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Addressing the gap in multidisciplinary cooperation to enhance the protection of victims' rights

101148912 — CEPOV — JUST-2023-JACC-EJUSTICE

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CILD Italian Council
for Civil Liberties and Rights



SOLWODI
Solidarity with women in distress
Solidarität mit Frauen in Not



TASK FORCE MEETING

ROME, ITALY, 4 – 5 December 2024

WORKSHEET

Overview Summary of Presentations

The presentations collectively examined the challenges and policy frameworks for safeguarding victims' rights and access to justice in Italy, Romania, Sweden, and Germany. Key focus areas included trauma-informed care, hate crimes, torture, data protection, and conditions in detention centers, emphasizing the role of interdisciplinary collaboration and systemic reforms in addressing victims' vulnerabilities. Awareness-raising campaigns, legal reforms, and robust data collection methodologies were highlighted as critical tools for improving victim support.

Trauma-Informed Care and Gender Sensitivity

Psychologist Gabriela Ionescu (Pro Refugiu, Romania) and association SOLWODI (Germany) emphasized the critical importance of trauma-informed care (TIC) and gender-sensitive approaches, stressing the need for training legal and healthcare professionals to support victims effectively. Association Progetto Diritti (Italy) underscored the necessity of holistic interventions, combining medical, legal, and psychosocial services for abuse victims in detention centers.

Protection Against Hate Crimes

In Italy, despite the existence of laws like the Mancino Law, underreporting and limited legal enforcement hinder efforts to address hate crimes. Association Lunaria (Italy) detailed cultural



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and systemic barriers, highlighting campaigns like "Words Are Stones" to combat xenophobia. Germany's National Action Plan on Hate Crime provides a comprehensive model for tackling these issues, while Romania and Sweden struggle with societal stigma and resource limitations despite the legal frameworks in place.

Addressing Torture and Degrading Treatment

The introduction of torture as a crime in Italy (Law No. 110/2017) reflects a step forward, yet implementation gaps persist. Association Antigone's (Italy) monitoring efforts in prisons reveal systemic failures in addressing abuse and mistreatment. German and Swedish legal frameworks are aligned with international conventions, yet encounter challenges regarding enforcement and victim access to justice.

Data Protection for Victims

Andrea Oleandri's (CILD, Italy) presentation emphasized the importance of disaggregated data collection to enhance policy effectiveness and victim support. Secure data-sharing agreements and compliance with GDPR were identified as essential for safeguarding privacy while improving service coordination across all nations.

Migrant Detention Centers

Italy's outsourcing of detention facilities to Albania underlines the complexity of managing detention systems in compliance with international laws. Association Progetto Diritti (Italy) detailed deficiencies in detention conditions, including inadequate health screenings and lack of continuity in care upon release. Swedish structured legal protections provide a benchmark, though enforcement challenges remain.

Examples of Challenges Encountered by Victims

- A. Underreporting and Stigma:** Fear of reprisal, societal stigma, and lack of trust in authorities limit reporting of crimes, especially in hate crime cases.



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- B. Inconsistent Legal Protections:** Fragmented legal frameworks and regional disparities reduce access to justice for victims.
- C. Access Barriers:** Cultural and linguistic shortcoming, combined with administrative inefficiencies, hinder victims' ability to secure assistance.
- D. Migrant Detention Conditions:** Poor health screenings, inadequate legal aid, and lack of post-release support exacerbate vulnerabilities.
- E. Data Collection Gaps:** The absence of standardized frameworks impedes effective monitoring and policy formulation.
- F. Victim Support Services:** Insufficient funding and coordination limit the availability of holistic support services, especially for vulnerable groups.

Policy Recommendations

To address these issues, the following policy recommendations are proposed:

- 1. Enhancing Trauma-Informed Practices:**
 - a. Expand training regarding trauma-informed and gender-sensitive approaches for professionals.
 - b. Establish multidisciplinary support teams for victims of abuse.
- 2. Strengthening Hate Crime Responses:**
 - a. Develop public awareness campaigns to address cultural biases and encourage reporting.
 - b. Enhance enforcement of hate crime laws, including provisions for victim support and legal aid.
- 3. Improving Detention Conditions:**
 - a. Align detention practices with international human rights standards.
 - b. Increase oversight and accountability mechanisms to address abuses.
 - c. Ensure post-release care, including access to medical records and referrals.
- 4. Fostering Data-Driven Policies:**



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- a. Implement standardized frameworks for disaggregated data collection and analysis.
 - b. Promote cross-border collaboration for data sharing while safeguarding privacy.
- 5. Strengthening Legal Protections:**
- a. Harmonize national laws with international conventions, ensuring consistent application.
 - b. Introduce mandatory training on victims' rights for law enforcement and judiciary personnel.
- 6. Enhancing Multidisciplinary Collaboration:**
- a. Build networks of legal, medical, and social service providers to deliver holistic support.
 - b. Create platforms for sharing best practices and lessons learned across project countries.
- 7. Facilitating Access to Support Services:**
- a. Expand availability of interpreters and culturally sensitive counselors.
 - b. Establish low-threshold reporting mechanisms, such as anonymous hotlines.
- 8. Promoting Accountability:**
- a. Establish independent Ombudsman offices to oversee detention centers and law enforcement practices.
 - b. Conduct regular audits to ensure compliance with victim protection standards.

Conclusion

The presentations revealed substantial gaps in policy implementation and enforcement across project countries, necessitating coordinated efforts to enhance victim protection. By adopting these recommendations, project countries can create more inclusive, rights-based systems that uphold the dignity and justice owed to all victims.