

PROJECT INFORMATION SHEET

SUPPORTING FOSTER CARERS OF CHILD VICTIMS OF HUMAN TRAFFICKING & MODERN SLAVERY: CROYDON PILOT FOR ALBANIAN & VIETNAMESE UASC

Project Objective

This project aims to pilot tools to build the capacity of foster carers to look after Albanian and Vietnamese unaccompanied asylum seeking children (UASC) who are identified - or potential - victims of human trafficking and modern slavery, and to inform these children about foster care in their own language, thereby reducing the numbers going missing from care. The project will enhance foster carer capability by providing them with training, online materials, along with the opportunity to participate in both face to face and online forums, to increase their confidence and expertise, while Albanian and Vietnamese children will receive culturally tailored information on foster care. The tools will be piloted in partnership with the London Borough of Croydon, and with the support of Barnardo's.

Project Rationale

A large proportion of looked after children in the London Borough of Croydon are UASC, and some of these young people have been affected by issues related to trafficking and modern slavery. The majority come from Albania, with a smaller number coming from Vietnam.

The London Borough of Croydon has noticed that UASC face difficulties settling into foster care placements which can arise some time into the placement and not always in the first days. On top of cultural and linguistic differences, the children may feel pressure from traffickers and/or family members to repay debt and thus feel the need to work. These issues, along with issues of trust, mean that these children are at risk of going missing. This is an issue that affects Croydon, other London Boroughs, and Councils across the UK.

Project Activities

To achieve the project's objectives, the following activities will be undertaken:

- An initial stakeholder forum, to raise awareness and support content development for training and information materials.
- The development of an online resource hub containing introductory online briefings for foster carers, a handbook including cultural information and directory of services.
- The development and delivery of training for foster carers, to increase their confidence in supporting Albanian and Vietnamese young people who may be trafficked or at risk.

- A series of forums for foster carers to provide them with regular opportunities for targeted expert and peer support on issues related to the project.
- The development of monitoring and evaluation tools, and a baseline on Albanian and Vietnamese young people looked after by Croydon, and their missing episodes.
- An information leaflet for Albanian and Vietnamese young people placed in foster care in Croydon, guided by consultations with current or former Albanian and Vietnamese looked after children.
- A project evaluation report to be presented at a final Stakeholder Forum.

The project activities will be supported by Child Trafficking Experts from Barnardo's and IOM's Albania and Vietnam country offices, as well as a Monitoring and Evaluation Expert for IOM.

Project Timeline

The project will be implemented from March 2017 to March 2019.

About IOM and the London Borough of Croydon

IOM, the UN's migration agency, is the leading organisation in the field of migration. Established in 1951, IOM is committed to the principle that humane and orderly migration benefits migrants and society. IOM has been working in the area of human trafficking and modern slavery for over 20 years. In the UK, IOM works to strengthen the capacity of local authorities and other organisations to detect and respond to issues of trafficking and modern slavery and we seek to improve the support conditions for those who have been affected by these crimes by implementing projects that directly support survivors, as well as research to better understand vulnerabilities to trafficking. IOM has been working with Croydon since 2012, and in that time we have trained close to 2000 frontline professionals, building a strong relationship with the borough.

The London Borough of Croydon is the largest London borough by population. The Home Office UK Visas and Immigration department has its headquarters in Lunar House in Central Croydon, and for this reason it has been one of the local authorities with highest numbers of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children and potential victims of trafficking and modern slavery being referred into care. The team working directly on the project for Croydon Council sits within the Safeguarding and Looked After Children Quality Assurance Service, with the Looked After Children and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children's Service, Fostering Service, and Croydon's Children's Safeguarding Board providing essential support for engagement with beneficiaries.

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