

# Mary Ward Loreto Women (MWLW) Project

## Women's Rights in Albania for Freedom, Justice and to Speak their Truth

The result:  
stronger women,  
stronger families,  
stronger  
communities  
and finally,  
a stronger nation.



Women and girls in Albania struggle for economic and social equality in a patriarchal society that offers limited job opportunities and always at risk of abuse.

Working in very remote areas has taught us that the human development approach alongside economic empowerment of women leads to the improvement of the social status of women in need. The core of Mary Ward Loreto Women project is the prevention against human trafficking through providing another alternative: Empowerment for social transformation. The work is developed at the grass roots level with the poorest of the poor, and through networking, advocacy and lobbying we try to make sure that the women have the necessary resources, rights and opportunities to ensure their development and that of the communities around them. This work approach makes the MWL Women project very unique.

Empowering women empowers the family. This is the main hope for Albania.

The development of Albanian women and girls begins with the recognition of their rights and the protection of their integrity. This leads to social and cultural change which protects women's values and guarantees the development of a healthier society.

“Women in time to come will do much”  
Mary Ward

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## Project Goals:

- Working in networks against human trafficking: prevention, against demand, in direct support of victims;
- Reduce the vulnerability of women and girls through increased access to statutory and non-statutory services;
- Women are active and involved in problem solving;
- The community, the institutions and NGOs work together for women's and girls empowerment;
- Improvement of women's health;
- Improve women's self-esteem;
- Greater employment and self-employment opportunities for women;
- Generation of incomes to reduce their poverty and to provide for their children.

Changing the social and cultural norms which deny a woman the right to become whom they are meant to be, is a challenge and a mission for all of us.

Once the system begins to shift, the chain reaction will be unstoppable.

It will affect every aspect of their lives: education, economic opportunities, health and representation in society.

The human development activities are combined with economic initiatives in which 77 women are involved. Vocational courses are made available every year to young women approaching the project. Their skills are upgraded leading to full time employment.

Through the MWL Women Centres in 6 regions of Albania, over 1400 women benefit from organised activities. Women gather in a safe space to grow in every aspect of their person leading to dignity, self-worth and an ability to reach the potential they were born with at the beginning of life. This plants hope for a brighter future.

