BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Over the past ten years, the legal and institutional responses to trafficking in persons (TIP) have been strengthened in Turkey. Article 80 of the new Criminal Code, which entered into force in June 2005, defines human trafficking as the act of recruitment, abduction, transportation, transfer, harbouring of persons, for the purpose of subjecting to forced labour or service, prostitution, enslavement or removal of body organs by means of exerting threat, oppression, force or using violence, by abusing influence, by deceit or by abusing their control over or the vulnerabilities of individuals, and prescribes penalties from eight to 12 years’ imprisonment. Article 227(1) prohibits the facilitation of child prostitution and prescribes penalties of four to 10 years’ imprisonment. The 2013 Law on Foreigners and International Protection (LFIP) provides a legal definition of trafficking and establishes trafficking victims’ eligibility for a special type of residence permit that can be renewed for up to three years. The LFIP also mandated the establishment of the Department for the Protection of Victims of Human Trafficking under the Directorate General of Migration Management (DGMM), which is responsible for combating TIP and protecting victims, implementing anti-trafficking projects, and setting up, operating and outsourcing the operation of helplines for victims. DGMM opened offices in all 81 provinces and tasked them with coordinating with law enforcement in identifying trafficking victims. In February 2016, specific units in charge of the fight against migrant smuggling and human trafficking within the Turkish National Police and the Gendarmerie were established. On 17 March 2016, the Regulation on Combating Human Trafficking and Victim Protection was published in the Official Gazette. This comprehensive by-law regulates many issues including identification of victims, referral of victims to support services, content of support services, identification of the responsibilities of state institutions and organizations in this field, access for victims to services such as education, health and employment assistance, and financial support provided to the victims. On 2 May 2016, Turkey ratified the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings, which entered into force on 1 September 2016 (The Convention’s ratification legislation had been enacted in the Turkish Parliament on 30 January 2016 and published on the Official Gazette on 19 February 2016).

Between 2005 and 2015, the Turkish Ministry of Interior has identified a total of 1363 victims of human trafficking1. Of those identified victims, 98% were women sexually exploited in prostitution or other forms of exploitation2. Identified trafficked women in Turkey have been primarily from former Soviet countries. For instance, from 2004 to 2008, the majority of identified victims were from Moldova, Ukraine and Russia. After 2008, an increase was observed in the number of the victims coming from Central Asian countries3. In 2015, the majority of identified TIP victims in Turkey were from Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan4. Only a small proportion of all identified trafficked people in Turkey were trafficked internally within the country and a minority were Turkish citizens. The vast majority were identified as trafficked for sexual exploitation, with the remainder identified as trafficked for labour exploitation5. In terms of prosecutions, there were a total of 292 convictions under Article 80 (trafficking in persons) of the Turkish Penal Code during the period 2011-20136. Furthermore, the ongoing conflict situation...
in neighbouring countries has led to increasing concerns of people fleeing these conflicts falling victim of human trafficking.

In view of the above, although Turkey has substantially reinforced the legal and institutional anti-trafficking framework, most recently with the development of Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for trafficking victims, the current response needs to be further strengthened with regard to (a) increasing the capacities to prevent, identify and refer trafficking cases among newly recruited staff of relevant state agencies in the 81 provinces of the country, and (b) contributing substantially to raise the awareness of the general public on human trafficking and its risks.

Based on the observations of ICMPD deriving from the implementation of the completed project ‘Preventing, Identifying and Combating Trafficking of Refugees in Turkey (PICTOR), as well as the input and recommendations of the relevant anti-TIP stakeholders in Turkey, specifically DGMM, it is considered that a follow up project will be very beneficial for enhancing the fight against TIP in general in Turkey and also to ensure the sustainability of the outcomes of the PICTOR project. PICTOR project was funded by the British Embassy in Ankara for the period of implementation July 2016-March 2017 and aimed at increasing the knowledge and capacities of relevant national anti-TIP stakeholders to prevent, identify and refer trafficking cases among the vulnerable groups residing in Turkey under temporary protection. In this vein, the P-TIP project has been designed as a follow-up of the completed PICTOR project which expands the scope of its action to a) actual and potential TIP victims for all forms of trafficking in persons (PICTOR focused solely on the exploitation of Syrians and other displaced people in Turkey under Temporary Protection and develops targeted information campaigns on the labour rights and trafficking prevention for them) and b) contributing substantially to raise the awareness of the general public on human trafficking and its risks.

OBJECTIVES

The strategic objective of the P-TIP project is to combat all forms of trafficking in persons, whether national or transnational. The project aims at preventing trafficking and increasing the protection of potential and actual victims of trafficking. In addition, this project aims to support the development partnerships among state agencies and non-governmental organisations to enhance a more comprehensive anti-TIP response, according to the 4Ps approach. This project will: 1) significantly strengthen the institutional framework and increase the existing capacities of relevant state agencies in the 81 provinces of the country in preventing, identifying and referring trafficking cases and 2) foster multi-agency cooperation in providing an effective anti-trafficking response, and 3) contribute substantially to raise the awareness of the general public on TIP and its risks.

ACTIVITIES

The project comprises two interlinked and complementary components:

Component 1: Institutional Framework and Targeted Capacity Building

1.1 Development of recommendations for strengthening the institutional framework and interagency cooperation on TIP

1.1.1 Stock-taking of the anti-trafficking situation in Turkey

1.1.2 Two day multi-agency workshop to collect views on the current mechanisms and resources available to combat TIP in Turkey

1.1.3 Semi-structured interviews with the relevant anti-TIP stakeholders in Turkey

1.1.4 Development of tailored made training modules

1.2 Six three-day multidisciplinary trainings tailored for specific target groups

1.3 On-the-job training: Targeted expert support to the staff of DGMM working at selected removal centres in identifying potential victims of TIP at selected removal centres in identifying potential victims of TIP

1.4 Two-day multi-agency workshop on the development of effective anti-trafficking policies

1.5 Two-day workshop for senior level managers heading Provincial DGMM offices on international and national anti-trafficking and victim protection instruments and national legal and institutional anti-TIP framework

Component 2: Awareness-Raising of all forms of TIP in Turkey

2.1 Multi-agency workshop for Communication Strategy Development

2.2 Development and dissemination of communication tools

2.2.1 Design of the tools according to the needs and profiles of the targeted population by taking into account the literacy and education levels, access to internet, etc.

2.2.2 Development of a targeted dissemination strategy in order to ensure the broadest possible take-up of the information

2.2.3 Development, translation and dissemination of information materials in the targeted areas

EXPECTED RESULTS

Component 1:

- The capacities of the relevant anti-trafficking stakeholders in identification, referral protection and prosecution of TIP victims are increased.
- The institutional framework and multi-agency cooperation for a comprehensive anti-trafficking response in Turkey is further improved.

Component 2:

- The level of awareness with regard to all forms of trafficking among targeted population and general public including foreigners under Temporary Protection is increased.

CONTACT

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