**International Charitable Foundation “Caritas Ukraine”**

Information for OHCHR

 International Charitable Foundation ‘Caritas Ukraine’ is a humanitarian non-governmental organization which aims to help the people in need regardless of their religion, nationality or social status. Caritas provides social development programs and humanitarian services to the representatives of vulnerable communities in Ukraine supporting social development and fostering the traditions of charity and social work. The organization works since 1992 (official registration in 1999) and currently is a member of the International Confederation of *Caritas Internationalis.* The **strategic mission** of Caritas Ukraine is the development of traditions of charitable activities and social work.

 Charitable Foundation “Caritas Ukraine” has enough experience of dealing with the issues of migration and human trafficking as well as in administering of anti-trafficking counseling centres.

 Since 2004 Caritas Ukraine has been working in the direction of human trafficking prevention and reintegration for the victims of trafficking by support of many international donors. The main result of Caritas activity is the assistance to more than 1000 victims who applied to Caritas centers. They are men, women and minors. All of them received qualified complex reintegration assistance including social, psychological support, medical, judicial assistance, professional courses, help in employment and starting their own business.

 One of the Caritas achievements was the establishing and strengthening of the network of Caritas counseling centers that work in strong coalition with the Ukrainian anti-human trafficking platform. There were 5 Centers for counseling and assisting victims of trafficking and preventative activity. The Centers were located in two regions of Ukraine – Western (Khmelnytskyi, Ivano-Frankivsk and Drohobych) and Southern part (Odessa and Yuzhnyi).

 Among other Caritas Ukraine’s projects in this sphere were: *“*The Migrant Workers’ Repatriation and Reintegration Project”, project on “Reintegration of Emigrants”, Research Projects on the Legal Aspects of Migration in Ukraine and Abroad. Caritas Ukraine as well as some other European Caritases was an active participant of 2 international projects “Strengthening the cooperation and the Euro-Mediterranean network against trafficking human beings” (2011-2013; 2014 - 2016). Caritas Ukraine organized and successfully realized a Study visit to Ukraine with focus on two main issues: assistance to victims of trafficking and support to minors victims of trafficking (2012). Caritas Ukraine participated in two international programs of Exposure and Dialogue Program (EDP) “Migration and Devolopment” and “Human Trafficking”.

 Since May 2016 Caritas Ukraine is realizing the project **“Support of Activity of the Network of Counselling Centres for Trafficked Persons”** at 5 regions of Ukraine, namely at 5 regional Caritas organizations in the western, southern, central and eastern parts.General objective of this project is to contribute to the social and professional integration of victims of trafficking and help prevent human trafficking by providing counseling services to potential victims, especially labor migrants, children and risk groups.

 By the results of the annual report **96** persons were identified as victims of human trafficking and received complex reintegration assistance. Among them: 58 men, 38 women, 1 minor, 25 IDPs(internally displaced people) that is 26 % of all the clients. The majority of cases are trafficking for labor exploitation – 69 victims (71 %), 8persons were involved into war conflict, 7 had suffered from sexual exploitation and 7 cases are combined types of trafficking.

 Among all the victims there are a lot of young people (46), 3 citizens of the other countries, 13 people with many children, invalids, pensioners and other vulnerable.12 persons already received the official state status of victim of human trafficking given by the Ministry of Social Policy, several are expecting the decision.3 persons are recognized victims in criminal investigation.

 During 12 months of this project **310** preventative and awareness events were held, 102 working meetings, 10 round tables. Also we practiced different interesting forms of raising awareness and prevention such as photo exhibitions, bike rides, flash-mobs, pictures competitions, forum-theaters, street actions, film presentations, discussions, brain rings, walking marches, others. Totally **18 054** people took part in these events. We delivered **33 188** leaflets and booklets, 2 046bracelets and other promo-production.We think that 5 times more people received information indirectly.

 In Monitoring and evaluation report of this project (June 2017) it’s written

 *“The project is very relevant because it is dealing with a serious problem affecting Ukrainian society. As long as the government system of assistance for the VoHT is not fully effective and operational, victims will continue to rely mainly on NGOs like CARITAS while seeking for support.*

 *During its first year of implementation, the project has been effective in developing its strategies.*

 *It has succeeded in helping victims of HT through its model of complex assistance; its model of complex assistance is not only pertinent but also very appreciated by the VoHT and peer organizations. The project is also attracting an important number of persons from various targets group with its awareness rising activities; and is building successful coalitions on local level that have increased its impact and in reinforcing the capacities of the counseling centers. In the light of these achievements, it is very likely that the planned targets will be reached by the end of the project.*

 *The previous project has been instrumental in building capacities of the counseling centers, establishment of relevant partnerships with relevant institutions at the local level and in having CARITAS acknowledged as a key partner in the prevention of HT and in the support to victims”.*

Caritas Ukraine is the only organization in Ukraine which provides reintegration support for Ukrainian returnees in frame of reintegration projects.The first projects started in 2005 cooperating with Caritas Europa. Belgium, Austria, Italy and Raphaelswerk with the target of successful repatriation and effective socialization of Ukrainian migrants. The services of return programmes include social, legal counselling, covering of medical expenses, material aid and support in starting a micro-business. Especially setting up an own business is of high importance since the country is facing a high unemployment rate and lack of opportunities to earn a living and provide for the family members. If the reintegration is not planned well and supported with the finances, the returnee will most likely continue the labor migration cycle.

**I. ERSO II (European Reintegration Support Organization network, Phase II)**

**Duration:** 2008-2010

**Target group:** Ukrainian migrants in EU countries voluntarily returning to Ukraine

**Main goal:** to improve the assistance for migrants-primarily rejected asylum seekers – during their return and reintegration process back into their country of origin in order to contribute to a sustainable reintegration of the returnees.

**Assistance provided:**

- initial support: reception at the airport upon the request (and rarely accommodation)

**-** assistance to access local social/health and employment services

- vocational counseling/training

- information on business opportunities

- assistance with income generation (set-up of a small business

- legal counseling (support with registration, document handling)

- material aid.

**Results:**

The network of partner organization for returnees’ reintegration assistance was establishedin Ukraine (30 NGOs in 15 regions of Ukraine)

About 180 migrants returned to Ukraine through the ERSO network

35 returnees agreed to participate in project and have received full reintegration assistance

The survey on migrants’ needs has been published

**II. STAVR (Sustainable reintegration after voluntary return)**

**Duration:** 2010-till now

**Target group:** Ukrainian irregular migrants, asylum seekers in Belgium voluntarily returning to Ukraine

**Main goal:** to increase changes of successful reintegration of migrants who decided voluntarily return to Ukraine after staying in Belgium through qualified assistance provision

Very important element of reintegration support is pre-departure councelling provided by prepared organization. A pre-departure counseling period can be considered the first step in the reintegration process, given that there is enough time to prepare a returnee for his return and that the returnee is ready to accept an active part in the process.

**Assistance provided upon arrival:**

 **1.** to vulnerable groups:

minors (education and training)

pregnant women (medical and material assistance related to child birth)

medical cases (assistance covers only medical expenses)

**2**. to other migrants who are aimed to start micro business:

- professional skills trainings

- services of business consultant

- material support of micro business

**3.** to all groups of returnees:

- material support for house/flat renovation

- social support

* legal consultations

In frame of STAVR project tailor-made assistance was provided to more than 60 families.

**ІІІ. ERIN (European Reintegration Network)**

**Duration:** 2016-2018

**Target group:**Ukrainian nationals, returning from Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Italy, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom, voluntarily or non-voluntarily, known by the hosting / sending ERIN partner countries and defined as eligible under the rules of the European Asylum, Migration and Integration Fund (AMIF).

**Mail goal:** is the sustainable return and re-integration of nationals who no longer have the legal right to reside in the EU Member States (MS) and associated partner countries.

Since the beginning of the year, in frame of the project, 84 cases have been already assisted (more than 100 people).

Simultaneously, two more reintegration projects are being run by Caritas Ukraine: **IRMA** (partner - Caritas Austria) and **IntegralPlan** (Caritas Augsburg).

Our main principles in the work with returnees are:

- individual approach;

- partner/trustful relations;

- regular contacts.

Role of partner in country of origin is highly important during reintegration assistance due to the following:

- knowledge of country context;

- possibilities to meet the returnee and to have frequent communication;

- reintegration partner can be more confident regarding spending the reintegration budget in proper way;

- possibility to help to find family members;

- organization of monitoring mission by the request.

**Caritas Ukraine as recognized expert:**

- conducted trainings on reintegration assistance for other Ukrainian NGOs that was organized by IOM;

- participates in round tables, Supreme Council committees hearings, international conferences, study visitsand other evens related to the topic of migration;

* cooperates with IOM and other Ukrainian and foreign, international NGOs for developing reintegration and counseling support for returnees;
* is a member of Migration & Asylum Action Group of Caritas Europa.

Prepared by Natalia Holynska (nholynska@caritas-ua.org)

and Iryna Maevska (imaievska@caritas-ua.org)