

GERMANY

'MIND THE GAP' REPORT FINDINGS

The Mind the Gap Report shows how the integration of female victims of trafficking (VoT) in Germany can be facilitated with the help of gender-specific support measures in line with Art. 1 of the EU Anti-Trafficking Directive. SOLWODI's EU projects have provided empirical evidence of initial gender-specific support services and needs.

The integration of female VoT remains a challenge for Germany, as there is either a lack of gender-specific integration programmes for the particularly vulnerable target group or these are not fully funded and/or not funded for the long-term. Nevertheless, the best practices presented in the report represent basic steps for gender-specific integration support that have proven to be successful. Together with the suggestions for action, they provide an approach for improvements and practical starting points for optimising existing programmes and enabling affected women to heal in the host societies and to be integrated into the German society. In order to be able to launch such integration programmes, it is important that the appropriate framework conditions are created at the political level. Such steps require not only a political awareness of the needs of the vulnerable target group, but also the political obligation to implement the aforementioned steps.

The needs and situation analysis have identified the areas in which female VoT require more gender-specific support: Identification; Right of residence; Criminal proceedings; Family-related matters; Accommodation; Compensation & material support; Medical support; Psychological support; Access to other integration measures; Access to education; Access to the labour market; Access to other economic services.

A concept for a National Rapporteur Mechanism on trafficking in human beings has been developed by the German Institute for Human Rights (DIMR: Deutsches Institut für Menschenrechte), according to which two separate National Rapporteur Mechanisms are recommended to be established, one to report on gender-based violence and another on trafficking in human beings. National Rapporteur Mechanism on trafficking in human beings intends to address all forms of trafficking in human beings, using an intersectional and victim-centered approach and taking gender-based differences into account.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In particular, appropriate political and social structures should exist and be developed in order to successfully integrate the VoT into society.

VoT should be identified better and earlier than previously. Specialised NGOs can contribute to this. In this respect, it is important to provide funds for specialised counselling centres and human resources in order to address the gender-specific needs of VoT. The financial support should take place over a longer term and should not be dependent on two-year project timelines, for example.

Further gaps in the support system could be filled by an improved framework, for example through an unlimited access to the healthcare system in the area of mental health, the possibility of attending an integration course in spite of an unsettled residence title, an increase in the availability of childcare etc.

Among other improvements needed to provide better support to the female VoTs are:

- **Criminal proceedings: ensuring of faster investigation procedures; f.eg. by increasing the number of police and prosecutors, would be helpful for VoT.**
- **Better access to medical health services, gender-specific medical support: Provision of medical support irrespective of residence status; Gender-specific medical support; offering gynaecological assistance amongst other things; Inclusion of FGM in medical curricula.**
- **Obtaining residence permit for third country national VOTs: Recognition of THB as a gender-specific ground for asylum**

LEGAL FRAMEWORK

In Germany, THB (§ 232 German Criminal Code (StGB)), forced prostitution (§ 232a StGB), forced labour (§ 232b StGB) and exploitation of labour are criminal offences (§ 233 StGB). Further information about criminal prosecution in Germany can be found on the KOK website. Many women decide against making a statement because of their fear of the human traffickers and/or out of shame.

VoT, who decide to make a statement, can find the protracted investigations exhausting. Family reunification for VoT prove to be extremely difficult to impossible, as they are only granted to VoT with a residence title in accordance with § 25(4a) AufenthG, which is only awarded in rare cases, and other requirements have to be fulfilled for family reunification (e.g. international protection or humanitarian reasons or political interests).

GERMANY PROJECT PARTNER SOLWODI

SOLWODI stands up for the rights of foreign women in Germany who have experienced hardship and violence, be they victims of human trafficking, sexual exploitation and prostitution, forced marriage or other violence. The affected women are accompanied by experienced social workers. We offer psychosocial care, organize medical or legal support, help in finding housing and jobs, or arrange German language courses and vocational training. The care is always tailored to the specific needs and individual situation of the respective woman and her children.

<https://www.solwodi.de>



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