

The Two Little Girls campaign

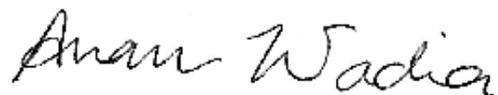


Lithuania - a case study

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Introduction

Two Little Girls is a short animated film which aims to raise awareness of trafficking in East Europe. The campaign began in January 2009 and will continue into 2014. It is funded by Comic Relief and aims to reach young people across 13 countries in East Europe.

The project was launched in Lithuania in September 2012 and is led by Save the Children (STC) Lithuania. The following case study describes the project's activities in Lithuania, how the film was received and what impact it has had so far.

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 Lithuania in June 2013 and met with STC staff who arranged meetings with young people who had seen the film as well as with professionals and agencies involved in its distribution. The visit took place towards the end of the Two Little Girls campaign in Lithuania and therefore provided a good opportunity to assess the immediate impact of the Two Little Girls campaign in Lithuania.

During our visit, we interviewed:

- 24 young people who had seen the film
- 4 professionals who had been involved in showing the film
- representatives from the British Embassy and the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office
- Save the Children Lithuania staff.

We also carried out a telephone interview with a representative from Caritas after our visit.

The context

Lithuania is the largest of the three Baltic States, extending from the Baltic Sea in the west to Belarus in the east. It became independent in 1991 following the break-up of the former Soviet Union. Since then, economic growth has been slow with little or no foreign investment, although this has increased since the introduction of a new currency in 1994. Compared with Russia and other former Soviet Union countries, development is positive.

Trafficking in Lithuania

Lithuania is a source, transit, and destination country for human trafficking. Both adults and children are victims of trafficking and forced to work, steal or used as prostitutes both inside Lithuania and in many European countries such as the UK, Germany, Spain, the Netherlands and Greece. Young women and girls from orphanages and state-run foster homes as well as women with mental health issues are most at risk of becoming victims of trafficking.

According to official statistics, around 1,200 girls and women from Lithuania are trafficked and sold each year, mainly for prostitution. However, NGOs stress that the real numbers are much higher.

The Lithuanian government fully complies with the minimum standards for the elimination of trafficking and has actively sought to address the problem of trafficking by reinstating its national working group and using new software to investigate trafficking offences. As a result, twice as many victims of trafficking were identified in 2011 and all convicted trafficking offenders were sentenced to time in prison. The government also significantly increased funding for the support of victims of trafficking and provided in-kind assistance to NGOs supporting trafficking victims.

Nevertheless, funding has remained low given the extent of the trafficking problem in Lithuania and NGOs report that they still struggle to sustain their services. Moreover, when the Two Little Girls campaign was launched in Lithuania, there was reportedly a low level of public awareness of trafficking and a lack of preventive work, especially in schools.²

Save the Children Lithuania

Save the Children Lithuania is a non-governmental, non-religious and non-political organisation whose primary function is to advocate for children's rights and promote the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.³ It runs a number of Day Care Centres for children at risk as well as running programmes to enable children from care institutions to prepare them for independent life within society. The organisation also runs training courses and workshops for professionals, parents, and care givers on the importance of children's rights and promotes children's safety at home and at school.

STC Lithuania has previously done some work around trafficking. In particular, it has:

- run a programme for girls at risk, with a particular focus on girls from rural, remote areas to inform them about trafficking and how they could protect themselves from it.
- translated and printed a book '*Travels that turned into nightmares*' containing the stories of nine trafficking victims.
- prepared a manual to support the use of '*Travels that turned into nightmares*'.
- run two seminars for professionals on how to use the '*Travels that turned into nightmares*' book and manual with children and young people.

² United States Department of State, *Trafficking in Persons Report 2012*

³ An international treaty setting out the civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights of children.

The project's activities

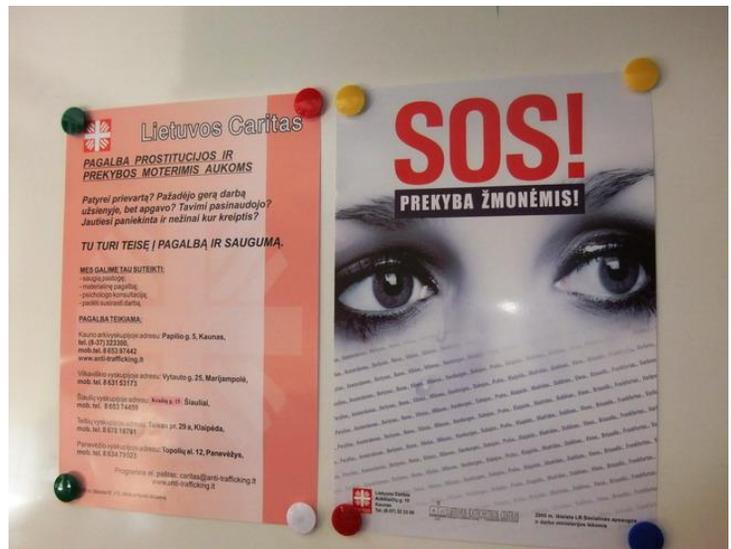
The Two Little Girls campaign in Lithuania combined direct work with children and young people who were particularly at risk of trafficking with a more general public awareness-raising programme.

Setting up and launching the project

The Two Little Girls campaign began in Lithuania in September 2012. Initially, STC Lithuania had the film translated into Lithuanian and sought endorsements from the Ministry of Social Security and Labour and the Ministry of Education and Science. The campaign was officially launched in January 2013 at a reception hosted by the British Embassy in Vilnius. The reception was attended by around 40 people including the Vice-Minister of Internal Affairs and representatives from the Ombudsman for Children's Rights and the Ministry of Education and Science. A number of professionals working with children also attended the launch.

Collaborating with others

STC Lithuania also made contact with various organisations working with children and young people and those working in the area of human trafficking. The strongest relationship they have developed is with Caritas, an international NGO providing a variety of services to vulnerable people including supporting victims of trafficking in Lithuania.



Caritas has also shown the Two Little Girls film to children in care institutions.

Showing the film to children and young people

The film, accompanied by letters from the two Ministries, was sent out to 80 child care institutions as well as to other institutions working with children and young people. It was also sent out to schools and to over 100 children's anti-violence groups. As a result, STC Lithuania estimate that more than 4,000 vulnerable children will have seen the film.



In addition, staff from STC Lithuania ran five workshops for groups of vulnerable children in day care centres and care institutions where they showed the film and organised games, discussions and group work to help children and young people explore the issues raised in the film.

Raising awareness amongst professionals

STC Lithuania showed the film to 140 social workers, social pedagogues, psychologists and other childcare professionals who attended their 'Positive Parenting' workshops. Participants were given a copy of the film and encouraged to use it with children and young people as well as to share it with other childcare professionals.



In addition, the film was shown and distributed at other events attended by professionals, including STC's conference 'Educate, Do not Punish', a seminar for social pedagogues and a round table organised by the Expert Group for Cooperation on children at Risk.

Media activity

During December 2012, the Two Little Girls film was broadcast regularly on five regional television stations. It was also shown on Lithuania's most popular national television station, TV3, which is watched by around half a million Lithuanians.

In addition, Rasa Dicipetriene, the director of STC Lithuania gave interviews on television and radio to raise awareness of the film and the issues of trafficking. She and Ruth Beni, the film's producer



were also interviewed for an article which appeared in a women's magazine and on the Internet.

STC Lithuania also promoted the film on Facebook where it has been viewed by over 50,000 people. A link to the film was also advertised through Google which resulted in over 2,000 clicks taking viewers to the film's page.

Future development

In March 2013, STC Lithuania submitted a proposal to the European Social Fund in order to extend the campaign to other regions of Lithuania and provide training for teachers. They also plan to involve children more actively in presenting the campaign so that there is peer learning amongst children.

What worked well

Feedback from those we interviewed shows that the Two Little Girls campaign has been successful in raising awareness of the issue of trafficking in Lithuania; STC Lithuania was clearly a good organisation to lead the campaign as it had enthusiasm and the networks to distribute the film to a wide audience. The film itself was also seen as an effective tool for raising awareness and the practical resources that accompanied the film were also helpful in enabling children and young people to discuss the issue of trafficking.

Choice of lead organisation

STC was a strong partner organisation for the Two Little Girls campaign in Lithuania for many reasons:

- the organisation had already been looking for ways to get more involved in addressing trafficking
- they work directly with vulnerable children who are at particular risk of becoming victims of trafficking
- they work nationally across the 60 municipalities in Lithuania
- they have established media contacts and extensive experience in using the media to raise awareness of key issues affecting children and young people.

The film itself

All the people we met and interviewed in Lithuania felt that the film was an effective tool in raising awareness of trafficking amongst children and young people. STC's staff felt that the film was invaluable for those working with children and young people:

It's good that the film helps people to talk about human trafficking especially children and young people because many people say it's not such a problem. Also this is preventive work and we have something we can give to practitioners – a practical tool.

Some of the children we spoke to felt that watching an animated film helped them understand the film's message better:

It's better to see a cartoon because when you see a movie you can misunderstand things and with a cartoon it's for children but at the same time it also has the message that you see.

In addition, representatives from the British Embassy felt that the format of the film made it more compelling and memorable:

It's short and punchy and quite moving and self explanatory. It's much more engaging than any poster or booklet. This is short and grabbing and a girl watching it would remember it.

Some teachers also felt that it was important that children were able to watch a film to convey the message rather than just being told about the dangers of trafficking:

It's good for children to have something visual rather than just having adults talk to them about it.

Nonetheless, there was some feeling that the film could have been longer in order to show more of the harsh realities of trafficking:

The film was a bit too short and too clean and too nice so then you have to speak about all the violence and dirty things yourself.

How the film was used

STC Lithuania staff provided additional resources to accompany the film so that professionals showing the film could use the resources to enable children and young people to discuss their feelings and share their experiences.



Teachers had found the film and resources useful in embedding the message:

The combination of showing the film and doing the activities is very important. For example, some children see things and remember whereas others hear and then they forget. So it's really important to talk about such subjects.

However, some feedback suggested that other NGOs did not have a full picture of what STC Lithuania had done to disseminate the film across Lithuania. For example, one NGO appeared to be unaware of the work that STC Lithuania had done in the regions:

I think the film was used too little and the campaign was a bit too short. Although a lot of things are happening in the capital, the stress should be put more on distributing the film and going to the provinces and regions.

Collaboration

A key element in the successful dissemination of the film was the relationships that Save the Children Lithuania had been able to develop with organisations such as care institutions and schools. STC Lithuania developed relationships with organisations such as social care institutions and professional bodies so that the film could be promoted more widely:

We sent the film to some organisations and they shared it with their colleagues and we received more requests.

They also reported that they had been able to use the film to establish relationships with institutions such as the British Embassy and the Ministry of the Interior enabling them to reach different audiences:

It was great to have the launch at the embassy. The media covered it really well so we started receiving requests from social workers and other organisations.

The Ministry of the Interior passed on the film to the police to use in training for police officers working with trafficking.

Support

Finally, the staff at STC Lithuania said they had appreciated the support they had received from the Two Little Girls team in London. They felt that the support and feedback they received had helped them develop the campaign:

For us, what is very important is that people who give money for a project are interested in what we are doing... It means we are growing and getting stronger because they come with their feedback and help us to focus on specific issues and it gives us space to think.

They also felt that the London team were open to discuss any changes they felt would make the campaign more effective:

The thing I value most is that normally you can't change activities when you are implementing the programme. With the Two Little Girls project, you can change things if they are not working.

The challenges

STC Lithuania also encountered some challenges in terms of developing and running the campaign.

Firstly, they encountered some negative attitudes towards those who are trafficked:

There is still this attitude in Lithuania that if a girl gets trapped into this situation, it's because of her behaviour, it's her fault that she behaved in this way.

In some cases, STC staff found that they had to challenge this attitude amongst some of the professionals working with children. For example, they described how some teachers had reacted negatively towards the film and challenged the facts they were presenting.

STC Lithuania also encountered some challenges in terms of running the project. For example, they found it difficult to get feedback from professionals using the film which has made it hard to monitor how widely the film is being shown. Some feedback also suggests that the format the film had been saved in made it difficult to show the film in some of the more remote places:

Save the Children gave us a lot of copies [of the film] because we were visiting remote schools but it turns out that the film was recorded in a format that was impossible to open in the schools.

STC Lithuania also felt that, despite having considerable experience of working with the media, they did not have direct experience of trafficking and had to rely on Caritas for background briefing information.

Finally, STC Lithuania felt that a project such as this needs time and resources and they are concerned that the campaign will fold if they cannot secure future funding:

My biggest challenge here is if we don't get EU funding it might sink...Personally I think it is still a very important thing and we should continue even if we don't get the funding but I know the reality. It would be difficult to concentrate and do without resources. Someone has to do it; it doesn't just happen by itself.



The impact of the film

It was clear from our visit to Lithuania that the Two Little Girls campaign is having a significant impact in raising children and young people's awareness of trafficking. The film is reaching some of the children and young people who are most at risk of becoming victims of trafficking and is proving to be an effective tool in helping them to recognise the signs and understand the dangers of trafficking.

Involvement with the project has also enabled STC Lithuania to engage in preventative work, thereby extending its networks and raising its profile. However, above all, the campaign in Lithuania appears to have had a ripple effect as it has been disseminated and used by organisations across Lithuania.

Impact on children and young people

Our interviews with children and young people who had seen the film revealed that it had had a profound effect on them. It was clear that the film had helped many young people to understand the dangers of being lured into situations highlighted in the film and, particularly, of trusting people too easily.

Shock and disbelief

Many young people described how the film had initially shocked them and they had found it hard to believe that these situations could arise:

I didn't expect that something like this could happen.

It was really scary because people can be taken into other countries and do horrible things.

Professionals who had shown the film to their students also described how young people had reacted with disbelief and shock:

The first question they asked me was why I showed the film to them –they were shocked.

When we were in the regions, they were saying we don't have such a problem. For some kids, it was something new. They couldn't believe it.

When we started to show the movie, it was very silent and everyone was listening to it. The thing that shocked them the most was that the closest people can betray you.

Greater understanding of risks

Once they started discussing the issue, young people started realising that this was something that could happen to them or to someone they knew. Many of the children we met were attending day care centres for children at risk; it was clear that the film's message was particularly relevant to them.

I felt like something like this could happen to me as well.



The older students we interviewed at a college for disadvantaged young people also described how the situations shown in the film felt very close to their own lives:

We graduate here and then we go abroad. Some of my friends are going abroad without knowing anything or having any information about where they are going.

The two cases that are shown [in the film] are like that's what really happens, every day events. It feels very close.

In particular, one young woman described how she had travelled to the UK to work:

We are all dreamers. We all want to go somewhere else, not Lithuania. I was a dreamer too. I've been in the UK but I was lucky because I had a job. I went with my boyfriend and I knew him for about half a year before we went to the UK. When I saw this movie, I thought that this could have happened to me. I was lucky.

Students also described the pressures that some young people face:

Some girls go aboard with nothing. They don't know where or how... They just leave. They have a reason why they are going – to help their families to get rid of their debts, they trust blindly and just go.

Some also described their fears for other young people they know:

I have two cousins. I have some worries about them. One has found a boyfriend and is just travelling getting temporary jobs.

The professionals we interviewed also told us how the film had helped young people to recognise the dangers of going abroad without understanding the risks. They described how some children had approached them after watching the film as they wanted information and reassurance:

One child said 'my brother wants to go abroad, nobody knows where', other children said 'we are also ready to leave, someone is actually sending money for us to come to work in a bar, so what is it?'

One of STC Lithuania's staff had been involved in running a series of workshops showing the film and discussing the issues it raised. She described how in every session she ran, there were young people coming to her with personal concerns. This was particularly the case in Utena where she held a workshop in a care institution where many of the older girls have boyfriends:

In every group, there was one or two [young people coming to me for advice]. Mainly teenage girls saying "I have a friend..." The most powerful story [in the film] was Alma's story because it shows that she found a nice boyfriend and in the care institutions, all the girls have boyfriends... boys coming with nice cars. This was the most powerful... for them to see what can happen.

Greater awareness of danger

It was also clear that the Two Little Girls film had helped young people to learn from the experiences highlighted in the film:

It made me realise that you shouldn't trust people easily and that you should find out things before you go abroad.

We discussed that you shouldn't trust strange people easily and be careful when you get a proposal to go abroad.

Now I know that it's not only girls that are trapped but also boys and men so we know now that we should be aware of that.

Professionals also described how viewing and discussing the film had helped young people to understand more about the risks of trafficking and how to protect themselves.

They said that after the film they understood that you have to be careful and that it's still OK to go to other countries but you understand that you have to be careful who you talk to and who you go with.

Sharing the film's message with others

It also emerged that young people had taken on board the messages from the film and shared them with their friends and families.

I told my friend about the film and what can happen and that you shouldn't trust people easily.

I spoke to my class friends and friends who live near my house. I told them about the film and that we mustn't trust strangers.

I showed my mum the film and we talked about it.

I watched it with my sister and she is now in the UK and one day a man came and told her to go to another country but she didn't understand why she had to do that on her own so she didn't go.

Furthermore, a number of the professionals who we interviewed told us that they planned to continue using the film with students in the future.

We will definitely show it in September and we are also thinking about including it in the curriculum in Lithuanian language lessons and getting young people to write an essay about what they think about this topic.



Impact on STC Lithuania

Interviews with staff from STC Lithuania revealed that taking part in the Two Little Girls Project had clearly had a positive impact on their organisation. In particular, their involvement in the campaign had enabled them to extend and develop their relationships with other organisations in Lithuania. They described how the film had enabled them to establish new relationships with organisations they had previously not had contact with.

We hadn't worked with the UK Embassy before. We were thinking about how we could approach them. That's a very powerful contact.

The Nordic Council of Ministers' Office – we didn't have a relationship with them before and now we have some contact so we can develop activities in the future and that was thanks to the film.

Moreover, their contact with the Nordic Council of Ministers' Office led to STC staff being invited to show the Two Little Girls film at a conference in St Petersburg.

Staff also described how the film had led them to working particularly closely with Caritas, a non-governmental organisation providing support for victims of trafficking.

We were really happy that Caritas were happy to put their contact details at the end of the film so that people could contact someone if they needed help.

The two organisations have recently applied for EU funding to continue working together in this field.

Staff at STC Lithuania also felt that their involvement with the Two Little Girls campaign had been important in raising their organisation's profile in the country.

For our profile it's also been a very good thing. When I introduce our organisation, I've started to use the film as an example of our work.

Finally, they described how being involved with the project had enabled them to extend the organisation's remit into the area of preventative work which they felt was important in addressing social issues at an early stage.

Wider impact

Our interviews also revealed that the Two Little Girls project has had a wider impact in Lithuania, by enabling others to become more engaged with and better resourced for raising awareness of sex trafficking. In particular, staff at the British Embassy in Vilnius told us that the film had given them an opportunity to work in this area again:

It has allowed us to re-engage with this issue because for years our funding from London had been cut on this issue and we hadn't been able to be as active as we wanted to be on such a high profile issue.

Other professionals we interviewed described how the film was reaching young people across Lithuania.

The director of one of the care homes came to the reception and took a film with him so it has a domino effect.

Caritas asked us for the film and we know that they are using it time after time in care institutions and schools so they are really helping us to disseminate the film at a local and regional level.

Key findings

Our visit provided an insight into the experience of delivering the Two Little Girls campaign in Lithuania and the immediate impact of the campaign in the country. We found that:

- The campaign reached children and young people who were particularly at risk of trafficking. It also appears to have been relevant to young adults who were thinking about working abroad.
- Activities following the film were valuable in giving children and young people an opportunity to explore some of the issues relating to trafficking.
- Alongside the targeted work, there was also wide dissemination of the film through other agencies and the media, reaching thousands of children and young people across the country.
- The film made a real impact on those who saw it; it opened their eyes, and through discussion, enabled them to better understand the risks of trafficking and how to protect themselves from it.
- The support from the British Embassy was important in getting official recognition for the campaign and attention from the media.
- STC Lithuania benefited from their involvement in the campaign through developing some new and important relationships and raising their own profile.
- The campaign has had a wider impact through people showing it to others and children talking about it to friends and family.

Lessons for the future

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

Choice of lead organisation

It is important that lead organisations:

- have a good understanding of trafficking issues in their country, or the ability to acquire this information through partnership-working.
- have relevant experience and established networks in order to be able to disseminate the film widely.
- are prepared to commit time and resources to the campaign.

Use of the film

- The combination of direct work with children and young people with more general public awareness-raising was particularly effective in raising awareness of trafficking issues.
- The experiences of ACDP in Albania and STC in Lithuania have also shown that it is important to have additional resources to accompany the film in order to engage young people in activities and discussion.
- Feedback in Lithuania has also shown that the film does not necessarily need to be restricted to younger children; it can also be helpful for young adults.
- It is important to create a receptive environment before showing film which may mean additional training for teachers and other professionals.
- It is also important to ensure that the film is in an accessible format.

Working with others

- Some feedback suggests that it is helpful for lead organisations to share information on the project's activities with their partners.

Further work

- Finally, it is important to recognise that trafficking is still very much an issue in Lithuania. There is definitely a need for the campaign to continue, particularly in the regions it has not yet reached.

