

Preventing Trafficking and Prostitution

A Joint project between European Women's Lobby and the Coalition against trafficking in Women (CATW) to promote preventative measures in combating trafficking in human beings for sexual exploitation.

The purposes of this project are to address gaps in current anti-trafficking programs and policies that avoid focusing on gender equality, the demand, and the links between trafficking and prostitution. It will support women's NGOs working on these issues in 14 countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Kosovo/Albania, Latvia, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Serbia and Montenegro in actions/projects.

Framework of the Project:

The lack of a gender equality perspective in national policies is reinforced by the under-representation of women in decision-making positions, which means women's views and specific concerns are not taken into account in all areas of life.

Gender-based violence takes multiple forms, all of which are the result of the imbalance of the power relationships between women and men. The promotion of women's dignity is central to eradicate violence against women and to reinforce women's human rights. It is important therefore to address the political will of governments as they attempt to create measures against trafficking in human beings and sexual exploitation.

The least discussed part of the prostitution and trafficking chain has been the men who buy women and children for sexual exploitation in prostitution, pornography, sex tourism and mail order bride marketing. All too often, the common view has been to shrug one's shoulders and say "men are like this," or "prostitution has always been in existence," or "boys will be boys." These messages, in reality, tell women and girls in prostitution that they must continue to do what they do because prostitution is inevitable. This project challenges this message.

This project also challenges the message that prostitution and trafficking are not connected. Over the last decade, certain UN agencies, various governments,

and some NGOs have promoted the policy that prostitution is voluntary and sex trafficking is forced. Yet, the reality is that prostitution and sex trafficking are habitually co-dependent. In countries that prohibit trafficking but decriminalize the sex industry, prostitution, sex trafficking, organized crime and child prostitution all expand.

Finally, this project challenges the notion that prostitution is "sex work." Some countries have legalized or decriminalized pimps and brothels, have set up "tolerance zones," and are living off the earnings of women in prostitution by levying taxes on the women and the sex industry. They claim that State control of prostitution helps protect women and reduce trafficking. But this is not true. State-legitimated prostitution creates a safe haven for traffickers and pimps, and does nothing to lessen the routine abuse, violence and degradation experienced by women in prostitution.

Each country project will devise action points – concrete steps – that individuals, organizations and governments can take to tackle male violence and sexual exploitation and other measures that will strengthen the position of women in society.

Resources and Research:

The project has prepared a "Resource Pack" on trafficking and prostitution to assist project partners with clear and



One of the posters of the project (Czech Republic)

accessible information to enable them to carry out the project philosophy and goals:

Trafficking and Sexual Exploitation in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations:

Civil and military conflicts are often the cause of gender-based violence during and after conflicts. Mobilization of male soldiers and arrival of peacekeepers contribute to the growth of rape, prostitution and sexual abuse around military installations. Additionally displacement of citizens and the ravaging of local economies encourage migration (domestic and international), discourage sustainability, and lead to even greater incidences of women's exploitation. The CATW-EWL project also promotes a safe environment and a democratic society that includes the participation of women on an equal footing with men in decision-making processes. A seminar has been organised in Zagreb, Croatia on Preventing

Trafficking in Conflict and Post-Conflict Situations: Who is Responsible?

Project Partners:

This project is jointly coordinated by EWL and CATW, 2 key international NGOs. Both CATW and the EWL have long campaigned for gender equality, women's human rights, and combating violence against women in all its forms. In the past, they have worked together to combat trafficking and prostitution, and both contributed to and influenced the provisions that have become the UN Protocol on Trafficking.

This project is funded by the U.S. and Swedish governments. <http://www.womenlobby.org/site/1abstract.asp?DocId=568&11> Check the following website link to view the project posters. http://www.womenlobby.org/site/1Template1.asp?DocId=1570&v1ID=&RevID=&namePage=&pageParent=&DocID_sousmenu

Ghada Jamsheer: Not Guilty

Women's rights activist Ghada Jamsheer was found not guilty of defaming a Sharia judge by the Lower Criminal Court on 28 December 2005. The court ruled that there was not enough evidence to prosecute Ms. Jamsheer because the judge only had one witness who supported his claim against her.

Only one witness would testify that he had heard Ms. Jamsheer insult the judge, although another did say that he only heard her call him an 'oppressor'. "The judge ruled in favour of my client because there wasn't sufficient evidence against her," said Ms. Jamsheer's lawyer Mohammed Al Mutawa.

Ms. Jamsheer had always denied any wrongdoing. "I'm very pleased with the results. The fact that I have won a case against a Shari'a judge shows that the courts are transparent and just."

The rulings came from the criminal court but Ms Jamsheer vowed to continue her fight for the reform of the Shari'a courts and its judges, which she and other critics say are given too much scope for interpretation.

This is the latest in a string of cases against Ms Jamsheer and the first in which she was actually found not guilty. The previous cases were either dropped or dismissed by the court as illegitimate.

This leaves only one case remaining against Ms Jamsheer. It was filed by the same judge, who claimed that she had called him on the phone and swore at him.

Ms. Jamsheer is one of Bahrain's most vocal advocates for a personal status law to replace the current Shari'a system, which has often been criticised for being unfair to women.

Campaigners say that Shari'a judges often rule unfairly in favour of men in custody, divorce and inheritance issues, and allow husbands to get away with emotionally and physically abusing their wives.

Previously, on 13 December 2005 the High Criminal Appeals Court upheld a previous ruling that the Public Prosecution had brought a case against Ghada illegally. Ms. Jamsheer, a campaigner for a personal status law, declared the decision a victory for the women's rights movement. Ghada is one of the country's most prominent advocates of a personal status law to replace the current Shari'a system, which critics say grants Shari'a judges too much scope for interpretation - allowing them to make unfair judgements on issues related to divorce, child custody and inheritance.

This remaining case against Ghada Jamsheer was raised by Jassim Mutlaq Al Thawadi, one of the Shari'a judges, accusing her of using abusive language. It is important to note that Al Thawadi was dismissed from his position by the King following the campaign by the Committee of Women's Petition campaign that Jamsheer headed.

Source:[http://www.wluml.org/english/actionsfulltxt.shtm?cmd\[156\]=i-156-438564](http://www.wluml.org/english/actionsfulltxt.shtm?cmd[156]=i-156-438564)