

-Save the Children-

**The Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA)
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs Norway (MFA)
The Oak Foundation**

**Child Trafficking Response Programme in South East Europe
Phase II**

External Evaluation

**Héilean Rosenstock-Armie, Consultant
Sibiu, April 2008
heilean@hotmail.com**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Table of Contents	ii
List of Abbreviations / Acronyms	iii
Executive Summary	iv
Problem Statement	1
Scope of Evaluation and Methodology	2
Evaluation Terms and Subsequent Findings	
Prevention	5
Identification	14
Reintegration	18
Regional Added Value	
Regional Information Exchange	24
Development of Regional Policies and Advocacy	28
Design and Application of the Impact Monitoring System	30
Capacity Building of Programme Teams	34
Cross Cuttings Themes	
Migration	36
Roma Discrimination	38
Violence and Child Protection	40
Gender Discrimination	41
Appendices	
Terms of Reference	43
List of Interviewees	46
Questionnaire	47
Results of Focus Group	48
Bibliography	49
Recommendations	51

List of Abbreviations

BiH:	Bosnia and Herzegovina
CRC:	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CTRP:	Child Trafficking Response Programme
GIM:	Global Impact Monitoring Guidelines
IDP:	Internally Displaced Person
IO:	International Organisation
IOM:	International Organisation of Migration
NGO:	Non Government Organisation
NRM:	National Referral Mechanism
OECD:	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OP:	The Optional Protocol on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography
OSCE:	Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe
ODIHR:	Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
RMT:	Regional Management Team
UN:	United Nations
UNICEF:	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNIFEM:	United Nations Development Fund for Women
SC:	Save the Children
SCEP:	Separated Children in Europe Programme
SEE:	South East Europe
TdH:	Terre des Hommes
ToR:	Terms of Reference

Executive Summary

This is an external evaluation of Phase II the CTRP Programme in South East Europe. The participating countries/entities were Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Kosovo, Montenegro, Romania and Serbia. The three year programme ended in March 2008. Child trafficking continues to be a serious concern in South Eastern Europe, with high numbers of children trafficked for exploitative purposes and a continuation of a Phase III is justified.

An evidence-based approach is central to the work of SC as is a child-rights approach and so a child-specific, participatory piece of research is a relevant main output of this phase. The regional research report and national reports illustrate beautifully the value of child participation and demonstrate an evidence base for future interventions. Examining risk factors alongside children's resiliency as well as their agency illustrates the pioneering work of CTRP in SEE. The printing of a child-friendly version of the research, based on consultation with children as to content, design and dissemination is an example of best practice in child-centredness.

The indicators designed to measure the research stated that three key risks and three key resiliency factors would be identified. Instead the results showed a more complex interplay. It shows the complex relationship between the macro (socio-economic, cultural, political) interpersonal (relationships with parents, caregivers, peers, community, state and non state-actors) and individual level factors (self-esteem, levels of trust, level of choices). It 'hinders casual claims about risk and trafficking and makes it challenging to identify specific children who are at risk'¹

Does this mean that the objective was not met? On the contrary, complex findings illustrate a complex interplay and thus ensure future interventions will not make general assumptions about risk as other interventions have done. Many lessons in prevention have been learnt as a result of the research. The concept paper for a possible Phase III includes focused interventions based on research findings. The research as an output met the evaluation terms, being relevant, effective and having impact. The consultant believes it was a missed opportunity not to include the voice of more trafficked children where over 600 at-risk children were involved. A possible follow on from the research would be to interview more trafficked children and to look again at risk and resiliency from their life experiences.²

Direct work with at-risk children to prevent trafficking forms a key part of the CTRP programme across the region. Most literature on trafficking discusses the clandestine nature of trafficking, the difficulty in finding and identifying victims or at-risk children. Surely, there is a need therefore for more outreach work to build trust with children.

¹ Save the Children, Children Speak Out: Risk and Resiliency in South East Europe, Regional Report 2007 p12

² In discussion with Veslemoy Naerland, Programme Director SC Albania

Where budget resources do not allow such, volunteers should be considered for outreach work. They should receive child-protection training and be vetted.

The research revealed that many at risk children do not trust NGOs anymore than state actor. The role of peers was emphasised in the research. There are many examples of peer to peer and child-led activities across the region.

Community-based child-protection networks (CCPN) have been established in three of the programme countries. The concept of community child-protection networks has been long advocated in anti-trafficking interventions. Issues around confidentiality and shared data information about children arise however in relation to such networks. They are still running on an ad-hoc basis and rules and guidelines of operation are needed.³

The consultant sees the collaboration in Albania between UNICEF, TdH and SC to set up CCPNs as a best practice example of joint cooperation. Such coherence and connectedness should be continued so as not to ‘reinvent the wheel’

In years 1 and 2 of the programme, all countries/entities did a mapping of the national referral mechanism, measured against child rights standards. This was an important and relevant activity. This activity was intended to feed into advocacy work and especially at regional level. An illustrative example of such is the SC submission to the European Commission on the issue of national coordinating mechanisms.⁴ The consultant however believes the possibilities were not fully exploited. It was stated that the activity, which took two years for all the countries to complete, ‘could have been planned more consistently within the programme’⁵ As year three of the programme focused on the regional research results, the information gleaned from the mapping exercise was possibly overlooked - a lost opportunity. The intervention evaluated therefore in terms of efficiency shows that the opportunities were not optimally exploited. There are many examples of problems in identification and the findings from the mapping should have formed the basis of an advocacy strategy to pressure states to implement National Referral Mechanisms.

Services have been provided to children in most of the programme countries. Services include shelter, material assistance, medical assistance, psycho-social and legal assistance. There are obvious case studies where intervention has been successful. Training and capacity building of staff in shelters and hotlines has seen the services become more child-friendly and numbers of children using the services have increased as a result.

³ Interview with Gina Badiu, CTRP Coordinator SC Romania (Salvati Copii)

⁴ Save the Children, Submission on Key Components of EU Recommendations to Enhance National Coordinating Mechanisms for Early Identification, Assistance and Protection of the Rights of Victims of Trafficking, June 2007

⁵ E-mail correspondence with Maria Antonia Di Maio, Regional Programme Coordinator

A case study reveals that before CTRP intervention, Serbia had no focus on child victims. Serbian NGO ASTRA is now considered a child-friendly organization which the CTRP can take credit for.⁶ The number of children receiving its services has grown, as has the number calling the hotline and visiting the day-centre. A cost analysis of CTRP funds given to ASTRA indicates efficiency. The quality of the outputs illustrates quality and effectiveness.

Child participation is not a rights issue but it is also practical and increases effectiveness of interventions. In Kosovo, SC and their partner NGO Kosovo Youth Council recently did an awareness raising campaign. The initial idea was to print and disseminate flyers with the message. Children stated that flyers are never read and always thrown away and suggested to use a set of postcards which the child could keep and even pin to their wall, thus allowing the message to be read over and over. This is an excellent example of the merit of listening to children on matters that affect them.

Direct reintegration activities are implemented in Romania and Bulgaria. BiH, Serbia and Montenegro work less directly through capacity building of shelter staff. In Romania the service is described as a “shallow service”⁷ where the child can only remain 30 days and then is referred on, often to an institution. Romania’s inadequate child-protection system was well documented in the 1990s in the world’s media and caused outrage. De-institutionalisation has been a key aim in Romania ever since. The decision to send trafficked children to institutions, therefore, is all the more perplexing. In Bosnia and Herzegovina, a case study revealed that a child victim was returned from a shelter to the institution she grew up in and soon went missing. Follow up revealed that six other girls from the institution had been trafficked.

Though the consultant accepts that Save the Children has a limited mandate in child protection and that the state services are the duty bearers responsible for reintegration and follow up, it seems that the paramount principle of Do No Harm and the principle of the best interests of the child⁸ have not been adhered to in such decisions. Where Save the Children has no mandate, they should advocate for those who are responsible to ensure that reintegration is comprehensive and effectively monitored and that the child’s best interest is paramount in all decisions.

The Concept Paper for an extension of the CTRP programme drops reintegration as a key stated objective. The consultant is concerned that without meaningful reintegration, victims of trafficking will be re-trafficked or will become victims of other forms of violence and abuse. It is increasingly acknowledged that high numbers of victims are re-trafficked. The consultant recommends that reintegration remains a key component of future work.

⁶ E-mail correspondence with Masa Avramovic CTRP Coordinator SC Serbia and Olivera Otasevic Coordinator Astra SOS Hotline Serbia

⁷ Interview with Gina Badiu CTRP Coordinator Save the Children Romania (Salvati Copii)

⁸ Article 3 CRC

The consultant believes that the appointment of a guardian for trafficked children to act in their best interests should be advocated for across the region. The appointment of a guardian would be a safeguard to ensure the well being of the child and ensure the child receives basic services from the relevant authorities. The guardian would work to find a durable solution for long-term care and reintegration following a best interest determination. Both the SCEPT and UNICEF⁹ advocate a guardian and so it would seem that CTRP should also be advocating and lobbying for same, possibly to be integrated into the government National Plans of Action of each country/entity.

The terms of reference for this evaluation specified that particular focus should be placed on achievements under the 'regional dimension' of the programme. An example of this is information exchange. The need for a regional information officer was stated at the end of Phase I. Initially this person was to be part time but the information officer recruited after a long delay works full time based in Albania.

Having examined outputs against objectives set at the start of the programme, the consultant believes an information officer should also have knowledge in the field of child rights/trafficking so that they can overlap as a spokesperson for the media and/or for awareness-raising events. This changed role would justify a full-time position where currently it is not justifiable in the consultant's opinion. In evaluation terms, it is not an effective intervention, nor is it currently relevant or a priority.

A key attribute to trafficking, is that it transcends borders (though noting that internal trafficking is on the rise, but which Surtees (2005)¹⁰ claims often leads to international trafficking) It would seem imperative therefore for information exchange and networking between countries of origin, transit and destination. Early Phase II proposal drafts also planned to, 'maintain and enrich links with SC in Western European countries'¹¹ There was an intention to forge links with SC Italy but this did not come about which the consultant believes is regretful. Any Phase III however must forge these links.

The concept paper for a Phase III states that the current geographical coverage may be reduced. Though no countries are mentioned as possibly being dropped from the programme, the consultant notes that many donors have withdrawn from Romania and Bulgaria since they joined the EU in January 2007. The consultant believes it is too early for an exit or phase out of the CTRP in these countries.

A best practice example of regional cooperation and the development of a regional policy is the SC/SCEPT Position Paper on Preventing and Responding to Trafficking of Children in Europe.¹² SC/SCEPT now has a working definition of child trafficking, which should be advocated by CTRP and included in any CTRP future literature. The definition is broader to include victims of internal trafficking, and it addresses the issue of coercion

⁹ UNICEF Guidelines on the Protection of Child Victims of Trafficking 2006

¹⁰ Surtees, R, 2005 Second Annual Report on Victims of Trafficking in SEE, IOM

¹¹ Ginzburg, O, 2004 Evaluation of Save the Children's anti-trafficking Programme in SEE, Final Report p25

¹² SC/SCEPT 2007 Position Paper on Preventing and Responding to Trafficking of Children in Europe

both of which were problematic in the UN Palermo definition. The position paper offers much opportunity to advocate at country level, regional level and EU level. Future policy development and advocacy work should be done with both SCEP and SC Alliance Brussels office. Advocacy at EU level is possible in this period when some of the countries have signed partnership agreements with the EU and EU conditionality can now use the ‘carrot and stick’ to pressure these countries to improve child protection systems including anti-trafficking interventions, as a prerequisite for full EU membership.

An advocacy strategy was not formed by CTRP because of late completion of the research. Any Phase III should work on a regional advocacy strategy at the start of the programme period. Regional advocacy was on an ad-hoc basis but none the less of note. Examples include the many talks the regional programme coordinator gave at international conferences after the launch of the regional research.

The CTRP has stronger standing as a regional project rather than as individual national projects. The CTRP acronym is recognized in anti-trafficking circles and mentioned as a case study in literature on child trafficking. Likewise the SC logo is recognised world wide. This gives the CTRP much opportunity for advocacy and should be exploited. It also illustrates the ‘added value’ of being a regional programme.

A comprehensive impact monitoring system (IMS) was designed and introduced to the programme in year two. Sixty seven indicators were designed by an external consultant for the programme to measure the impact of activities. Each country/entity had approximately 30-40 indicators each.

The indicators were designed a year and a half after the commencement of Phase II. Such a late introduction of M&E caused difficulties. M&E should ideally be introduced at project planning stage and it is regretful that this was not done. The experience was very challenging. Coordinators stated that they did not have enough time to verify 40 indicators, especially as many are not working 100% on the CTRP programme but have competing projects too. The consultant recommends that any future Phase III must fund all staff to work full time of the CTRP programme.

The fact that the partner organisations have learnt to measure impact will assist their long term project design, credibility and evidence base and their eventual sustainability and ability to apply for funds from other donors in the future. After the initial reluctance, the coordinators now state that they are grateful that they were ‘pushed’ to use the IMS and see its huge benefits.

The consultant recommends that any future Phase III includes design of indicators at the project design stage. Coordinators should design the indicators and tools themselves with support from RMT and an expert to facilitate the process. Further training should be given on M&E along with project design. A consultant should be brought in to facilitate design of a log-frame by the CTRP team for any Phase III and a regional strategic planning meeting should give enough time to this exercise. The consultant acknowledges

how difficult log-frames are but when done correctly they are a huge aid to project cycle management. The design of a log-frame for any Phase III should be as participatory as possible. As children are the main beneficiaries, their involvement in programme design should be advocated too.

Input from the regional management team was seen by all as a form of capacity building. Montenegro stated that, ‘the continuous and intensive communication and information exchange through the RMT helps increase regional spirit and effectiveness of the programme’¹³ Personal and professional support from colleagues was deemed important by many, so that staff do not feel that they are trying to tackle the complex issue of child trafficking alone. Input from the programme regional coordinator reminded staff of the regional element of the programme and gave a broader overview and context to their daily work.¹⁴

It is clear to the consultant how issues relating to trafficking are interlinked. Some issues are particularly salient. The research confirmed that the majority of children in the region see migration to the West as a means of escape. In Montenegro over 50% of teenagers wish to go abroad.¹⁵ The UN Special Representative on Migration, Peter Sutherland, has stated that migration is, ‘the key international question for this century.’¹⁶ A staggering proportion of the world’s population is on the move in this era of globalisation and children clearly form the ‘vulnerable crest of this wave.’¹⁷

Of course migration in broad terms is too big a bite for CTRP and there are many other actors working on migration issues. Any focus on migration must be in the context of its link to trafficking. In evaluation terms the consultant sees the inclusion of a focus on migration as relevant.

Another issue not currently addressed within the programme is the vulnerability of children left behind by migrating parents, some 350,000 in Romania alone. They should be seen as another at risk group by the programme.

The consultant believes that the regional research report and national reports were unclear in relation to risk of trafficking in the Roma community. The report seems to skirt the issues and makes no clear recommendations. This is similar to the criticism by Ginzburg of Phase I of the programme when he asked if Roma children were included in interventions simply for being Roma. More should be learnt about Roma children and stereotyping should be challenged. The consultant believes that the link between forced marriage and trafficking should be explored further and CTRP should take a stance (a position paper) on the issue. The Decade of Roma Inclusion should be used to debate the issue.

¹³ CTRP Montenegro Annual Report Year 2 p31

¹⁴ Phone Conversation with Ana Stojovic Jankovic CTRP Coordinator SC Montenegro

¹⁵ Phone conversation with Ana Stojovic Jankovic, CTRP Coordinator SC Montenegro

¹⁶ Peter Sutherland, UN Special Representative on Migration, *The Irish Times* 17-03-07

¹⁷ Eliahu F, ‘The Child’s Right to Family Unity in International Law’ *Law and Policy* 17 (4) (1995): 397-439 p398

The UN Study on violence against children¹⁸ showed how endemic the problem is. Social services are still weak in SEE and the link between violence and trafficking or the 'endless cycle of violence' is documented in CTRP reports. Many of the research reports have recommended that trafficking should not be addressed in isolation, but holistically through a child protection response. The programme should focus on Child Protection where it relates to trafficking. An emphasis on gender equality is also relevant.

In conclusion, a holistic approach, which is a key principle of SC, should be the working motto of CTRP in any Phase III. However these broad themes should always be linked to child trafficking to ensure a targeted approach. Prevention work should continue as a focus but with an added emphasis on advocacy, reflecting the lessons learnt by CTRP over the years.

None of the criticisms within the report are a criticism of the staff of the CTRP. Their hard work, enthusiasm, openness and passion is evident to the consultant. The consultant extends heart felt thanks to them for their contribution to this report.

It is also clear that a huge amount has been achieved by the CTRP. Much of the work is pioneering, on an issue that is extremely complex and in a region which is still in transition with a multitude of social problems, where social services and child protection mechanisms are weak and where a rights-based approach is a new concept. A follow up evaluation of CTRP in some years will no doubt measure impact to a greater extent than is possible now.

Key Recommendations

Follow-up research should be conducted with a larger sample of trafficked children to identify risk and resiliency factors in their experience.

A Phase III of the CTRP should be funded to allow the full benefit of the research be realised.

More outreach work should be considered to find trafficked and at risk children and to build their trust

Rules and guidelines should be developed for all CCPNs to ensure they adhere to the Do No Harm principle. Confidentiality must be assured for all trafficked children

Any Phase III should use the findings of the regional mapping to advocate for the establishment and/or implementation of National Referral Mechanisms in all countries/entities

The appointment of guardians for trafficked children should be advocated for across the region

¹⁸ The UN Secretary General's study on violence against children presented to the GA 2006. A/61/150

Reintegration should remain a key component of any Phase III

Links with destination countries should be forged

The current geographic coverage should not be reduced

Vetting of all staff working with children should be mandatory

Joint advocacy with the SC Brussels office and SCEP should be developed further

A regional advocacy strategy should be developed and become a core feature of future work

Donors should fund all staff to work full time on the CTRP programme

Design of indicators should be done at programme design stage of any Phase III and CTRP Coordinators should be involved in design of indicators

Further training on M&E is required for CTRP staff and partners

Full resources should be given to design of a log-frame and SMART objectives with full participation of coordinators and other stakeholders.

The CTRP should advocate for a child-rights focus on immigration policy and legislation, using their evidence base on the links between trafficking and migration

Children left behind by migrating parents should be seen as another at risk group by the programme

The link between forced marriage and trafficking should be explored further and CTRP should take a stance (a position paper) on the issue. The Decade of Roma Inclusion should be used to debate the issue.

The programme should focus on child protection as it relates to trafficking. Debate on such linkages should be had, so that CTRP has a specific role in the region, to avoid overlap with other actors focusing on child protection

An emphasis on gender equality is relevant for any Phase III.