



SPEAKING OUT.

Case study report of Proyecto Esperanza and SICAR cat

Part of the final evaluation of the programme
Strengthening Support and Protection Systems for
Victims of Human Trafficking in Europe

INTRODUCTION

This is a brief report of a case study of the work of Proyecto Esperanza and SICAR cat in the project “Speaking out for the protection of victims of Trafficking for all forms of exploitation”. This project ran from July 2019 until the end of 2021 and was part of a broader programme, financed by Porticus, named “Strengthening Support and Protection Systems for Victims of Human Trafficking in Europe”. This case study is one of four case studies, carried out for the final evaluation of this programme.

This case study attempts to provide an answer to the following questions

1. To what structural changes in systems for protection and support of victims of trafficking in human beings (THB) did the project contribute?
2. What was the contribution of the project to these changes? With special attention to the role of service delivery in relation to advocacy and the role of cooperation with other organisations.

METHODOLOGY

The organisation used a monitoring instrument, specifically designed to capture structural changes in systems and the contributions to these changes. In addition to this, group discussions or interviews were held with staff, with Porticus and with a number of external stakeholders. Avance has been involved with this project from its inception.

WHY THIS PROJECT

Spain is in the front line of many migratory flows and has many victims of THB within its borders. For these and other victims it is often difficult to access support and protection to which they are entitled on the basis of European legislation. One reason for this limited access is the narrow focus of Spanish support for victims of THB, mainly for women victims of sexual exploitation.

Support is mostly available for those who self-identify as victims and who are already abused and are willing to cooperate with the police. Not for all others, including those

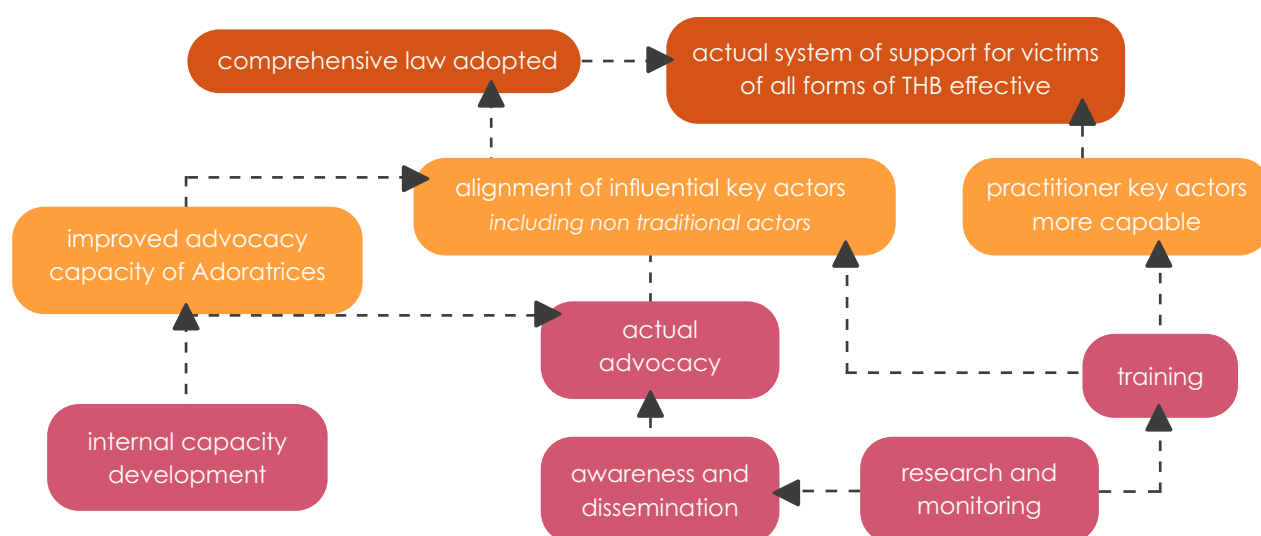
who arrive and are at risk of being exploited in a variety of ways. Such exploitation includes sexual abuse, but also labour exploitation, for example in domestic work, forced marriage, forced begging, forced to commit criminal acts or to remove organs.

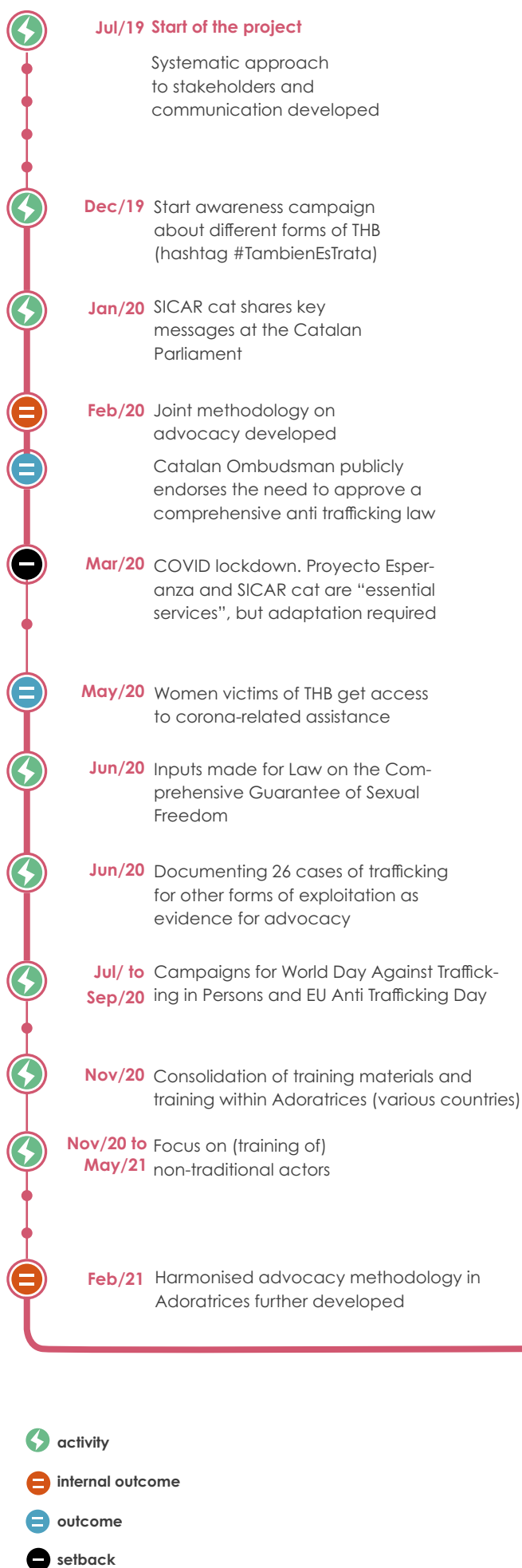
Because of the narrow understanding on THB focusing mostly on sexual abuse of women, most victims for other forms of THB are not even identified and therefore remain invisible. In the most recent GRETA monitoring report, it is recommended that Spain needs to widen its focus and incorporate all forms and purposes of THB. This project attempts to broaden the legislative basis and public policies as well as to raise awareness to include all forms and purposes of THB so that more victims can be identified and the access of victims to support and protection is improved

Adoratrices is a Catholic religious congregation, established in 1856 and active in almost 30 countries. It implements numerous projects for social activities. Two of these projects are Proyecto Esperanza and SICAR cat and they jointly carried out this project.

The figure below presents a simplified Theory of Change of the project. The overall objective of the project is to improve the system of support for victims of all forms and purposes of THB, and this is mainly done through two major pathways. The first and major pathway is to work toward a comprehensive law that covers all forms and purposes of THB, so that also victims of THB that now remain hidden or cannot access support will be supported and protected. This is done by working with a broad range of actors and nudge them toward recognition of the need for such comprehensive legislation. This is done with the usual actors, such as the responsible ministries, but also with less traditional actors, such as trade unions, sector organisations and migration-related organisations. The idea is that when a broader coalition of actors becomes convinced of the need for a comprehensive law, the likelihood that such legislation will actually be passed, is increased.

THEORY OF CHANGE





Influencing key actors around the need for a comprehensive law is done through advocacy, including meetings and (social media and other) campaigns, providing inputs and statements, but also through offering training. This very constructive approach raises awareness and brings evidence to the table and helps to convince stakeholders that comprehensive legislation is needed. The advocacy activities, including the training, are based on an evidence base that is generated through the practical involvement of Adoratrices with victims of THB. This evidence base is researched and documented and increases the force of the advocacy itself.

The training, mentioned above, is also the starting point of a second pathway toward the overall objective of an improved system of support. By training a broad range of actors on the identification and the needs and modes of support and protection for different categories of victims of THB, actors can already start acting on their behalf. This in itself already improves the support available for these victims. But in addition to this, the actual (improved) practice in turn underlines the need for legislation and this further builds the coalition of those who argue for the need for such legislation.

In addition to the two interconnected pathways described above (working on improved legislation and on improved practice), the project has also invested in Adoratrices itself. While advocacy has been part of the work of Adoratrices since its inception, the main focus is on direct social support activities. This project also offered internal capacity development and systematisation of its advocacy work in all its countries, structures and foundations. In turn, the weight of this much bigger structure was used to endorse the advocacy for a comprehensive law in Spain.





SYSTEMIC CHANGES

Has the project succeeded in bringing about structural changes in the system of support for victims of THB? This section describes briefly which structural changes were observed and the next section digs deeper into the causal question if and how the project contributed to these changes.

A first change is within the system of Adoratrices. At least in the province that covers Europe and Africa, the advocacy capacity of this religious congregation has been strengthened. Advocacy has been in the constitution of the congregation since its start in 1856, but the main focus was and is often on practical support. Proyecto Esperanza and SICAR cat have offered training to other Adoratrices foundations and bodies, and they have showcased their toolbox of instruments, such as stakeholder mapping and the systematization of knowledge and monitoring of public policy.

Across the congregation, the EFQM model is used as a quality management system, and the advocacy work has been incorporated into this system in order to embed it structurally in the congregation. Adoratrices has adopted a coherence strategy for all its social work, common advocacy objectives and top-level indicators on advocacy that are now being used across all its foundations. Because of this change, Adoratrices is now able to speak out with a single voice on issues of social transformation. They did this already about the urgency of adopting a comprehensive law.

The change is still an initial change and the organisation will need to develop a common strategic plan and annual action plans that include the advocacy dimension to achieve a more focused and effective advocacy strategy. Also, the set of instruments, tools, and templates may need to be shared to other provinces as well.

Nevertheless, this change is broader than Adoratrices only. SICAR cat also participates in the Ödos project, led by Arcoiris and one of its contributions has been to change the mindset of the organisation from doing social work, to doing social work and at the same time using it to drive structural change, by using the evidence and combining it with a political sensitivity and ability to see and seize windows of opportunity and build coalitions for change.

A second change is related to the movement toward a comprehensive law on THB and the alignment of key stakeholders in this process. Proyecto Esperanza and SICAR cat have been instrumental as a key actor to drive this movement. They did this along with the Spanish network against THB (the RECTP) but within this network, Proyecto Esperanza is recognised as the driving force of this process.

Actors that have increasingly recognised the need to address all forms and purposes of THB, and to cover this in legislation, include some Spanish members of the European Parliament; the General Director of Migrations at the Ministry of Inclusion, Social Security and Migrations; members of the Senate's Study Group on Migration; the General Directorate for Children and Adolescent care of Catalonia and several Catalan political parties. One university adapted and broadened its curriculum on THB. Campaigns about different forms of THB were picked up by trade unions, media, civil society organisations and legal actors. The Catalan ombudsman

has become one of the greatest allies, and through him, the Catalan parliament as well as the national ombudsman are reached.

The project also reached non-traditional actors through offering training, like migration related actors and actors active for domestic workers. Such training capacitated them to recognize different forms of THB, but at the same time enlisted them in the movement toward comprehensive legislation. It is also from the concrete practice of the work of non-legislative actors (such as police, legal and fiscal actors) that the need for comprehensive legislation is increasingly recognised.

The Ministry of Equality is currently driving the process toward comprehensive legislation and the project has developed good working relations with them. They opened a consultation to gather input for a comprehensive law and the introductory document shows part of the project's position on the topic. But the fact that a single ministry is in charge is also a disadvantage, since it reconfirms the narrow focus on women. And cooperation between different ministries is not straightforward.

At the same time, there are parallel developments. Since 2018 an ILO protocol is in force in Spain that forces the government to address labour exploitation. This stimulates the development of better legislation against labour exploitation. Also, a law on guaranteeing sexual freedom is currently in a parliamentary procedure. This law includes trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation for prostitution and it improves the legislation for this type of THB.

These developments are real improvements of the legislation against THB and the project takes every opportunity to stimulate and facilitate these improvements. At the same time, these improvements take away the sense of urgency for a really comprehensive legislation and this is a negative countereffect.

A major challenge for the development of comprehensive legislation against THB is the debate about abolition or regulation of prostitution. Several strong voices argue for an abolitionist law, with the assumption that this will resolve all issues of THB. This movement takes away the urgency of developing a really comprehensive law that includes all forms and purposes of THB and is therefore considered unhelpful.

The influence of the next national elections will likely be large. Depending on its outcome, the direction may be toward abolitionist legislation instead of comprehensive legislation, or toward the further development of comprehensive legislation. In any case, the advocacy for this latter direction, as well as the development of an increasingly broad alliance of actors that supports this will have to continue.










CONTRIBUTION ANALYSIS

CHANGE

The advocacy capacity of Adoratrices as a key actor in the fight against THB has been strengthened.

CAUSAL QUESTION

To what extent did the project contribute to this change?

+ project functioned as example to be scaled up	 certainly or very likely happened
+ project provided training and resources, templates, tools	 certainly or very likely happened
+ The opportunity of Porticus funding for strengthening advocacy capacity	 certainly or very likely happened
+ advocacy was already part of the constitution of 1856	 certainly or very likely happened
+ positive role of current and previous superiora provincial	 certainly or very likely happened
+ being involved in advocacy is also a global trend	 somewhat likely
+ existence of quality management system (EFQM), possibility to integrate	 certainly or very likely happened
- leadership changes and lack of decisions	 somewhat likely
- lack of knowledge and resistance to advocacy because of difficulty to balance resources between advocacy and direct assistance.	 somewhat likely

CONCLUSION: the project was a major contributing factor toward this change in Adoratrices.

 programme mechanism

 cooperating actor









 influencing factor




CHANGE

The process towards the adoption of a Comprehensive Law against trafficking in human beings, incorporating all forms of exploitation is initiated and key actors support this need.

CAUSAL QUESTION

To what extent did the project contribute to this change?

+ Social media campaigns about other forms of THB made it easy to follow for other actors	 certainly or very likely happened
+ Active lobby, meetings, networking, to build coalitions of support	 certainly or very likely happened
+ Provide statements, inputs to influence processes and actors, which are taken up	 certainly or very likely happened
+ Working with concrete cases helps actors (e.g. police, legal, fiscal) to discover gaps in legislation	 somewhat likely
+ Joint lobby with Spanish network against THB (RECTP), with Proyecto Esperanza in a leading position	 certainly or very likely happened
+ ILO protocol against labour exploitation in force in Spain since 2018	 certainly or very likely happened
+ GRETA report recommends improvement of legislation and more attention for all forms of THB	 certainly or very likely happened
+ Commitment of the current government (esp ministry of Equality) to fight THB	 somewhat likely

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Current narrow focus on sexual abuse of women is increasing through a preoccupation with abolitionist legislation as solution to THB. In current unstable political climate, this is worsening. 	 certainly or very likely happened
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Other specific legislation trajectories (on sexual freedom, labour exploitation) help address some issues but also take away the urgency for a comprehensive law 	 somewhat likely
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ministry of Equality is leading. Its mandate is limited on THB for sexual exploitation. Other relevant Ministries have a limited engagement (justice, interior) 	 somewhat likely

CONCLUSION: the change itself is in initial stages, but an increasingly large coalition of support is being formed. This project has as much as possible cooperated with others, but often took a proactive and leading role in such cooperation. They are therefore the major contributor to this change insofar as it has started to come about.

ROLE OF SERVICE DELIVERY

Proyecto Esperanza and SICAR cat are organisations that combine concrete service delivery with advocacy work. This evaluation asked the question about the added value of combining these two. Would it make a difference if the organisations focused only on advocacy and obtain their field knowledge from the work of other organisations?

The answer to this question is indisputable and all respondents are unanimous about it: the linkage of service delivery to advocacy work is the single most important reason for the efficacy of the advocacy work of these organisations. The specific connections include the following:

- **Evidence and knowledge.** The organisations know what they argue for. They know the reality of victims' lives in much detail. More than can be known through a one-time interview are reading a report.
- **Legitimacy and credibility.** Advocacy messages are grounded in reality and all stakeholders take this serious for the fact that these organisations know what they are saying from their own practice.
- **Authenticity and personal involvement.** Through the personal involvement of staff (even staff that focus mainly on advocacy work) with concrete persons and their situations, they develop an authenticity and personal experience that translates into persuasiveness and urgency. This could be regarded as another form of "lived experience" in the sense that part of their lives indeed share in victims' lives. Abstract concepts are conveyed through very real situations.
- **Opportunities through cases.** Working on concrete cases, e.g. with legal, social or law enforcement agencies provides these organisations the opportunity to unground concrete legal gaps and enlists them directly as allies in the advocacy work. The line between cases and advocacy is very short and direct.

ROLE OF COOPERATION

Another question asked in this evaluation is the role that cooperation with others plays in contributing to changes in the system. Proyecto Esperanza and SICAR cat are extremely well-connected. They are broadly recognized as the leading experts on issues of THB and on the trajectory toward a comprehensive law specifically. Other organisations recognise them as being willing to share their expertise and willing to take the lead in joint advocacy processes.

The role of the RECTP has been important. This network, with its 33 members provides the necessary weight and volume. Proyecto Esperanza is one of the leading agencies in the advocacy for a comprehensive law, but it gives credit to others where this is due, and it is wise enough to use the mass of the network, as well as the mass of the broad congregation of Adoratrices when official statements are made.

GOOD PRACTICES AND LESSONS LEARNED

The project has contributed to an enlarged capacity and effectiveness of the advocacy of the worldwide organisation Adoratrices. They have also contributed to the political awareness of other organisations and their potential to use practical work as a means to contribute to structural change in systems. They have systematised their advocacy efforts and developed relevant instruments, through which they are able to deal with many stakeholders and make conscious decisions about which course to follow.

The project has also contributed to the movement toward a comprehensive law against all forms and purposes of THB. An increasingly broad range of actors is seeing the need for improvements in legislation and practice. Both organisations are skilful in maneuvering between their advocacy for a single comprehensive law and grasping opportunities as the occur, to improve specific parts of legislation or practice.

Both organisations are widely recognized as leaders in the field of THB, willing to share with others and without overclaiming successes for themselves.

Toward the future it will be necessary to continue to weigh the alternatives of focusing on one comprehensive law or on specific laws that improve the situation for victims of THB. Likewise, depending on the political situation, the organisations will need to weigh their options between focusing on legislative trajectories and focusing on other system components, such as the actual practice and capacities of system actors, or national action plans with resources and budgets, through which the system of support for victims of THB is also improved. This will not take away the need for a comprehensive law, but for the shorter term it could constitute a more effective pathway.