because staff went without salaries for months and contractors agreed to defer payments. In 2012, another organisation was forced to temporarily offer only crisis intervention due to lack of funds. The TVRP was designed to accommodate these challenges and the long-term nature of a transition to sustainability. The programme calibrated the introduction of sustainability requirements to an uncooperative (and, at times, openly hostile) government and business environment. When it finishes at the end of 2014, it will have run for eight years. During this period, organisations received a consistent base of funding while working towards long-term sustainability of re/integration services.

The following sections explore each strategy used to ensure sustainable re/integration services. By laying bare these experiences (both successes and failures), we hope to offer suggestions as well as cautions in building and funding sustainable re/integration services for trafficked persons.

### 1. Advocating for Government Funding of Re/integration Programmes and Services

When the TVRP started, there was little government support for re/integration services or programmes. NGOs had taken on re/integration work, traditionally a government's domain, because states were not adequately doing so. In late 2006, when the first grant applications were submitted to the KBF, only one organisation was receiving government funds. Moreover, this was municipal funding and a function of specific advocacy rather than a state-wide approach. Even strategic partnerships with state agencies for individual re/integration services—like employment centres and hospitals—were limited, as one organisation explained at the time:

In spite of the state's greater engagement...the major portion of the provision of services is still dependent on NGOs. Hence, foreign donors need to be acquainted with the real situation in order to help adequate mechanisms and services to be provided by NGOs until the state builds its capacities to do so.

A 2007 study of victim assistance in the Balkans found that trafficking victims faced problems in accessing even the most basic state services and receiving minimal state support. Where services were available, bureaucratic procedures impeded access.

Lack of government support was partly due to a deficit in government budgets in many service areas—e.g. social services, health, education—which affected the population at large. It may also have been due, at least in part, to the (often inaccurate) assumption that trafficking victims were foreign nationals rather than one's own country nationals.

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<sup>31</sup> R Surtees, *Taking Stock. Evaluating KBF's TVRP in the Balkans, 2006–2010*, KBF and NEXUS Institute, 2010.



Lobbying governments to support re/integration programmes and services has been a key, and indeed requisite, activity of the TVRP and some significant successes have been realised. Some organisations receive government funds for their programmes; others receive in-kind contributions, like public buildings for office space, shelters or a day centre or contribution of utilities and other expenses.<sup>32</sup>

The 2007 United States Department of State *Trafficking in Persons (TIP) Report* noted that governments in the region largely relied on NGOs to provide re/integration services to trafficking victims and makes no mention of government funds to NGOs for re/integration work. However, the 2011 and 2012 *TIP Reports* showed that governments were funding some re/integration services, as documented in the table below.

**Table 1: 2011 and 2012 Government Funding of Re/integration, in USD**

	2011	2012
<b>Albania</b>	9,775 to shelters for trafficked persons (for food expenses) <sup>33</sup>	7,280 to shelters for trafficked persons (for food expenses) <sup>34</sup>
<b>Bosnia and Herzegovina</b>	46,000 for services for victims of sexual violence, including trafficking <sup>35</sup>	69,000 to assist foreign trafficking victims; USD 46,000 to assist domestic trafficking victims (including NGO grants) <sup>36</sup>
<b>Kosovo</b>	153,000 for victim assistance <sup>37</sup>	198,000 for victim assistance <sup>38</sup>
<b>Serbia</b>	54,700 for victim assistance <sup>39</sup>	81,400 for victim assistance <sup>40</sup>
<b>The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia</b>	14,000 for victim assistance <sup>41</sup>	35,000 for victim assistance <sup>42</sup>

Importantly, governments are increasingly offering re/integration services, like medical care, counselling, legal aid and so on. In 2012, the Albanian government reportedly spent USD 280,952 on social services for adult trafficking victims, albeit through the government reception shelter, which then refers victims to one of three re/integration NGOs (none of which received funding).<sup>43</sup> And, in 2011, the Serbian government adopted the Law on Social Protection, designating trafficked persons a category of vulnerable persons, entitling them to rights and benefits under the social protection system.

<sup>32</sup> United States Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2007*.

<sup>33</sup> United States Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2012 (2012 TIP Report)*, p. 64.

<sup>34</sup> United States Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2013 (2013 TIP Report)*, p. 68.

<sup>35</sup> 2012 *TIP Report*, p. 92.

<sup>36</sup> 2013 *TIP Report*, p. 101.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 225.

<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 323.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>41</sup> 2012 *TIP Report*, p. 230.

<sup>42</sup> 2013 *TIP Report*, p. 244.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 68.

Some states provide more funds than others. One organisation in Kosovo, supporting abused and trafficked children, received from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy 50% of its budget in 2011 and 57% in 2012. By contrast, in 2012, the Macedonian government allocated a very small amount of funds for assistance—USD 35,000, divided between five NGOs.<sup>44</sup> An additional EUR 5,300 (USD 7,102) was provided for rent and utilities to the NGO operating the government shelter, while the shelter operating costs are approximately EUR 70,000 (USD 93,800; leaving the NGO to raise more than EUR 55,000 [USD 73,700] from other sources).<sup>45</sup>

The provision of government support has been neither linear nor assured. State funding has waxed and waned due to budget constraints, as well as changes in government and political priorities. Some organisations received state funds for re/integration services one year but not subsequently. In 2010, the Serbian government promised funds for re/integration services for trafficked victims, which led international donors to cease funding the TVRP-supported re/integration programmes. When government funds did not materialise, the re/integration organisation struggled to stay open and provide adequate services.<sup>46</sup> One centre for vulnerable and trafficked children in Serbia received, in 2012, about 42% of its budget from a municipal social welfare department, an amount that was reduced to 18% in 2013, due to the dismissal of the mayor and city government of Belgrade.<sup>47</sup>

Additionally, trafficked persons face administrative barriers in accessing re/integration services. Access to state services requires identity documents, which are taken away from many trafficked persons during exploitation and cannot be re-issued without permanent residency (and many do not have a fixed address because they do not own their homes or are not living with their families). Also, trafficked persons may be required to self-identify as trafficking victims to state agencies, which many are unwilling to do because of concerns about confidentiality and discrimination.

There are also structural factors that inhibit government funding of re/integration services. With decentralisation, services and funds are to be provided at a local level and yet resources do not always exist locally. There is also often a lack of trained and sensitised human resources to ensure the provision of high quality and adequate re/integration services at the local level. In many countries, changes of government often lead to staff turnover (or dismissal), which can work against positive developments.

Moreover, some governments continue to abdicate responsibility for social services to NGOs and rely on international donors to fund services for trafficking victims.<sup>48</sup> Consider, for example, the comment of one high-ranking government official responsible for anti-trafficking activities. When pressed about his government's very low funding of services in an interview during a monitoring visit in 2011, he said: 'We won't fund NGOs doing re/integration because if we do that, then the donors will

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<sup>44</sup> Ibid., p. 244.

<sup>45</sup> Email correspondence with TVRP partner NGO, November 2013.

<sup>46</sup> Email correspondence with TVRP partner NGO, November 2013.

<sup>47</sup> Email correspondence with TVRP partner NGO, November 2013.

<sup>48</sup> When GIZ initiated the SPPHT, there were concerns that a large influx of donor funds would undermine government commitments and advances in assuming responsibility for re/integration services. KBF and GIZ agreed to partner and co-fund the TVRP to ensure coordination and avoid such conflicts. Given GIZ's existing relationships with governments, the partnership also had the potential to contribute to government responsibility for re/integration work, i.e. assistance from state social services and by funding NGOs offering re/integration services.

leave.’ Such statements and attitudes raise questions about the extent to which individual NGOs can ensure sustainable re/integration services, even so many years after such discussions and efforts began. It also demonstrates lack of cooperation between governments and the civil society, so crucial for sustainability.

## 2. Leveraging Private Sector Funding and Contributions

Securing private-sector donations has been another strategy toward sustainability—fundraising from local businesses and from private donors, like foundations. In late 2006, only a few organisations had approached private businesses for donations and in-kind contributions and had faced many challenges. By contrast, in 2013, all organisations proactively sought support from local businesses. Most commonly this comprised in-kind contributions—e.g. free dental services for beneficiaries, reduced fees for professional training courses, donations from or discounts at local stores (clothes, shoes, food, hygiene supplies), building supplies for renovating a shelter and so on—although some organisations also received monetary contributions. While this was usually in small amounts (contributions of a few hundred euros), some organisations in Albania, Serbia and Bosnia and Herzegovina received contributions from private businesses ranging from EUR 2000 (USD 2,680) annually to several thousand euros. In 2012, one Serbian organisation received EUR 10,000 (USD 13,400) from a local business and, in 2013, EUR 8,000 (USD 10,720) of in-kind contributions of food, clothing and furniture.<sup>49</sup>

Nonetheless, there are challenges, including complicated administrative procedures and lack of tax exemptions for business donations. One organisation was required to prepare invoices for ‘promotional services’ to receive donations from private businesses, otherwise the company would be taxed on its donation. This is also unpredictable funding—one NGO in Serbia received almost EUR 15,000 (USD 20,100) in private-sector contributions in 2012 but less (not quite EUR 10,000/USD 13,400) in 2013—which complicates long-term planning.<sup>50</sup> Moreover, staff costs constitute a high percentage of re/integration budgets, as case management, which underpins successful re/integration, is labour intensive. Some organisations struggle to leverage funds for staff salaries; many private donors prefer to fund ‘tangible’ contributions.

Leveraging the support of foundations has been far less successful in spite of concerted efforts to advocate for the involvement of foundations in protection and re/integration.<sup>51</sup> Few foundations are willing to support re/integration services. To some extent, this seems to be due to the complexity of the issue. It is an expensive undertaking with a high risk of failure, which seemingly does not appeal to many foundations. It is also less visible and less appealing than other types of anti-trafficking work, like awareness and prevention activities. Moreover, sustainable re/integration programmes require long-term involvement and relatively large budgets with unpredictable results, which does not fit with the fast-changing priorities of many private foundations as well as with a general focus on short-term projects or on policy work. There is also an assumption within philanthropic circles that this issue is being tackled by multi-lateral and bilateral donors, as well as large international organisations, and that the leverage of private foundations would be limited. At the

<sup>49</sup> Email correspondence with TVRP partner NGO, November 2013.

<sup>50</sup> Email correspondence with TVRP partner NGO, November 2013.

<sup>51</sup> Exceptions include: Oak Foundation, ProVictimis Foundation and the Sigrid Rausing Trust. Postcode Foundation (Sweden) and Mary Ward Loreto Foundation (Albania) are scheduled to fund re/integration in Albania in 2014.

same time, official statistics about the seemingly low numbers of recognised victims (and the even lower numbers of those successfully re/integrated) dissuade donors from venturing into such complex work. In addition, at a recent TVRP seminar on sustainability of re/integration services,<sup>52</sup> some foundation representatives (those affiliated with businesses) stressed the need for re/integration NGOs to link any funding proposals to the foundation's or business' core work and mandate, which is not an easy fit for social service provision and re/integration.

One overarching challenge of private sector fundraising is that it is labour intensive work, with uncertain and highly variable outcomes. As such, it is not always an option for smaller organisations with fewer staff who need to focus on their project work and do not have resources to take on this additional task. While volunteers might contribute to fundraising, this requires appropriate training, monitoring and oversight, which also involves human resources.

### 3. Establishing Social Enterprises to Fund Re/integration Services

Social entrepreneurship is increasingly acknowledged as an innovative strategy towards economic development and social wellbeing.<sup>53</sup> Social enterprises can contribute to the long-term financial sustainability of NGOs in that profits can fund social services for trafficked persons and the enterprise can potentially serve as a safe and protected workplace for them.

Social enterprises have increasingly been implemented by TVRP-funded organisations, which have set up an internet café, tour guiding, restaurant, bakery, catering, a printing company, and a car wash. However, results have been mixed, not least because of the lack of a legal framework for social enterprises. This means that they are taxed as regular businesses and even as 'big businesses', as is the case in Albania. Additional difficulties have been due to lack of start-up capital and professional capacity for, and interest in, managing a business, which, regardless of its social aims, must function competitively in a business environment. Recent economic crises have further threatened the viability of social enterprises.

Moreover, some difficulties are specific to anti-trafficking organisations and their beneficiaries—not least that beneficiaries may lack the education and professional skills required to work in such enterprises and their physical and psychological condition may impede their productivity. It is also an open question as to when it is appropriate for beneficiaries to staff such endeavours, for some staff, depending on how they are introduced to the role, may identify beneficiaries as trafficked, exposing them to discrimination and possibly violence. Critically, setting up a social enterprise requires often very significant adjustments in the management of anti-trafficking NGOs, or at least the social enterprise component, and also requires capacity building and significant capital investment.

Results for social enterprises have been mixed. One TVRP organisation, in 2011, set up a bakery as a social business to train and provide work experience to beneficiaries and

<sup>52</sup> Sustainability Week on Protecting Victims of Human Trafficking and Improving Social Inclusion—Partnering for Sustainable Social Services, KBF, GIZ SPPHT, Jahorina, Bosnia and Herzegovina, 23–26 September 2013.

<sup>53</sup> C Borzaga, G Galera and R Nogales (eds.), *Social Enterprise: A new model for poverty reduction and employment generation. An examination of the concept and practice in Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States*, United Nations Development Programme, European Research Network, 2008.

also to eventually make a profit to fund social services. They received EUR 33,000 (USD 44,220) in private and charitable donations but faced many challenges not least because staff, who lacked business experience and expertise, worked on this venture (often in addition to their re/integration work). The bakery was initially housed in the shelter kitchen but, in 2013, they opened a public bakery/shop front. The business broke even, partly because they have now hired a professional business manager to operate the business. Nonetheless, significant challenges remain in terms of the blurred lines between beneficiaries and staff, and also because the business and social services components often diverge in philosophy and approach.

## Conclusion

This paper has discussed the generally inadequate funding and support for re/integration services, a critical component of protection efforts in anti-trafficking. These resources have not been forthcoming for various reasons, including a failure to distinguish between short-term assistance and long-term re/integration; the complex, messy and unpredictable nature of re/integration work; the risk of failed re/integration; the high cost of re/integration services and case management; lack of budget allocation from national and local governments; and a lack of interest in re/integration from international donors and foundations. This failure has necessarily impacted the lives of many trafficked persons who rely on services and support to recover from the crime of trafficking.

This article has also discussed how organisations and institutions can be and, to varying degrees, have been successful in moving towards a more diverse and sustainable funding base for re/integration support and services. Certainly re/integration organisations in the Balkans have made significant strides in the direction of long-term sustainability of high-quality and professional re/integration services for trafficked persons—services from both the state and NGOs. However, this has not been without complications; it is neither a linear nor an inevitable trajectory. NGOs in the Balkans have, at times, struggled to keep much-needed re/integration services available to trafficked persons. And trafficked persons have, at times, been unable to access services and support needed to recover and move on from their trafficking experience.

This discussion is intended to be helpful in considering how sustainability of re/integration services might be fostered in different settings, albeit with requisite adaptations to individual settings and contexts. The recognition of the long time frame and intensive labour required in re/integration service provision and case management is key. Equally important is a funder's willingness to accommodate the crises and problems faced along the way, including the vagaries of public and private sector support and the difficulties in establishing economically viable social enterprises. One reason that it has been possible to achieve some measure of sustainability for re/integration services in the Balkans is linked to the donors' technical support and backstopping of re/integration support through uncertain, transitional times—when NGOs, governments and the private sector were figuring out their respective roles and responsibilities as well as possible partnerships and cooperation. This highlights that the move towards sustainability is a process that is likely to be longer and more complex in countries and regions with weaker state structures, lower state budgets

and less developed social protection systems.

The authors, therefore, conclude this article with a call for greater attention to re/integration –not only in terms of funding from national governments and donors but also in terms of working alongside organisations and institutions to discuss, explore and support long-term sustainability of re/integration services. Re/integrating into one’s family and community after a trafficking experience is often a slow and painful process. It is messy and complicated and fraught with setbacks and failures. In addition to coming to terms with their exploitation, trafficked persons face many challenges in their social environment and in forging a viable livelihood. As a consequence, re/integration work is slow moving, labour intensive, unglamorous and intensely complex. Each experience of successful and sustainable re/integration is a hard-won success. And yet it is in these hard-won successes that the fight against trafficking is realised. Re/integration services must be reliably and widely available to all trafficked persons who wish to receive them, and they must be of the highest possible quality. While the cost of re/integration services is great, the cost of not supporting (and funding) re/integration—for trafficked persons and society generally—is far greater.

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