

VISIT AT THE MEDAILLE TRUST SERVICES

A partnership has been developed between Mary Ward Loreto (MWL) in Albania and Medaille Trust (MT) in UK since 2013, in the realm of combating Modern Day Slavery. Consequent to this staff from MWL were invited to visit the Medaille Trust services for a work experience in the shelters of the Medaille Trust. Irena Kraja, assistant manager of MWL Women Project, responded to this invitation and was a volunteer in the shelter homes from 21st of July – 5th of August 2016. She was also available for other work as requests were made.

The visit consisted of:

- Working at the Medaille Trust services
- Sharing Albanian perspective with professionals working against Modern Day Slavery
- One day with Metropolitan Police, London
- Post-Cooperation

Working at the Medaille Trust services

Medaille Trust services in London, Southampton, Broadstairs, Winsdon, were founded to shelter women, men and children who have been freed from human trafficking. These shelters were the focus for the work experience in the UK. It consisted of working directly with the survived victims of trafficking in the shelters. Support has been given to 15 Albanian girls. Among these girls, 4 of them have been assisted before through online Counselling and also by providing psychological evidence to support the process of asylum seeking application.

Individual and group meetings have been developed at the shelters in order to build trust, to help the girls with information about Albania, and for psychological support. Even though none of the girls expressed the desire to turn back to Albania they are aware that one day they might be repatriated. They asked many questions about services for victims of trafficking, opportunities and rehabilitation, safety and protection in Albania, the attitudes of Albanian society towards VOT. They have been provided with all this information.

Work and support has been given outside the shelters as well, by accompanying them to the doctor, to the hospital, and to the Home Office. Apart from emotional support, MWL representative helped with the translation between the services offered and the clients.

As a result of these visits, online Counselling sessions have been agreed to take place with 3 of the Albanian clients and will continue with 4 girls who have already started online sessions before this time.

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The Medaille Trust and MWL staff have been working as a team, and shared ideas and suggestions on further support that would be helpful to the Albanian clients, based on the needs pointed out during these visits.



Sharing with professionals working against Modern Day Slavery

Besides visiting the Medaille Trust Shelters for trafficked victims, the MWL staff member also had the chance to meet and share information with a group of actors in combating THB in Broadstairs. She was invited by Jess Gealer, to a training organized by M. Trust and Barnardo's Trafficking Service with professionals from services for child protection. The MWL representative spoke

about human trafficking in Albania, seen by the perspective of an origin country for many of the victims of THB and the factors which affect trafficking in Albania.

The MWL staff member was introduced to the staff working at the Medaille T shelters. They were very interested to know about the human trafficking situation in Albania and the work of the MWL Foundation. At the service in Broadstairs, there was an opportunity to meet with Mrs. Carolyn Thom, a social worker from 'Their Voice', who found the work of MWL on prevention of THB amazing, and offered to support MWL Women Project, with the market for handmade cards prepared by the women of Hot i Ri. She believes that communities to whom they give talks about awareness raising on Modern Day Slavery, would be interested to know about the work on prevention of THB taking place in the countries of origin such as Albania.

One day with Metropolitan Police



The MWL representative was invited by the Metropolitan Police in London, Human Trafficking and Kidnap Unit, for a daily experience exchange. Together with the Service Manager from the Medaille T, Bernice Andersen, she was introduced to the department and the work they do. A meeting took place with 8 from the Human Trafficking and Kidnap Unit, to share information about human trafficking in Albania, cultural and socio – economic

factors that affect this phenomenon, tendencies of migration in Albania and the Blood Feud

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phenomenon. They were interested in these topics since it would help them during the interviews with migrants and potential victims of THB. This meeting showed a real will to collaborate while the police who may contact for any information which would lead them to the identification and further investigating cases of trafficking.

Irena and Bernice participated in a process of identifying any potential victim forced into sex work, by researching online websites. The Met police officer explained about the details in the online pictures which can be considered as indicators for identification of the girls who are wilfully in this work and those who seem to be unhappy and perhaps forced into it.

The next part of the day was organized at grass roots. The Met Police had an entire afternoon operation by visiting brothels in London to interview the sex workers and to identify potential victims of trafficking and exploitation. MWL, Medaille T, and Tamar NGO Team participated in this. Two brothels have been visited with a group of 13 girls in total, among them was one Albanian girl. The police entered first into the building, making sure that the ambience is safe and then invited us inside. MWL staff assisted in translating from English to Italian during the interview in the brothel.

After the operation, the whole team shared the insights and ideas on indicators of risk for the girls in the brothels.

Post –Cooperation

Hospitality and entertainment

The Medaille Trust staff offered warm hospitality and looked after everything to make the MWL staff stay very pleasant. They had organized trips and social time for bonding and for enjoying England as well.

Prepared by:
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