

**ATTACHMENT:** Description of Social and Economic Empowerment Measures Implemented by NGO “ATINA” from Belgrade

In 2009 and 2010, the **NGO ATINA** developed the “*Economic Inclusion of THB Victims Through Labour Market*“ Project with the support of the International Organisation for Migrations (IOM), National Employment Service (NES) and the Service for Cooperation of the Protection of THB Victims. This Project created the preconditions and the methodology to facilitate access to labour market for victims of THB, but also all other women and girls, members of populations with multiple vulnerabilities whose access to these rights is limited. Under the Projects, employment was ensured for six victims of THB by way of providing benefits for employers for in the form of tax and contribution exemptions, while 24 of them successfully attended requalification, additional qualification, and alternative education programmes including computer courses and basic-level courses in foreign languages, etc. The NGO ATINA signed a Memorandum of Cooperation with the NES, setting the foundations for future cooperation in the employment of victims of THB.

Under the “*Sustainable Social Inclusion of Victims and Potential Victims of THB*“ Project, which was implemented by the NGO ATINA during 2011 and 2012 with the support of the Joint Programme, a service provider network was created including the NGOs ATINA, CIM, NSHC and Shelter for Victims of Family Violence in Nis, which signed memoranda of cooperation ensuring that the services for victims of THB are not centralised and available exclusively in Belgrade, and that the victims could be provided services at the local level, i.e. in the communities in which they live. In addition, the creation of this network has enabled for the identified victims of THB to access a wide range of services relating the health care for their medical problems, alternative accommodation, accommodation in the Half Way House and Shelters, regulation of their property legal status, legal assistance in courts proceedings, employment assistance, additional education, psychological support, family mediation and counselling, etc.

Under the social inclusion programmes for victims of THB, one person is employed in the NGO and is fully dedicated to and responsible for the programme beneficiaries and helps them go through the professional orientation, requalification and education processes, especially in case of minors who are victims of THB. Those are beneficiaries who have never been enrolled into the formal education system. Under the social inclusion programmes for victims of THB, the beneficiaries attend literacy programmes and receive support for the enrolment into the formal education system, the necessary documentation is obtained for school enrolment, the mapping of adequate educational institutions is developed, and cooperation with the relevant professionals from the institutions is established. The beneficiaries have continued support and monitoring, they can participate in all teaching and non-teaching activities, and have the teaching materials for educational activities provided. They also receive assistance in learning. Individual classes and group workshops are organised to help the beneficiaries to improve their attainment in the formal education system. In addition to that, these workshops focus on the development of the necessary learning skills. One of the most important components of the ATINA social inclusion programmes for victims of THB is the support in job searching and the organisation employs one person who is responsible exclusively for the preparation of the beneficiaries for job search. Special educational workshops are organised to train the beneficiaries how to apply for jobs. Also, the beneficiaries can attend computer courses, basic-level courses in foreign languages, vocational training for pedicurists, manicurists, etc. They are also provided assistance in writing CVs, preparation for job interviews, and help in job searching. Under this part of the programme, the beneficiaries’ capacities, aspirations and abilities are assessed in relation to the labour market demand. The cooperation with the NES, as well as the cooperation with the youth and student employment collectives, are accompanied by consultative work and the support for managing work obligations, and social networking. The beneficiaries are also provided support in planning and spending money. The programme beneficiaries are participating on a voluntary basis in all the activities focusing on the development of social skills and have been sent to attend the programmes by other NGOs and

government institutions that can help them in developing their social skills. In addition to that, under this activity programme, the beneficiaries and their families are informed about all the aspects of their rights, and are empowered to tackle all administrative actions relating to their legal status. They obtain the basic knowledge on communication, conflict resolution, how to react in cases of discrimination in order to overcome the problems they face in communication with the relevant government institutions. At least two times a month, the programme beneficiaries attend cultural events (cinemas, theatres) in order to minimise the cultural and social exclusion. Informal meetings of the beneficiaries are organised, where they have a chance to exchange experience, plans and problems they face in everyday life. These meetings are organised once a month in cooperation with the beneficiaries. Considering the lack of standards for the evaluation of the success of the existing programmes, but also the results of studies analysing the reasons why victims refuse various assistance programmes<sup>1</sup>, ATINA's starting point is – the creation of programme activities in accordance with the beneficiaries' requests and needs, and that is how the social inclusion programme was chosen. The key difference *inter alia* is the NGO ATINA's striving to influence, in their interventions, with full participation, consent and cooperation of the beneficiaries, the causes for entering into the THB situations – primary and secondary family relations, poverty, marginalisation and discrimination, lack of access to the basic rights, etc. It is clear and the experience from all the ATINA programmes by 2001 shows that without the creation of a wider programme framework it is not possible to achieve the main programme outcomes and objectives – assistance to victims of THB and other forms of exploitation in sustainable integration into society. In that respect, the NGO ATINA is the only organisation that has such a comprehensive approach to the social inclusion programmes, and implements very successfully all the activities of the subsequent monitoring and inclusion impact assessment for each individual beneficiary (*the NGO ATINA associates are in regular contact with 90% of the former programme beneficiaries, which allows for the programme impacts to be measured based on their achievements and the inclusion levels*). All the beneficiaries who expressed their wish to participate in the implementation of the programme activities (*such as the group for peer support and support to new social inclusion programme beneficiaries*) had an opportunity to obtain the necessary skills and knowledge through a large number of trainings in the last five years. The impacts of including the beneficiaries themselves into the programme design activities reflect directly in their ability to manage change in their lives, overcome consequences of trauma through strengthened self-acceptance and self-esteem, regain trust in others, establish and maintain partner relationships and peer relations, regaining trust in others, establishment and maintenance of partner relationships and peer relations, and through the expansion of their social networks in spite of specific difficulties in establishing of such relations. The inclusion of victims into the system (*health, education, social, market*) is a guarantee for their full integration and prevents their further revictimisation and marginalisation.

Within the social inclusion programmes for victims of THB, in cooperation with the “Fair Girls“, Foundation, the NGO ATINA organises workshops for manufacturing of bijou jewellery two times a week in the premises of the Open Club. This activity is not only good for the development of social skills, and new practical skills, and the development of creativity and individuality, it ensures also economic empowerment of the beneficiaries, through the sale of the manufactured jewellery on fairs in the country and abroad.

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<sup>1</sup> A NEXUS Institute study shows that the main reason why victims refuse assistance from various organisations in the inadequacy of their programmes that do not take into account the wishes and motivation of the beneficiaries themselves, their past experience with marginalisation and abuse, and that do not strive to establish partner relations based on full participation.