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What is IOFA?

The International Organization for Adolescents is a private, not-for-profit organization committed to advancing the health and well-being of adolescents throughout the world. With operations out of Chicago and New York, we work in partnership with individuals and youth-serving and community based organizations. IOFA strengthens its partners by providing training and technical assistance in program development, organizational development, service-based research, and coalition building. IOFA's three initiatives include preventing youth trafficking, girls leadership development, and empowering orphaned youth.

IOFA Builds Networks to Combat Human Trafficking in the Dominican Republic

The Dominican Republic is a known source, transit and destination country for human trafficking. The U.S. State Department estimates 10,000 persons are trafficked each year from the Dominican Republic, and non-governmental organizations state the numbers are as high as 30,000-50,000.

Consequently, the Dominican Republic enacted the Migration and Anti Trafficking in Persons law in 2003. However, due to high rates of migration and lack of awareness, most Dominicans do not know about this law. Furthermore, there has been no systematic education of key responders such as law enforcement or service providers, and little efforts to reach vulnerable segments of society.

In response, IOFA and the Centro de Orientacion e Investigacion Integral (COIN), a nonprofit organization in Santo Domingo, have established a partnership to combat human trafficking in the Dominican Republic by replicating the Community Response to Trafficking program (CRT) which was successfully pioneered in New York City and in Latvia. The Community Response to Trafficking: Dominican Republic project is training key responders, assisting in building regional collaborative working groups to combat the problem at the community level, and implementing creative outreach strategies to potential victims.

IOFA and COIN have partnered with three local community organizations in Boca Chica (tourist



community), Villas Agricolas (urban community), and Yaguatae (rural community) have established local anti-trafficking coalitions.

Outreach campaigns are currently being developed in each of these communities. A report on the trafficking situation in each community and the action taken to fight trafficking will be prepared and presented to the National Committee for the Protection of Migrant Women in early 2008.

IOFA Plays Role in Passing of New York State's New Anti-Trafficking Legislation

On November 1, 2007, the New York State Human Trafficking Law, which was signed by Governor Eliot Spitzer, went into effect. The new law creates felony charges for those engaged in sex trafficking and labor trafficking. Additionally, the law provides victims in New York State with important services such as emergency temporary housing, access to health care, drug addiction treatment, translation services, and job training.

A prominent port of entry,

transit and destination for trafficking victims, New York's strict enforcement of this new law could create a significant impact, reducing human trafficking nationally.

IOFA, in collaboration with the NY Anti-Trafficking Network, a coalition of diverse service providers and advocates in New York dedicated to ending human trafficking and coordinating resources for trafficked person, worked hard to assure the NYS law would protect victims' rights by

advocating for resources for training and victim services. IOFA presented testimony at hearings organized by the New York State Legislature emphasizing the importance of training first responders on the issue of human trafficking. IOFA also developed a statewide plan to train first responders. IOFA staff traveled to Albany several times to meet with State Legislators and their staff to provide input as they worked for more than two years to draft the law.

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Director's Letter

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

Welcome! There are many new exciting changes at IOFA, and I am pleased to share them with you. I joined IOFA as Executive Director in September 2007, and opened a new office in Chicago, Illinois. Prior to joining IOFA, I managed the Counter-Human Trafficking program at the National Immigrant Justice Center, and represented men, women, and children who were victims of human trafficking in the United States for the purpose of forced labor and forced sexual exploitation. Additionally, I represented several children who were victims of other serious crimes and human rights violations.

My experience working with survivors of human trafficking, and youth particularly, has demonstrated to me the importance of training, outreach, and prevention work in the field of human trafficking and child exploitation in the United States and abroad. This work is particularly important at a time when there are so many vulnerable children at risk, including youth being exploited in the Dominican Republic's sex tourism industry, orphans and street youth in Eastern Europe confronted with traffickers offering "good jobs" abroad, and countless children in the United States forced to work as domestic servants, as laborers on farms and in restaurants, and in the commercial sex industry. I welcome the opportunity to share some of our ongoing projects that focus on prevention of child exploitation and trafficking, and initiatives assisting law enforcement, service providers, and non-governmental organizations around the world to empower and protect youth in their countries.

Sincerely,
Katherine Kaufka, J.D.
Executive Director



IOFA in Action: Training Highlights

IOFA is an established global leader in developing and implementing effective and practical training opportunities to address the problem of human trafficking. IOFA has successfully trained more than 5,000 professionals on issues relating to human trafficking in the United States and from countries throughout Europe, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

IOFA Presents at National Conference

In September, IOFA was invited to present to over 400 law enforcement agents and service providers at the National Trafficking Conference in Chicago, on a panel entitled, "Working with Victims of Trauma." The conference was sponsored by the U.S. Department of Justice.

NYC Child Protective Services

On October 12, 2007 IOFA conducted a successful day-long training on child trafficking for New York City's Administration for Children's Services (ACS). The training educated 107 participants on the issue of child trafficking and to provide them with the tools they need to identify and refer these children for special services.

New York Police Department

In September, October, and November of 2007, IOFA trained more than 172 New York Police Department officers in Brooklyn, NY. Sergeant Karen Pasano, Director of Training, said in a letter of thanks to IOFA, "Your presentation made this seminar the most successful yet!"

IOFA would like to thank Kirkland & Ellis, LLP for its partnership, providing IOFA pro bono legal services, and helping to assist IOFA establish its new office in Chicago, IL.

If you are an organization that would like to receive trafficking training, or learn more about IOFA's international and U.S. training and technical assistance services, please contact kkaufka@iofa.org or 773.404.8831.

Mili's Story

Mili is a 17-year old Serbian girl who has spent almost her entire life in the social care system in Serbia. She has been tossed from institution to foster home and back again. She lives now in the State House Number 52. It is also the home for children who are older and do not have chances of being adopted.

At her young age, she's already been a victim of discrimination and sexual violence. When she was able to attend school, Mili felt open bias from both her peers and teachers because they knew she came from an orphanage. Her current situation has taken its toll on Mili, so she takes medication for the anxiety and insomnia that she suffers. This medication will stop abruptly when she leaves the home.

Mili has never known a loving environment where she felt supported and truly safe. She doesn't feel ready to leave the home. Without marketable skills, or even the ability to cook for herself, Mili's options are limited and her chances for success upon leaving the orphanage are low. She is very much afraid that with no other viable options she will end up in prostitution. This happened already to some of her friends. Two girls were even kidnapped off the streets this year and she thinks they are dead.

Project Prepare! works to give young people like Mili a foundation to stand upon - it gives vulnerable youth the skills and support they need to safely and successfully transition to life outside of a state run institution. It is important to create both an effective and sustainable program, and we do so by building the capacity of providers and staff within these institutions, creating a curriculum that the youth themselves contribute to, as well as offering the orphaned youth relevant job skills and job placement options. Your help gives Mili, and the countless others like her a chance, choices for a better future.

Mili's story is reprinted with the permission of FAIR Fund

IOFA Launches New Initiative to Help Orphaned Youth

Throughout the world there are hundreds of thousands of orphan youth. Orphaned by poverty, war, natural disasters, or abandonment, state institutions are overcrowded and stimulating programs to foster healthy lifestyles or job-skills training are frequently pushed aside in order to ensure that each child receives food, minimal shelter, and an abbreviated version of the public education. When they are released from their orphanages at 17 or 18, however, these children are expected to make it on their own. They are not prepared for life outside the institution, and many of them end up on the streets, exploited, or find themselves trafficked for work or forced prostitution

IOFA and FAIR Fund, a partner organization of IOFA based in Washington, DC, began to notice through their work that many victims of human trafficking had spent some part of their life in an orphanage. To explore this relationship further, IOFA and Fair Fund, developed an in-depth study aimed at better understanding the pathways young people leaving orphanages and other state institutions follow to achieve independent living.

The survey was conducted in Serbia with assistance from Center for Youth Integration and graduate students from the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University.

The results of the study show that young people leaving orphanages and state institutions in Serbia face incredible challenges. They are vulnerable to various forms of exploitation. Few have marketable skills or the opportunity to attain additional education. Most lack the social networks of family and friends to support them during their transition to independent living.

This year, with support from the Third Millennium Foundation and the Ramsay Merriam Foundation, IOFA worked with FAIR Fund and the Center for Youth Integration to pilot Project Prepare! in Belgrade, Serbia. A curriculum was developed aimed at providing young people with the information and skills they need to make a successful transition to independent living. Orphanage staff and volunteers from the Center for Youth Integration were trained to implement the program within the orphanage setting.

The first piloting of this 12 week program is currently underway. Youth in orphanages are in classes learning about housing options, building social networks, accessing health care, and building many other critical skills need to support themselves. They are also getting much needed support and guidance from the trainers.



Project Prepare! Highlights:

- Established a Community Advisory Board comprising of 20 local, national, and international nonprofits and nongovernmental agencies in the field of youth and child rights.
- Working in partnership with key government officials, including the Ministry of Social Work and Labor, the City Center for Social Work, and the Managers of the Youth Home system.
- Building the capacity of local organizations in Serbia to implement Project Prepare! in Belgrade, Serbia to ensure sustainable programs.

Project Prepare! partners are developing a "Support an Orphanage Program" so that young people can continue to benefit from this important program even after pilot funding runs out. We will be looking for community groups such as book clubs, social organizations, youth groups, etc. to adopt an orphanage and donate or raise funds for the children aging out of orphanages.

If you are interested in learning more about Project Prepare! and supporting an orphanage abroad, please contact Katherine Kaufka at kkaufka@iofa.org or 773.404.8831

Project Prepare! Belgrade, Serbia Key Findings

- 90% of youth surveyed did not think they would have any money or financial means to live independently after leaving their state institution or youth home
- 73% of youth responded feeling depressed for extended periods of time
- Less than 50% of youth have participated in any kind of job search workshops
- 41% of youth reported they would accept a job to work abroad even if they thought it could possibly be a trafficking situation because they felt they did not have ability to turn down jobs
- 35% of youth leaving orphan care do not feel they are prepared to leave their youth home
- 10% of youth had already been propositioned to participate in commercial sexual activities including prostitution and pornography

How you can help

Donations

IOFA is a U.S. based non-governmental organization that has worked in over 20 countries around the world to combat human trafficking, to empower girls, and to support orphans in their transition to adulthood. We depend on donations and grants to continue our work and rely on the generosity of our supporters to achieve our mission of advancing the health and well-being of adolescents around the world.

Can you help us? In-kind and pro bono assistance needed

- Accountant: IOFA is currently seeking an accountant or firm to conduct a pro bono audit and tax filings.
- Event Planning: Interested in hosting/planning a fundraiser? IOFA staff are available to provide a presentation in your home or event about one or more of its initiatives.
- Translation services: IOFA is currently seeking a volunteer Spanish interpreter/translator.
- Furniture & Office Supplies: IOFA's new office needs chairs! Filing cabinets and bookcases are also appreciated.

Interested in helping? Please contact Katherine Kaufka at kkaufka@iofa.org or 773.404.8831

Donation Form

Youth, their rights, our responsibility.

Yes! I support IOFA's efforts to prevent youth trafficking, develop girl leaders, and empower orphaned youth.

Amount Enclosed:

\$10,000 \$5,000 \$1,000 \$500 \$100 \$50 Other amount

Please accept tax deductible donation of \$_____.

IOFA is a 501 (c) (3) organization. All donations are tax deductible. We will provide you with an acknowledgement letter for tax purposes if you kindly provide us with your contact information.

Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

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Telephone #: _____

Please send check to: IOFA
4305 N. Lincoln Ave. Suite K
Chicago, IL 60618 USA

Your money at work...

\$100 will provide outreach materials educating young people about the dangers of human trafficking.

\$5,000 will support IOFA staff participating in an international conference in Moscow where groups are coming together to find innovative solutions for orphaned youth leaving institutional care.

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