

## **The Angel Coalition**

### **The Anti-Trafficking Coalition for Russia and CIS**

**Angel Coalition Trafficking Victim Assistance Center (TVAC) - is the national hub of rescue/repatriation operations in Russia.**

**The Angel Coalition TVAC and its network of 9 regional safe house partners currently functions as the hub of rescue, repatriation and rehabilitation activities for Russian trafficking victims - a complex operation requiring close liaisons with Russian and international government agencies, law enforcement and NGOs focusing on all aspects of counter-trafficking.**

Currently, the TVAC coordinates Russian and international rescue and repatriation of trafficking victims; operates toll-free Russian and international help lines; receives trafficking victims in Moscow and safely transfers them to regional safe houses; oversees safe house referral, financial, and programmatic operations; provides ongoing training and capacity building for regional NGO partners; and facilitates the Russian advocacy of those partners at the federal level in Moscow.

TVAC staff meet trafficking victims in airports, train stations, bus terminals where traffickers are usually waiting to re-capture the victim. Victims are quickly removed to a safer place while TVAC staff help them buy transportation to the regional safe houses. Often victims arrive in winter with inadequate clothing and no money for food.

The TVAC maintains a "victims assistance fund" which is used to buy tickets, food and some warm clothes so that the victim can continue on to safety. Rescues have led to difficult confrontations with traffickers and not all rescues have been successful.

Since starting operations in June 2003, the TVAC has provided direct assistance in repatriation and finding missing persons to more than 800 people from the Russian Federation, Germany, Belgium, U.S.A., Ukraine, Netherlands, Italy, Spain, U.A.E., Turkey, Israel, Uzbekistan and Great Britain.

It has also been directly responsible for the successful rescue and repatriation of 52 CIS nationals, including 11 survivors who were rescued by TVAC staff directly at Sheremetyevo Airport following deportation from Israel and Europe.

In summary, during the first two years, more than 25,000 staff hours have been spent to achieve the following:

- Russia's first fully operational Trafficking Victim Assistance Center (TVAC).
- Russia's first network of 9 safe houses with operational protocols specific to the unique needs of victims of trafficking.
- Russia's first 24 hour toll-free national and international rescue/help-lines for trafficking victims (Germany, Netherlands, Belgium, US,Russia).
- Direct help-line assistance in Russia and 13 other countries to more than 4,000 people-including victims, families and those seeking information about the risks of working abroad.
- Successful TVAC international rescues and repatriations of more than 50 Russian-speaking trafficking victims.

- Rehabilitation of 75 trafficking victims by the shelter network.
- Partnering with Russian and international law enforcement to instigate 2 ongoing, full-scale international investigations of criminal trafficking rings.
- Working with survivor witnesses, police and regional prosecutors to develop 9 cases now going to court in Russia.
- Performing multiple emergency interventions in partnership with the Russian police to prevent trafficking from occurring at Russian borders.
- Initiating more than 20 successful missing persons cases through the police in destination countries including the United States, Israel, Turkey and EU.
- Participating as experts on more than 25 television programs, in over 100 news interviews, and in 16 newspaper investigations of the issue of trafficking to, from and within Russia.
- Publication of the "Counter-trafficking Protocol and Plan of Action for the Russian Federation," written with input from NGOs and Russian and international governmental agencies which is currently used as the template for NGO/government counter-trafficking partnership by Angel Coalition and the Ministry of Interior of Russia.
- Publication of the "Victim Assistance Protocol" as a standard of "best practice" for the operation of safe houses in the Russian Federation.
- Serving as consulting trainers for the National Training Academy of the Ministry of Interior to develop a law enforcement counter-trafficking and victim profiling curriculum that will be taught to cadets in 2006.

During 2004, the TVAC developed the Counter-Trafficking Protocol and Plan of Action for the Russian Federation which has been widely distributed throughout government ministries federally and regionally and has served as a template for the development of NGO/governmental partnerships.

### **Coalition Programs:**

#### ***Russian Toll-Free Helplines - the lifeline for victims to the Trafficking Victims Assistance Center (TVAC).***

The TVAC is designed as a global response center for Russian speaking trafficking victims. As an emergency response facility, free, rapid, secure access to its services by those who need them urgently is a necessity.

The most accessible system for initiating contact with the TVAC is by telephone. Toll-free numbers have only been available for Russia since 2003 and international toll-free numbers from a limited number of countries since 2004.

In November 2004, MiraMed Institute and the Angel Coalition Trafficking Victim Assistance Center opened Russia 's first and only 24-hour national and international toll-free help-lines to:

- Provide immediate international toll-free, Russian-language rescue and repatriation assistance to trafficking victims in the U.S.A. and three European countries ( Belgium ,

Netherlands and Germany ) by the Angel Coalition Trafficking Victim Assistance Center in Moscow .

- Provide a direct toll-free national help-line for trafficking victims in Russia so that families and friends of trafficking victims can report trafficking cases and receive assistance and advice from TVAC experts.

- Provide trafficking prevention education to at-risk women throughout Russia through live, toll-free consultations with experts.

The first three countries to go "on line" with international toll-free numbers were Netherlands , Belgium and Germany followed by the US in March, 2005. In order to start promoting the help-lines, the TVAC contacted NGOs, law enforcement and other agencies in these target countries to ask for their input and support.

After analyzing their input, it was decided that the most direct mechanism to reach trapped women would be through the distribution of a wallet-sized card with the help-line phone number and other essential information.

A trial run of 10,000 wallet sized cards were printed up for distribution to NGOs, embassies, border points, etc.

As a result of feedback from this initial distribution, three different card designs were eventually developed:

- (1) a card directly targeted to suspected trafficking victims distributed by police and NGO outreach projects that is carefully designed to conceal its true purpose by making it look like astrological "advice";

- (2) a second card which is used specifically by embassies, at border entry points and by Russian NGOs that contains information that "every woman should know before going abroad";

- (3) a third card with national as well as international information about the threat of trafficking for distribution within the Russian Federation through police, employment agencies, NGOs, schools, institutes, orphanages, etc.

In the first quarter of 2005, TVAC staff made site visits to Netherlands, Germany and Belgium to meet with NGOs, law enforcement, embassy officials and others to talk about the help-line, gather information, discuss distribution and build cooperative rescue/repatriation international networks.

In Germany , TVAC staff met with a national consortium of NGOs, IOM and police officials in Berlin , Essen, Westphalia and Frankfurt.

In Belgium ,TVAC staff met with members of the European Women's Lobby and IOM and signed cooperative agreements with police officials in Antwerp and Brussels.

In Netherlands , TVAC staff addressed a nationwide conference of police from trafficking task forces across the country and arranged to distribute cards through IOM, the police and NGOs.

In the US, MiraMed staff met with NGOs, and government agencies tasked with assisting trafficking victims and it was agreed that TVAC helpline information will be included in websites, publications and as part a government funded project to reach trafficking victims in all US cities.

(Trafficking Victims Assistance Center- Moscow): Operators are Russian-speaking only.

**International:**

Call from Netherlands, Belgium, Germany (to Russia): [00-800-455-05-555](tel:00-800-455-05-555)

Call from USA (to Russia): [+1-866-800-0270](tel:+1-866-800-0270)

In November 2004, the Angel Coalition's Moscow Trafficking Victim Assistance Center (TVAC) opened four Russian-language toll-free help-lines in Russia, Germany, the Netherlands and Belgium. A similar line will be established in the United States in 2005, and help-lines will be set up in additional countries soon.

**National:**

Calls from anywhere in Russia (to the Angel Coalition/TVAC in Moscow): [8-800-200-2400](tel:8-800-200-2400)

This toll-free service provides valuable information for those interested in traveling abroad to study, work, or for other personal reasons. Help-line operators provide vital information about the terms and conditions of work overseas, warn against fraudulent schemes, and give important tips on what to do and how to protect one's rights.

Additionally, the help-line enables the Angel Coalition to assist women and girls who are trapped in trafficking in Europe or the U.S. to return home and undergo rehabilitation. Relatives and parents can also initiate broad-based searches for their loved ones. The help-line is Russian-language, and therefore accessible to Russian travelers abroad who do not know the language of their destination country.

The help-line operates 24 hours a day. Coached operators and the TVAC staff provide necessary assistance. We cooperate with domestic and international law enforcement, as well as Interpol, in working on actual trafficking cases. We ensure that victims outside Russia receive assistance by working with government agencies and NGOs in these countries, thus making the rescue, on-site rehabilitation, and return of the victim more efficient.

The Coalition considers the confidentiality of incoming calls to be highly important.

**Regional Russian Hotlines:**

There are hot-lines of other NGO's in the cities of Russia and Countries of CIS for consultations and help to victims of trafficking.

***Rescue/Repatriation Global Database***

The Trafficking Victims Assistance Center (TVAC) Rescue/Repatriation Global Database is currently in use by the staff of the Angel Coalition Trafficking Victim Assistance Center (TVAC) for direct emergency rescues initiated throughout the world.

The compilation of the database (2003-2005) required an exhaustive review and direct verification of reference publications put out by IOM, OSCE, EU, USAID, GTIP, the Protection Project, faith-based organizations and many others.

All organizations described in these resources were contacted directly by TVAC interns and staff by phone to verify that their organizations were operational, that they could receive or assist Russian trafficking victims and the kinds of services they provided. All hotline numbers entered into the TVAC database were tested to verify response by calling them directly from Moscow.

In addition, government resources were researched, contacted and verified. Staff and interns worked with the Russian Ministries of Interior and Foreign Affairs, Europol, and law enforcement liaisons in 11 embassies in Moscow to gather information on key contacts in Europe , the Middle East , North America and Asia .

Again, all potential resources were called to validate their willingness and ability to assist. Sources for the U.S. portion of the database were provided by U.S. government agencies such as HHS, NGOs such as IJM, Covenant House, Gospel Missions, and the Salvation Army. Over two thousand organizations were contacted directly before being included into the TVAC Russian victim response database.

Computer programming for this database also required extensive development time. No templates were available for a multinational, multi-access online Russian language database required for helpline operations. Over the course of one year, TVAC staff worked with computer programmers in Moscow to design a unique, multi-functional Russian language database that includes more than 2000 references and can be accessed at any time by Angel Coalition staff and partners conducting rescues and repatriations.

### ***Network of Shelters***

During 2003, five safe houses were started to receive trafficking victims rescued by the TVAC - two in St. Petersburg , and one each in Murmansk, Petrozavodsk, and Kazan with funding from the US Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons. The projects provide shelter and psychological counseling, assist in repatriation, and facilitate access to medical and legal services for trafficking victims.

In mid-2004, 4 more Russian NGO partners opened shelters under The Russian Project in Yaroslavl, Nizhni Novgorod, Chelyabinsk and Irkutsk.

### ***Information Campaigns***

Although regional information campaigns by Angel Coalition members are ongoing, no coordinated multi-regional, multi-media campaign against trafficking had been conducted in Russia until May, 2001.

#### **First all-Russia multi-media public education and information campaign**

On May 16th, 2001 the Angel Coalition, a consortium of 43 Russian NGO's, launched an intensive 100 day anti-trafficking campaign in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Nizhni y Novgorod, Yaroslavl, Petrozavodsk and Veliki y Novgorod with simultaneous press conferences in all six sites and the distribution of campaign literature, bus posters, metro cards, TV and radio spots.

During the course of the campaign, over 1000 community volunteers in six regions distributed 50,000 posters, 600,000 information booklets, 100,000 stickers, 5,000 buttons, 25,000 printed packets and 12,000 bus/metro placards. Community action events included organizing parades, demonstrations, lectures, and legislative activity.

On May 16th, the Angel Coalition partners in each region opened telephone hotlines in preparation for callers to hotline numbers published on TV, radio, in newspaper articles and on printed materials.

Funds for NGO press training and community coalition building were provided by the US Department of State Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs. Funds for printing of

campaign materials and distribution were provided by the US Embassy Democracy Grant program, Soroptimist International, private foundations and donors.

The 100-day campaign was the first and largest multi-regional, multi-media public education anti-trafficking campaign in Russia. The campaign reached more than 10 million Russians. The raised awareness that the campaign created nationally is well documented-radio, TV and newspaper stories reached an audience of more than 60 million. Although this is an impressive number, it is a one-time "reach".

The following statistical and anecdotal record clearly documents that the training and print media strategies specifically developed for this campaign were highly successful in reaching the target audience not only one-to-one, but multiple times through the extensive use of non-broadcast media, personal contact and regional presentations by Angel Coalition partners. Responses from print media outnumbered broadcast media 3 to 1.

The large number of actual telephone hotline responses (1562), the significant involvement of private and public community participants and the political support received in most regions was unprecedented.

The campaign was most successful in those regions where local and oblast government support was high. Where such support was lacking, the results were clearly not as impressive. This points to the need for increased training and education to political entities and individuals for future campaigns.

Although the campaign officially ended on August 31, the public demand for continuing education has compelled NGO's in each region to extend their local efforts, despite a lack of funding. There is universal agreement by the Angel Coalition partners in each region that anti-trafficking public education efforts must continue, with specific focus on young women and girls in orphanages, schools, universities and the workplace.

### **Informational campaign in Murmansk and Kola Peninsula**

The Angel Coalition actively partners with its members and other NGO's not only in Russia but abroad.

In 2003 working with the IRIS, a Swedish NGO, and Crisis Center "Priyut" an NGO in the Kola peninsula (Murmansk region), Angel Coalition staff provided expert training to help create the region's first anti-trafficking multi-media campaign. In addition to TV and radio spots, the campaign included distribution of brochures, posters, stickers, bus cards and plastic bags.

This campaign funded by the Swedish International Development Agency (SIDA) was planned for the whole Murmansk oblast.

NGO representatives from the cities of Severomorsk, Apatity, and Poliarnye Zory joined the campaign and provided information coverage of the trafficking problem in their local media.

The campaign started on September 18, 2003 with a high level international conference for the Government of Murmansk and Murmansk region and a press conference.

During the campaign over then 1000 brochures were distributed in Murmansk alone. Murmansk hot-line received more then 225 calls. City Police has given his order to his staff to direct all the trafficking victims to Priyut's shelter, if they ever meet such cases. City and Oblast government received a flood of letters and calls from community groups and local NGO's in Murmansk. Local Migration service allowed to publish their telephone number in our campaign brochure.

As a result Migration service complained that too many people called them to check this or that company's legality. That's how good cooperation with Migration Service was achieved.

A documentary was filmed by Swedish partners and Murmansk State Tele-Radio Company. It will be shown on Murmansk TV. A leaflet was published by Roks in Murmansk with telephone numbers of Crisis centers in Sweden, Norway and Finland. 16 seminars on trafficking were carried out for teachers around the oblast (Murmansk-12, Monchegorsk-1, Olenegorsk-1, Polyarhy-1, Zapolyarny-1) by Murmansk team of trainers of Irina Fogt. In the other 3 cities-campaign participants (Polyarnie Zory, Severomorsk and Apatity) the seminars were held by their own crisis centers.

Those teachers later were obliged to hold 10 seminars or "class hours" with their children, thus more than 160 seminars for more than 3000 teenagers were carried out around the region. Anti-trafficking seminars were also held in Murmansk by Priyut for Migration Service and for tour companies. Those tour companies who did not come for the seminar were put on a black list. The research of tour agencies was carried out by Olga Patrakeeva's team. The list was sent to Migration service to check and take measures.

### **Training on how to run a campaign on trafficking provided by MiraMed Institute and Angel Coalition to NGO's in Romania**

The Angel Coalition has also provided staff training for the first regional anti-trafficking campaign in the Iasi region of Romania, a large area that borders Moldova. Working with the Romanian organization "Alternative Sociale" ("Social Alternative"), based in Iasi, Angel Coalition experts provided 36 days of technical assistance to the coalition of Romanian NGOs in Iasi, Suceava and Neamtz. MiraMed Institute and Angel Coalition experts were recommended to Romanian NGO's. by the international funding organizations were USAID and World Learning.

The campaign center – city of Iasi (North-East of Romania, close to the border with the Republic of Moldova) is characterized by hard trafficking situation: with large number of Romanian women are being trafficked from this region of the country, this place is also a transit point for trafficking of Moldovan and Ukrainian women to Western Europe and to the Southern border of the country for trafficking to the countries of Middle East. Therefore the NGO's of this region with active support of IOM Bucharest office decided to conduct an information campaign about the threat of trafficking.

Ytaded by NGO "Alternative Sociale", NGO's from the cities of Botoshany, Galats, Bakeu, Vasluy, Pyatra-Nyamts and Suchava united in a team of campaign organizers.

The training of this team was conducted by MiraMed/ Angel Coalition experts in three stages: in May 2003 – preparation for the press-conference, June 11-16, 2003 – teaching basic campaign elements, September 11-16, 2003 – on site supervision of the campaign. During the second stage of the training the campaigns goals and strategies were developed, the target group defined and the slogan chosen, the quantity and character of printed hand-out materials were discussed. The strategy of lobbying work with government and stakeholders was also developed for each NGO group. Special attention was paid to untraditional methods of work? Such as child parades and rally, stickers in busses, rock concert for youth.

A good result of this training was that participants acquired more confidence in organizing such events, especially in working with government.

In September MiraMed and Angel Coalition checked the preparations of the coordinating organization in Iasi and local NGOs for the launch of the campaign, visited 3 remote districts, and made the last corrections before the campaign start.

On September 11, 2003 the campaign was officially opened with a simultaneous press-conferences in 7 cities, where the main goals and objectives of the campaign were stated. Volunteers worked on central streets, distributing brochures to the public and putting up posters on the walls.

As a result of an active start the population got the impression of something large going on in the cities. The campaign lasted for 2 months and included an organization of a large rock concert of one of the popular Romanian bands in support of the campaign and against trafficking.

Source: <http://www.angelcoalition.org>

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