

Paraguay
Government Report on Sexual Exploitation
Republic of Paraguay
Department of Social Action
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REPORT

1. Represented institutions

1.1 Department of Social Action, Presidency (SAS)

Agency created in 1995 by executive decree and charged with the coordination of measures towards a substantial and progressive improvement of the quality of life, especially of those groups of society that have been less favored and are more vulnerable, caring for their basic needs through social services.

SAS implements programs and manages funds of international loans and donations, it allocates funds to projects that benefit marginal rural and urban populations, poor peasants and women at risk, disabled people, indigenous people, the elderly, street children and adolescents, or children and adolescents at high risk. SAS works through municipalities, governorships and NGOs in charge of implementing the projects.

1.2 "Proyecto AMAR" (Integral care of minors at high risk)

AMAR is a cooperation project between the European Union and the Republic of Paraguay under SAS (Paraguay) and the Delegation of European Communities (European Union) headquartered in Montevideo, Uruguay.

The Paraguayan Government has charged AMAR with studying the status of sexual exploitation in Paraguay. The Government provides support through the activities presented in this Report.

1.3 Department of Women

The department is a governmental agency under the Presidency created by law No.34/92, aimed at preparing, coordinating and implementing public policies with a gender approach, through regulatory instruments and specific actions to eliminate discrimination against women and to promote equal opportunities and results favoring social democratization.

1.4 Strategies

One of the main obstacles standing in the way towards eradication of sexual exploitation was the absence of a criminal characterization of pimping in the Criminal Code. In March 2000 the new Criminal Code entered in force and a whole new chapter on sanctions of pimping is included.

1.5 Furthermore, the Paraguayan Government has ratified ILO's Convention No. 182 on the worst forms of child labor, and the Recommendations No. 190.

2. The Government has recently passed the Code of Childhood and Adolescence that is scheduled to enter into force on 5 December 2001. Said Code is based on the doctrine of child integral protection.

2.1 Successful program or project in the chosen area

An achievement worth mentioning is the approval of the Code of Childhood and Adolescence by law No. 1680/01 that will enter into force on 7 December 2001, and is based on the doctrine of integral childcare.

In 1996 and 2000 UNICEF conducted studies on sexual exploitation in Paraguay.

AMAR, along with BECA and a European expert conducted research on sexual exploitation in Paraguay, mainly in Ciudad del Este, Hernandarias and Presidente Franco, all border towns with Brazil and Asuncion. The data collected was presented in a Workshop where approximately 70 professionals of different fields participated. Said workshop was charged with the preparation of action strategies aimed at prevention, care and sanctioning of pimps. The data collected and the conclusions were compiled in a book entitled "La explotación sexual en el Paraguay" (Sexual exploitation in Paraguay), published by AMAR.

Based on the data collected, AMAR intends to finance the following:

2.2. Institutional projects or programs:
Target population

Included here are all projects from all institutions that will be collected in a General Plan.

- a. Judicial sanctions to pimps: through an Agreement with the Ministry of Justice that will create a specialized unit. AMAR will finance equipment and functioning.
- b. Setting up two shelters aimed at caring for sexually exploited girls and adolescents, one in Asuncion, the other one in Ciudad del Este. In order to ensure sustainability, we will try to work with programs of the Ministry of Health, Municipality of Asuncion, or of other institutions.
- c. Campaign on prevention of sexual exploitation. For 2002 we expect to create a Reference Center (at the Bus Terminal) and a database. Moreover, we are working on an informative campaign against sexual exploitation.

2.3 At private level

2.4 Grupo Luna Nueva" is working with projects on care for exploited girls in Asuncion, and BECA (Educational and Com

municative Care Platform), an NGO, organizes training workshops.

2.5 The International Labor Organization through IPEC (International Program for Eradication of Child Labor) is implementing a Bi-national (Brazil / Paraguay) Cooperation Program aimed at eliminating and preventing commercial sexual exploitation of children and adolescents in border areas (Ciudad del Este and Foz de Iguazu. September 2001 - September 2004).

2.6 Results

There are still no official results, however, "Grupo Luna Nueva", and NGO with external financing, has conducted successful rehabilitation of sexually exploited girls.

2.7 Funding

The National Government applied to a European Union non-reimbursable loan for Integral Care of Children at High Risk (AMAR). At the same time, UNICEF Paraguay cooperates efficiently with projects in the field:

In the first research on sexual exploitation conducted in 1996,

In training and information programs on rights of children, and

In advancing the appointing a board to study national plans and programs on the issue.

2.8 Successful experiences

Even if it is too soon to talk about successful experiences, we may assert that the recommendations from Stockholm have been taken into account when preparing new strategies and actions (as those mentioned).

2.9 Action Plan

There is still no Action Plan, the board in charge of its preparation is being appointed.

2.10 Identifying problems and lacunae

Regional Governmental Congress on Sexual Exploitation of Children

Sexual exploitation, being closely intertwined with drug trafficking and trafficking in children, mainly in Brazilian and Argentine borders, is extremely difficult to eradicate. Some of the determinants that hinder its eradication are fear, complicity with authorities, lack of familial and community support.

Conclusions

Paraguay is starting to take the first steps: a round table on the elaboration of a National Plan is being appointed, UNICEF and CDIA (Coordinator of the Rights of Children and Adolescents) - with 16 NGOs, participate.

IPEC is participating in an important project in border towns, and AMAR on behalf of the Department of Social Action has signed agreements with Brazil.

Recommendations:

We should strive to establish national, regional and international networks that facilitate exchanging information and experiences, and signing agreements that ensure effective control. Training and sensitization above all of law enforcement officers, judges and attorneys should also be prioritized.