

The Two Little Girls campaign

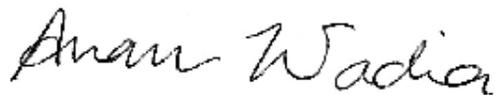


Albania - a case study

Acknowledgements

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Contents

Introduction.....	1
The project’s activities	3
What worked well	6
The challenges	11
The impact of the campaign	12
Key findings	16
Lessons for the future	17

Introduction

The Two Little Girls film was launched in 2009. It is a short animated film aimed at raising awareness about sex trafficking amongst young women in Eastern Europe. Albania was the first country in which the campaign was launched and provided the stories on which the film itself is based.

The following case study describes the project's activities in Albania, how the film was received and what impact it has had. The case study has been compiled by M & E Consulting, a social research agency specialising in evaluating outcomes and impact. The evaluators carried out a visit to Albania in October 2012 and met with staff and volunteers from the Two Little Girls' project partner, the Albanian Center for Population and Development (ACPD), who also arranged meetings with school students and teachers who had seen the film and other agencies who had been involved in its distribution.

The visit took place several years after the campaign was launched and therefore provided a good opportunity to assess the longer-term impact of the Two Little Girls campaign in Albania. During our visit, we interviewed:

- 11 young people who had seen the film
- 6 teachers who had been involved in showing the film
- representatives from the Albanian Ministry of Labour and the Department of Social Welfare in Vlora
- representatives from Vatra (a shelter for trafficked women and those at risk of being trafficked), the Observatory for Children's Rights, SOS Children's Villages
- ACPD staff and volunteers.

The context

In 2009, Albania was still emerging from nearly half a decade of Communist rule. The country was one of the poorest in Europe, with high unemployment, a large informal economy and powerful organised crime networks. It was, and still is, a source country for men, women, and children trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced labour, including forced begging. Most sex trafficking victims were women and girls between the ages of 15 and 25 who were trafficked to Greece, Italy, Macedonia, and Kosovo and onwards to Western European countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Belgium, Norway, Germany, and the Netherlands.

In 2001, the Albanian government made human trafficking a criminal offence and adopted a national plan to reduce the trafficking of people. It also opened the first anti-sex trafficking centre in Europe and since 2007 the Ministry of the Interior has funded a national free, 24-hour helpline for victims and potential victims of trafficking. Nonetheless, the United States Department of State's *Trafficking in Persons Report* states that although the Albanian Government is making significant efforts to eliminate trafficking, the country still does not fully comply with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking.¹

More recently, with laws controlling the use of speed boats along the coast, internal trafficking – where women, men and children are moved to another part of the country for sexual exploitation and forced labour – is on the rise. It is suspected that many of these people are later trafficked abroad.

¹ *United States Department of State, Trafficking in Persons Report 2012 - Albania*

The project's activities

Launching the project

In 2009, the Two Little Girls project partnered with the Albanian Center for Population and Development (ACPD) to launch the Two Little Girls film in Albania. Initially, ACPD ran a pilot project to explore how best to use the film and which age groups to target. The pilot was run in schools in three cities – Tirana, Vlora and Shkodra – and revealed that the film worked best with young people aged around 13 to 14 years old. It also became clear that it would be useful to develop a booklet to give to young people who had seen the film and to be used when there were no facilities to show the film, such as in rural areas.

Extending the project

In 2010, the project was extended to a further two districts and the film was shown to 1200 students in a further eleven schools.

In addition, 3,000 copies of the booklet were disseminated to the schools and copies of the film were given to school staff to use in their education sessions.



Developing the teachers' module

In 2010, ACPD also developed a training module for teachers so that they could run workshops in which students could discuss the issues associated with trafficking and express their feelings. ACPD went on to train 52 teachers who ran 30 workshops with around 28 students in each session.



Collaborating with others

ACPD also held round-table discussions with other NGOs and key stakeholders to promote the use of the film both within Albania and in other countries. For example, the film was shown to young people through NGOs such as SOS Children's Villages and an orphanage in order to raise awareness amongst children who were particularly at risk.

It was also used by a 'shelter' working with victims of trafficking to help women to talk about their experiences and to raise awareness amongst women who were at risk of being trafficked.

Media activity

Through its networks, ACPD was also successful in getting the Two Little Girls film shown on Albanian television and promoted in several national newspapers. In addition, the film was shown at the International Human Rights Film Festival and at a conference held by the Ministry of the Interior.

Project development

As a member of the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), ACPD also promoted and supported the development of the campaign in Kosovo, Macedonia, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia and Bosnia.



In recent years, ACPD has also been in discussions with the Ministry of Education to get the Two Little Girls film included in the national curriculum in Albania; these discussions are still on-going.

What worked well

It is clear from the feedback from the people we interviewed that the Two Little Girls project was extremely successful in Albania; the timing of the campaign was right and it was led by a well-resourced, experienced and committed organisation that worked effectively with others to build a campaign around the film. The film itself provided an accessible resource, supplemented by other materials and activities, which were valued both by young people and by those working with them.

Timing

The film was introduced in Albania at a time when the focus on trafficking had diminished and when internal trafficking was becoming more prevalent. Many of the people we spoke to felt it had therefore been important that efforts to raise awareness of trafficking were re-invigorated and that the film provided the right impetus for this to happen. One person described the film as a “shot” which had helped to revive people’s awareness of the risks of trafficking and the importance of working to combat it.

Choice of lead organisation

ACPD was clearly an excellent choice of organisation to lead the campaign in Albania. The organisation had a track record of working on human rights issues and had already been involved in work related to trafficking. ACPD was also experienced in working with young people and within the education system and had the knowledge and contacts to support its work in Tirana and in the other regions.

As a member of the IPPF, ACPD was also part of a wider network of organisations and had gained accreditation from the IPPF, demonstrating that it had sound financial management and governance systems in place. ACPD staff also told us that the film fitted with the organisation's strategic plan and extended the work it had done previously in this area:

We wanted to do more on gender and on trafficking. We had some experience and we liked the approach.

The organisation was therefore committed to the project and keen to ensure its success.

The film

Feedback from the people we met in Albania showed that the film had provided a new and effective way of raising awareness of trafficking issues amongst young people. Many students and teachers emphasised that the success of the film had been largely due to it being based on true stories. Feedback from young people showed how the film's message had hit home:

It leaves people thinking after they see it - it could happen to me or my sister or my daughter.

We have seen things on TV but we didn't know it could happen in real life.

The simplicity and length of the film were also highlighted by many of the people we spoke to as contributing to its success.

ACPD staff felt that the use of animation had enabled the issue of trafficking to be handled sensitively without being too shocking or brutal, thus making it accessible to all:

If you really want to approach sensitive issues, you have to do it in an appropriate way.

Teachers also commented on the film's effectiveness:

It engages the children and they can see with their own eyes what can happen.

One of the representatives from a voluntary agency that we spoke to felt that the film was a particularly good way of engaging young people from the Roma and Egyptian communities, among whom there are high rates of illiteracy.

How the film was used

The way in which the film was used also appears to have contributed greatly to the success of the Two Little Girls campaign in Albania. The booklet enabled young people to take away information relating to the film and share it with others and the teachers' training module and manual enabled teachers to incorporate



the film and associated activities into their own classes. The discussions which followed the showing of the film were particularly important in reinforcing and extending the film's message. Teachers described how engaged the young people had been in the discussions and how these had enabled them to talk through their concerns:

Children do have information but they are hesitant to talk even if they are in risky situations. The film enabled them to express their thoughts.



ACPD staff felt that having a range of resources to support the use of the film was crucial in embedding the messages from the film.

Collaboration

Another important element in the success of the Two Little Girls campaign in Albania was the collaboration between ACPD and other agencies and key individuals. Through its relationships with organisations both within Albania and further afield, ACPD was able to collaborate with other NGOs in order to gain access to different communities and extend the reach of the project. Many of the NGOs they worked with also asked for copies of the film for use in their own work.

Support

Finally, ACPD explained that the support it received from the Two Little Girls team in London and from the project funder, Comic Relief, was extremely important in establishing and delivering the project.

They described having a very good relationship with the Two Little Girls team in London and particularly valued their flexible, understanding and supportive attitude. They also felt that the visit from the London team accompanied by a representative from Comic Relief at the start of the project was important in raising the profile of the project at a high level; this had enabled them to enlist the support of the British Ambassador in Albania who subsequently became a key supporter of the project.



The challenges

Despite the success of the Two Little Girls campaign in Albania, it is important to note the challenges that the project encountered.

In particular, getting the film shown in schools had required permission from the Ministry of Education as well as from the head teachers of the schools themselves. This had taken time to arrange and, in some cases, head teachers had decided not to allow the film to be shown. ACPD has been working to overcome this by seeking approval from the Ministry of Education for the film to be incorporated into the national curriculum however this is proving to be a complex and lengthy process.

In addition, ACPD found that, particularly in rural areas, many schools did not have facilities for showing the film so they had to take equipment with them or use the booklet alone.

Finally, ACPD had also tried showing the film to older students but found that they did not relate well to an animated film. It was suggested that a similar film could be made for older students in a style more appropriate for older students.

The impact of the film

It is evident that the Two Little Girls film has made a significant impact in raising awareness of trafficking amongst young people; the film continues to be shown in schools and by other organisations. It has also strengthened ACPD's position amongst its stakeholders.

Giving a clear message

The film has clearly left a lasting impression on the young people who saw it. Many of the young people we met were able to recount the stories from the film even though they had seen it several years ago. Some said that the message about trafficking had stayed with them as a result of watching the film:

The film impressed us a lot and we got the message directly by watching it.

We talked about how we can protect ourselves from these things.

Teachers also described how the children reacted when they watched the film. Some said that initially the children had been shocked but they soon started talking about the issues raised by the film and how they felt:

The children took it really seriously. The school psychologist was involved in the discussion – they talked about wanting to end trafficking.

One teacher also talked about how one student had confided in her about her concerns about an uncle who had approached her.

Spreading the word

Many of the young people talked about how they had subsequently spread the word about the film amongst their peers. Some said they had shown the film on YouTube to their friends whilst others had shared the booklet with their friends :

I talked to some friends and they wanted to watch it too.

When I talked to my friends at home, they said they wanted to watch the film and I showed them the book.



Others had taken the booklet home and talked to their families about the issue:

I discussed it with my family and particularly with my younger sister who is eight years younger so I needed to tell her.

I talked to my parents about it and they were pleased because they wanted to talk to me about it anyway. They were very happy that I got this information.

Some teachers also told us that they had continued to show the film in their school:

We are still showing the film because it is good information. Children get information from different sources but this is reliable information from a good organisation.

Another teacher told us that she had talked to other teachers about the film and had even taken the film with her when she moved jobs:

I am using the film in the new school I am working in. I am going to show it on international trafficking day.

One teacher also told us that the discussions following the screening of the Two Little Girls film had raised awareness amongst some of her students of the vulnerability of street children. As a result, some of her students went on to support street children who were attending a summer school in their local area.

Impact on schools

The film also appeared to have benefited schools in a number of ways. Some teachers talked about how they had used the film to introduce other subjects within the curriculum:

The children discussed the film in the children's rights session - this shows how we have been able to expand on the film.

Teachers also appreciated having ~~the~~ additional resources which had given them different ways of engaging some of the children:

Sometimes children tend to drop out of school or start smoking so it is good to be able to engage them in different activities. It helps to improve their behaviour and attitude.

Impact on ACPD

ACPD's involvement in the Two Little Girls campaign has also clearly brought benefits for the organisation in terms of raising its profile, building its networks and extending its work.

ACPD reported that their involvement with the Two Little Girls campaign had strengthened its role within the IPPF network and raised its profile nationally as a credible and reputable NGO:

The impact for us is that we are among the leaders in civil society working here on trafficking and gender issues. It has also strengthened our collaboration with many stakeholders.

The film also benefited ACPD by enabling it to attract funding from the Dutch Embassy who had seen the film and liked the concept as well as leading to collaboration with other NGOs to develop new projects around gender-based violence.

Key findings

Our visit enabled us to learn from ACPD's experience of delivering the Two Little Girls campaign in Albania and to explore the longer-term impact of the campaign on young people, schools and other organisations. We found that:

- The campaign was launched at a time when awareness of trafficking had diminished and therefore provided a much-needed opportunity to re-awaken public consciousness of the issues.
- The film provided a valuable resource which engaged young people and left a lasting impression on them. In particular, it helped them to understand the relevance of trafficking to their own lives and those of other young people around them.
- Producing a booklet to support the distribution of the film enabled ACPD to reach communities where there were no resources for showing the film itself. The booklet also enabled young people to share what they had learnt with their friends and families.
- Being involved in the campaign was beneficial to ACPD, enabling it to raise its profile and extend its influence. However, it required the organisation to commit a considerable amount of its own staff time and resources to the campaign.
- The success of the campaign is evident in that the film is still being shown in schools in Albania, despite the fact that it has not yet been incorporated into the national curriculum.

Lessons for the future

There are many useful lessons that can be learned from the Two Little Girls campaign in Albania.

Setting up projects of this nature

The film is a 'spark' that can ignite the development of a campaign on human trafficking in different countries. However, what happens in each country depends on the resources and commitment of the partner organisation in that country. In order to get the most impact from the film, it is important that partner organisations are able and willing to commit their own resources and energies to disseminating the film and finding opportunities to extend its impact. It is also clearly important that partner organisations are working in a relevant field (i.e. with children and young people or women) and have a focus on issues such as women's rights, children's rights or human rights.

Many of the teachers and NGOs we spoke to felt that the model used by Two Little Girls could be used with other issues such as children's rights or gender-based violence.

Resources required

Although the film is the main focus of the campaign, the booklet produced by ACPD was important in reinforcing the message and giving children something to take home to discuss with their friends and their families. The booklet was also of great value in schools where it was not possible to show the film.

Targeting and sustaining the project's activities

It is important to select schools attended by children who are particularly at risk, such as schools in rural areas. In addition, many of the people we spoke to felt that it was important to show the film to children as young as nine or ten.

It is also important to train a cohort of teachers in each school so that the message continues to be spread even when teachers leave.

Work still to be done

Trafficking is still very much an issue in Albania. All the people we spoke to felt that there is still much more that can be done to raise awareness amongst young people, particularly those in rural areas, who are most at risk of being trafficked.

