

RENATE Annual REPORT

October 2016 – September 2017



Religious in Europe Networking
Against Trafficking and Exploitation

*“The RENATE Network is committed to working tirelessly to rehabilitate victims,
free the world of labour exploitation, slavery and forced organ harvesting.”*

*RENATE’s 2nd Assembly,
6 – 12 November 2016, Rome, Italy*



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FROM THE PRESIDENT

On behalf of Religious and Co workers in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation (RENATE), I am pleased to introduce to you the Foundation as it has now developed across Europe and to offer the vision for this Foundation.

The history of RENATE is a narrative of response to a call to combat the phenomena of Human Trafficking, a scourge in our society today. That call came originally in 1807 when after many years of advocacy and lobbying, a slave trade act was passed abolishing the trade. This was passed under the leadership of Wilberforce in Great Britain and alongside the written evidence of the writings of the slave, Aquino and many others. The Church in the world honours St Bakhita, another slave, traded for labour in Sudan. She was rescued and became a Connosian sister. She is an icon of freedom and justice for victims of human trafficking. Millions are still suffering under the hands of traffickers whilst survivors struggle to recover from such trauma.

Today, the call to end human trafficking “emanates from a world that has experienced an explosion of knowledge, but not a corresponding growth in understanding. It is a world that has developed wondrous technologies that link continents, but isolates human beings, leaving many men and women weary and dispirited, feeling distant from moral purpose, uncertain about knowledge or the very worth of human endeavour.” William Leahy (President Boston College). The phenomena of Human Trafficking has emerged out of this dispirited world where the gap between the rich and the poor widens day by day and where this instant communication highlights the divisions in society, leading to anger and depression.

RENATE is responding to this call, in this changing world, alongside thousands of other networks, individuals and groups, who have a passion to work against the traffickers and to abolish this modern day slavery. This trade is very different from that abolished in 1807. It is an illegal trade that is clandestine and which uses all those modern forms of communication which keep it hidden. It is a deeply cruel phenomena and one which is lucrative beyond any human expectations. Greed lies at the source of such a trade.

Together with Church, State and Civil Society, in conjunction with realising the UN Sustainable Development Goals, the RENATE Network is committed to:

- Working tirelessly to rehabilitate victims, free the world of labour exploitation, slavery and forced organ harvesting.
- Addressing the root causes of systemic injustice that creates and sustains this vile trade in human lives.
- Using its network to strengthen communication and co-operation between countries of origin, transit and destination.
- Providing opportunities for the full reintegration of victims which can include protection in a safe home, acquisition of proper documents and training for meaningful work so that victims can regain and be enabled to live life to the full.
- Educating society, particularly youth, to view all forms of human trafficking and exploitation as totally unacceptable.

- Challenging judicial and civil authorities to adopt and enforce legislation that protects victims, provides them with adequate compensation, punishes clients and buyers and seizes the assets of perpetrators.
- Collaborating with the media in efforts to bring a strong voice to the attention of the world denouncing all aspects of human trafficking and exploitation.

We encourage all our readers to join us in this work and to become fully conscientised to this evil in our midst. We are grateful to Pope Francis who stays close to this work and who constantly encourages us to sustain our efforts and energy in this mission of the Church in our world today.

“I thank you for your faithful witness to the Gospel of mercy, as demonstrated in your commitment to the recovery and rehabilitation of victims of Human Trafficking.”

Pope Francis’ Address to the 2nd European Assembly of RENATE, 7 November 2016.

Imelda Poole IBVM, President of RENATE

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The reporting year 2016 – 2017 began with the closing of the mandate for the last five years given to RENATE by the Assembly in Poland in 2011. The implementation of this mandate rooted the membership across Europe with equal membership numbers in East and West Europe and with the launching of a new website, vision, mission and goals. The core group want to thank the membership for their untiring efforts in achieving the goals of this first mandate of RENATE which has seen the work flourish in many countries and in particular where members have been supported to launch their work against human trafficking either as individuals or groups.

Funding has supported many projects whether it was in the fields of prevention, awareness raising, advocacy, campaigning or direct action. Films against trafficking have been made as tools to be used against this phenomena, the UNGift box has been constructed in three other countries of the membership and effective campaigns have resulted using this excellent tool for this mission. Members have moved into new work in the field, leading shelters, working in rescue-work on the streets, awareness raising in church and state, working within social media and in a virtual way in the rescue and rehabilitation of the victims of human trafficking.

The RENATE Assembly in Rome has been a milestone for the Foundation. Evaluating the work already done was important as a task for aiding the discernment into the future. A new mandate for the next five years was addressed and presented to the Foundation at this Assembly. In the light of this mandate, in January, 2017, a five year strategic plan was made in Palermo where we worked and where we experienced the pain of 50 minors, rescued from the Mediterranean, just a week before this working meeting. It was a very transformative experience for those of us present at this core group meeting.

Another milestone reached has been the task of looking at our safeguarding and protection policies, of growing importance in todays world where there is an explosion of social media, a tool used by the traffickers and trafficked and where there is a growing awareness of the priority of such a document to protect all. This protection is needed for all the trafficked, all beneficiaries in the field, staff and members. Safeguarding and Protection Training has taken place since the Assembly in Rome and a new policy document will be signed by all working Board members when we meet in Malta in November, 2017. We are grateful to ECPAT and our sponsors for enabling this important work to be achieved.

Since this time we are happy to know that the strategic plan is dynamically being activated anew and all the members are becoming aware of the new beginnings taking place. This report speaks a little of some of these new beginnings and as the next five years unfold, more and more of this plan will become known and realised. We are grateful for such incredible collaboration in the field and the fact that the membership of maybe only one or two members in a country can mean a local network developing amongst many other like-minded Foundations who are animated by the one to achieve much in the field. The one or the two become energised by the body of RENATE behind and with them at every step of the way. In other countries there are many members and these work together in groups or support one another from different parts of the country, linked together by the common cause. For all of this we are grateful.

In conclusion it is good to present RENATE's renewed vision and mission for reflection as you move into the reading of this annual report.

We leave the last word to one of the members of RENATE:

"It's not only depending on our programme. In most cases, we see that successful integration means that the community wants to accept these people. The community says: "Yes. These are our citizens and we want them to have a normal life." These are not society's trash.

A project manager

Vision

All people are created in the image of God. We, the Religious of Europe, believe in a world where everyone has a right to human dignity. Human dignity cannot be compromised. Therefore we labour to free the world from trafficking and exploitation.

Goal

To respond, in the light of Gospel values, to the issue of trafficking of women, children and men.

Objectives

- To develop awareness-raising activities against human trafficking and the growing demand within all levels of society in Europe, using all forms of modern technology and communications;
- Networking and sharing resources, skills and knowledge;
- To research and implement actions against the growing demand for such abuse in the countries of origin and destination

2. BACKGROUND

RENATE was established in 2009 by a group of Religious representing several different Congregations working against Human Trafficking in Europe. In 2007 USMI (Union of Major Religious Superiors in Italy), invited Religious from all over the world to come together to discuss the phenomenon of trafficking and to adopt a way forward for Religious in combating this evil. This group, called INRATIP, made the choice to work together to form another international body under the umbrella of UISG (Union of International Female Superiors General). In 2009 this dream was realised and the international group of Religious called TALITHA KUM was established. At this gathering some of the members of TALITHA KUM, from Europe, realised that there was no network of Religious for Europe. A decision was made to call together sisters from congregations working in Europe who would be interested in establishing such a network. The first gathering of Sisters from Europe took place in The Netherlands at the administrative base of SRTV, courtesy of the Dutch Religious who founded this organisation.

At this meeting, RENATE (Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation) was conceived. RENATE is grateful to SRTV for enabling these first meetings to be realised. This first group, of fifteen sisters and a core group of six sisters, plus the two workers employed by SRTV, established RENATE on a legal footing, with financial support by 2010 under the Dutch law. The mandate for this initial group was to call a conference to launch RENATE, and to invite Religious from Eastern, Central and Western Europe. This 1st Assembly of RENATE was realised in Trzebinia/Poland in September 2011, at which RENATE was launched as a Network. This opened the 'door' to official activities and engagement of Religious and laity under RENATE's umbrella in various European countries. The Core Group and the Working Board leading the way through, aimed to find members in every European country and this task was/is realised little by little each year. After successful completion of five years work, there was a need to deepen the understanding of Membership and their work, hence the 2nd Assembly of RENATE was organised. It took place in Rome/Italy in November 2016, at which the Network's mandate was developed.

3. GOAL AND OBJECTIVES

The goal of RENATE is to respond, in the light of Gospel values, to the issue of trafficking in human persons, working where possible against the root causes of Human Trafficking. The main goal of this reporting period was accomplished by implementing the Plan of Action 2016 – 2017 (first year of 5-years Strategic Plan for RENATE) as per the agenda which includes:

- *COMMUNICATION & AWARENESS RAISING: Development of communication and awareness-raising activities against HT and the growing demand for this within all levels of society in Europe, using all forms of modern technology and communications.*
 - ✓ *Communication – continuous updating of Website, Facebook and Twitter, new editions of the quarterly Newsletter and E-Bulletins.*
 - ✓ *Strengthen European co-operation in assistance, provision and prevention.*
 - ✓ *Proactive co-operation with media and other relevant actors in order to influence public opinion.*
 - ✓ *Campaigning – October 18th 2016, European Day against Human Trafficking; St. Bakhita's Day on February 8th 2017, International Day of Prayer and Awareness Against Human Trafficking.*

- ✓ *Presentation of RENATE film as a very useful resource to raise awareness against human trafficking (locally and internationally).*
- ✓ *Theological reflection as an integral part of communication & awareness-raising.*
- *NETWORKING: Networking and sharing resources, skills, and knowledge. Research and implementation actions against the growing demand for such abuse in the countries of origin and destination.*
 - ✓ *Cross cultural campaigns to extend membership of RENATE and to highlight and educate towards the issues of anti-trafficking in all membership countries.*
 - ✓ *National Anti-Trafficking groups of Religious share their experience.*
 - ✓ *Strengthen co-operation with anti-trafficking networks.*
 - ✓ *Study days on Human Trafficking upon request and in partnership with ANDANTE.*
 - ✓ *Participation in the Council of Europe Conference of INGO's.*
 - ✓ *Mapping Exercise in Child Trafficking.*
 - ✓ *Updating of RENATE on the latest evident forms of trafficking and the present reality of this phenomena.*
 - ✓ *The development of a campaign which is of European interest and which will make an impact across Europe.*
- *CAPACITY BUILDING: The membership, who are involved in prevention against trafficking with the most marginalised and vulnerable people, aim to safe guard and enhance social protection of all their beneficiaries. This also includes care for the carers and its vital component is professional training as well as English language training.*
 - ✓ *RENATE Assembly for Membership in November 2016 – Rome, Italy.*
 - ✓ *Training in Migration & Human Trafficking.*
 - ✓ *Cross Cultural Experience for Capacity Building of members.*
 - ✓ *Courses on English language for members.*
 - ✓ *Emergency relief for local projects.*
 - ✓ *Emergency fund for a break from work (crisis situation).*
 - ✓ *Retreat for Working Board: care of volunteers.*
 - ✓ *Strategic planning for the next 5 years – to fulfil the mandate of the 2nd Assembly.*
 - ✓ *Appointment of fundraiser and liaison work with this development.*

The above is the subject for this review, referred to as the OUTCOMES chapter of this report. The distinguished areas are often overlapping therefore the content listed might be found under different headings.

4. METHODOLOGY

RENATE has developed a methodology of work which includes a high level of networking processes amongst the members using modern technology and clear communication. This enables resources to be shared and an implementation of the plan of action to be successfully accomplished at every stage. The work itself includes awareness-raising across Europe through the collaboration of the many members of RENATE. This action is directed to eliminating, where possible, the crime of human trafficking taking place in our world today.

This particular work, undertaken by the members, involves many creative initiatives across Europe in the field of prevention as well as protection of the most vulnerable. This takes place often in isolated regions, sustaining many innovative projects. The members are also engaged in direct action with the victims of trafficking. Members work in shelters, refugee services, re-integration centres and on the streets where the victims are being used by pimps and need to be rescued. Finally the methodology of the Network includes advocacy and research. There are some amongst the membership of RENATE, who are conducting PhD level research in the field of anti-trafficking and who collaborate with RENATE in this work.

Having finalised successfully the first mapping exercise of the work against trafficking across Europe, led by Sr. Patricia Mulhall, CSB, RENATE planned a second edition of the mapping exercise, this time focused on trafficking in children. This project runs for nine months from February until October 2017 and includes investigation of the child trafficking situation in the 7 chosen countries. The leader of this initiative is Anne Kelleher, RENATE Communications Person, working with a dynamic and active team across Europe.

RENATE is aware, through the use of the website, Facebook and Twitter, filled with information and press releases by the communications person, that it can be a key actor in the field of advocacy worldwide. Through the individual members, advocacy is taking place each day at the local level. RENATE is aware of the intensity of the work and therefore a key element for its work is also the care of the workers. This due care of workers is included as an integral part of the plan of action and methodology. There is also the need for assessment and evaluation of the work, ensuring the on-going work of the future until this crime has disappeared. Fund-raising is an important aspect of the work in order to raise awareness of the needs. Both Congregations and funding bodies in Europe respond to this work. RENATE has recognised a necessity of a full time fund-raiser to ensure that the full plan of action is realised. The new staff member, Mrs. Namrata Majinthia based in London, UK, was appointed for this position in July.

List of specific means and methods used by RENATE to conduct its work:

- Monthly conference calls via Skype with the RENATE Core Group, followed by a written feedback from the Secretary
- Ad hoc conference calls via Skype when an urgent need requires immediate action
- An annual meeting of the RENATE Working Board with representatives from various European countries, followed by a written report of the meeting from the Secretary
- An annual training programme for RENATE members on a specific subject related to anti-trafficking, followed by a written report of the training from the Communications Person
- An annual meeting of the RENATE Core Group to consider long-term plans and a chance to liaise with each other in more 'informal' settings

- Exchange of information by email, mobile phones
- Cross-cultural visits for capacity building
- Publishing of latest news, projects and trafficking alerts on the website
- Sharing of source materials, toolkits, ideas for prayer via website
- Using Facebook and Twitter to inform the followers of RENATE about anti-trafficking actions
- Campaigning using the medium of Facebook as well as the RENATE web
- Issuing of a quarterly newsletter, addressed to a wide audience (circulated not only between the members but also on the website)
- Regular E-Bulletins
- Meeting key people involved in anti-trafficking work who represent the Catholic Church and other relevant actors who influence public opinion
- Raising awareness at different levels of society, from local parishes and schools, to reaching larger groups of interested audiences at universities, at conferences and symposiums and similar events
- Giving the members the opportunity to benefit from intensive English courses when needed, or specialised trainings in the field of Human Trafficking or short respite care for workers
- Offering financial support to RENATE members for local projects
- Presentation of the RENATE documentary on the work against trafficking across Europe.

5. OUTCOMES

RENATE has aimed to achieve all the tasks which are divided into three sections, i.e.:

- *Communication & awareness raising,*
- *Networking,*
- *Capacity building.*

Communication & Awareness Raising involves all the activities which enable society to become familiar with human trafficking and its exploitative methods and make the Network's mission visible to other networks and authorities. This includes website development, communication via Facebook & Twitter, campaigns and proactive co-operation with media and other relevant actors in order to influence public opinion.

Networking is essential to make RENATE stronger in its mission. These include networking and sharing resources, skills, and knowledge through the publishing of tool-kits and resource materials. Research and implementation actions against the growing demand for such abuse in the countries of origin and destination, e.g. second edition of mapping exercise project – this time focused on trafficking in children.

Capacity Building includes one main training programme each year focusing on a particular area of interest (e.g. social media, Catholic social teaching, labour trafficking, intervention and integration of victims of trafficking in human beings, advocacy & campaigning, migration & human trafficking); cross-cultural experiences and on-going English language training for members who need it. This is also care for the carers and emergency relief from work.

All three sections are underpinned by *Theological Reflection* which accompanies any action of RENATE. This is key to the way of working within the Network as it maintains a focus on vision and values which are important to RENATE Members.

5.1 COMMUNICATION & AWARENESS RAISING

Communication via Website, Facebook Page, Twitter, E-Bulletin & Newsletter

The RENATE website completed four years of its dynamic functioning on the 30 September 2017. It continues to be a platform of communication for the Membership as well as the wider public. This was possible thanks to a positive response not only from Network members who delivered information from their countries, but also as a result of the external interest of other actors (e.g. journalists representing newspapers, magazines, radio, tv), who were keen on sharing their texts, interviews and videos with RENATE. It helped the Website Manager, to keep the information updated on a regular basis and offer news European-wide, regarding projects and activities carried out by the members. The external interest also allowed for the inclusion of worldwide news and videos. The RENATE Communications Person was the author and editor of many articles which featured on the RENATE website. Some of the information was shared simultaneously on the RENATE Facebook Page and Twitter.

Further development of the website together with its 'Members only area' is gradually taking place and follows in accordance with an on-going dialogue to make the website more user-friendly. The new feature facilitates easier access for new members to the application process which can be completed on-line. The planned and prepared update extended the map of countries in the Network. Information compiled from the new locations feeds the new pages. The building of plug-ins and widgets related to the awareness activities and events of RENATE is under construction, as is the digital calendar for the annual action of the Network.

There were three editions of the RENATE Newsletter from October, 2016 until September, 2017. It is a very successful communications tool which informs the membership of the Network's activities. Its layout and presentation has been developed and improved in the past year. Members who received it by email and non-members who accessed it via the website, gave positive feedback on the Newsletter. The thirteenth publication will follow in October. In addition to the Newsletters, E-Bulletins are regularly produced and disseminated. The E-Bulletins provide any adhoc information vital for the members. These reach the membership via email. The general public can access E-Bulletins via the website.

Other social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter are widely used to promote the Mission of RENATE and their impact was well notified during the 2nd Assembly in Rome, November 2016. There were many news' followers and the information was shared further via individuals who were not necessarily members of the Network. Both continue to be good means of communication with all who like to be at the forefront of technical novelties. These are good to reach the target group of young people who might be at risk of human trafficking.

Campaigns & Actions to mark the European Day against Human Trafficking, 18 October 2016

The European Day against Human Trafficking was celebrated for the 10th time on 18 October 2016. RENATE members in various locations took on many initiatives to mark this important day and raise awareness among society. Samples of events which took place and resources shared throughout the RENATE Network are presented below.

- In Albania, there were a number of activities around the UN Giftbox, in honour of the month's activities against trafficking. The Minister of the Interior, the Deputy Minister of the Interior and the Deputy Minister of Education lead events based on the UN Giftbox campaign in Tirana, having become aware of the value of this tool in raising awareness against trafficking.
- Regional Anti-Trafficking Campaign in Tropoja, Albania. Children attending the secondary school "Ali Podrimja" presented an art exhibition in the city hall based on the topic of combating human trafficking. This activity was repeated in the area of Tropoja (East North of Albania) on the 24th of October.
- Mary Ward Loreto Foundation, in collaboration with the Ministry of the Interior, RENATE and United Response Against Trafficking (URAT), organised a film festival focused on human trafficking. The festival took place at the Cultural Centre of Orthodox Church in the centre of Tirana and lasted two hours on 17 October 2016. Four films were shown during the evening, and all of these films as indicated below, reflected the work against human trafficking in which we are all engaged: "Called To Give Voice to the Voiceless"- RENATE; "Two Little Girls" – ALBANIA ACPD; "Passport" – MWL; "UN.Gift Box – Anti-Human Trafficking Campaign in Albania" – URAT Network. This event offered an opportunity to reflect on our greater strength when working collectively to bring an end to this heinous crime.
- Marie Hélène Halligon, RGS from France shared Secours Catholique-Caritas France's news of the launch of the film *#Invisible* which documents the story of the trafficking of minors.
- Margaret Gonzi, RGS from Malta gave an interview for the Maltese Catholic newspaper *Lehen Is-Sewwa*. She said 'Awareness of human trafficking and exploitation is always on my mind'. Margaret spoke about the work being done by RENATE members and about the importance of marking the 18th of October, the European day against trafficking.
- The Bakhita Network in Poland organised a movie evening on 18th October in the cultural centre of Cardinal Wyszynski University in Warsaw. The documentary of Benjamin Nolot & Matt Dickey – *Nefarious Merchant of Souls* – was presented. This film reveals the mechanisms of modern-day slavery and was a good introduction to an audience discussion between more than 300 participants of different age and status. It finished with a successful call for volunteers who wish to support the work and actions of the Bakhita Network.
- Adina Balan, CJ from Romania was a guest speaker in Linz, Austria, at an evening organised by the SSVD Sisters. Adina spoke about the possibilities and challenges faced in the partnership between origin and destination countries. Adina focused on the socio-economic situation in Romania as a contributing factor to the exploitation of persons.
- Caritas Slovakia in co-operation with foreign partners (e.g. the Medaille Trust, Unchosen) and with the support of the Ministry of Interior of the Slovak Republic, hosted their 3rd Film Festival titled: *Together Against Trafficking in Human Beings*. This time, the event took place in Banská Bystrica, which, according to the latest statistics, comes second to the city of Košice in terms of the number of victims of trafficking. The films faithfully illustrated the effects of exploitation on the lives of the victims as well as the problems associated with recovery. The Film Festival played its part in portraying the merciless reality of modern slavery in Slovakia. The 3rd Festival placed special emphasis on the stories of victims and the value of every human being's life. In total, nine films were screened, including the premiere of two new Slovak films, *In God's Image* and *Ivan*. In addition, this festival hosted a photographic exhibition entitled *Life after Trafficking* –

Life after Deliverance and the campaign *Giftbox Slovakia – People are Not for Sale*. Following the film screenings, there was a forum for discussion on the topics of human trafficking and exploitation. The panel discussion comprised the following speakers: Mr. Jozef Halcin (Ministry of Interior, Slovakia). Sr. Bohdana Bezáková CJ (SKCH-Caritas, Slovakia). Mr. Mike Emberson (Medaille Trust, United Kingdom).

Not a Box of Chocolates – UN Gift Box Campaign in Ireland

The UN Gift Box campaign held in Ireland during the month of March, featured in the 4th of March 2017 edition of The Tablet, as follows: *Lent is traditionally a time of fasting and abstinence when some people give up chocolates and sweets. The people of Drogheda in Ireland may therefore have been surprised to see a giant chocolate box outside St Peter’s Church on Ash Wednesday. The Gift Box is an initiative of the Loreto Sisters and APT (Act to Prevent Trafficking), a coalition of Religious orders campaigning against human trafficking.* This was the first time the walk-in piece of public art, symbolising the way traffickers entice their victims with false promises, hit the streets of Ireland, according to Sr. Elizabeth Byrne IBVM. She explained that the month-long awareness-raising tour by the Gift Box is based on an initiative first launched by Stop the Traffick (UK) at the Olympics in 2012. There have been concerns in Ireland over an increase in the number of suspected victims of sex trafficking and forced labour, forced criminal activity, and forced begging, Sr. Elizabeth explained.

The UNGift box also featured for a second time on the World Day Against Human Trafficking, in July, in Albania. This year it was specifically focused on informing school children. The campaign was held in conjunction with the Ministry against Human Trafficking and the Ministry of Education in Albania. It featured in Shengjin, Albania, during the tourist season in July. Over 4,000 people benefitted from these campaigns and included art and music and drama in the awareness raising strategy.

The Gift Box aimed to highlight and inform the public about the issue of trafficking and show how Religious orders are helping fight this modern form of slavery. [The Tablet, 4 March, 2017, Notebook Feature]

International Women’s Day, the President of Malta visits Dar Merhba Bik Foundation



Dar Merhba Bik Foundation Staff with the President of Malta

It was a special Women’s Day this year for the Dar Merhba Bik Foundation, an RGS Shelter for Domestic Violence Survivors, their children and the staff as they hosted a visit from the President of Malta, Her Excellency, Dr. Marie Louise Coleiro Preca. This official yet very informal visit, made it possible for all involved to exchange their concerns, future plans and aspirations. Her Excellency was very emphatic in her address to the residents, their children and the staff (represented by Ms. Elaine Pavia Head of the Shelter), encouraging them to remain optimistic, notwithstanding their daily challenges.

The President and the Dar Merhba Bik Foundation promised to continue working closely together, in view of assurances of resources and financial support to all concerned through the Malta Community Chest Fund, of which Her Excellency is the Patron.

Presentation of RENATE film



The RENATE film project concluded at the end of May 2016, directed by Sr. Ivica Kúšiková SSpS. The completion of transcript translations reached subtitles in 17 languages and DVD's were produced as part of the toolkit for each participant of the 2nd General Assembly of RENATE held in Rome, 6-12 November 2016. This valuable resource is used by RENATE members at various awareness-raising events including local, national and international film festivals. It documents the issue of modern slavery present in our times and shows RENATE's work in response to this phenomenon.

RENAME Presence in the Media

The 5-year Strategic Plan 2016 – 2021 emphasises pro-active co-operation with the media and actors in order to influence public opinion. This was realised through various interviews from both the RENATE President and the Communications Person, as well as the Membership of RENATE at a local level. The Assembly in Rome was a crucial opportunity to spread awareness about human trafficking and present work being done by the Network in Europe. A full account of RENATE's media presence can be found on the website.

RENATE's President in Canada

Speaking on the 18th of May, at the Mary Ward Centre in Toronto, Sr. Imelda Poole, IBVM, said Canada has become a primary destination for victims of human trafficking in spite of various initiatives to combat the illegal trade. She was in Canada on the same day that Ontario passed the Anti-Human Trafficking Act. Ontario accounts for 69 per cent of reported human trafficking crimes



in Canada, according to 2014 data. About 70 per cent of these cases involve sexual exploitation. The Anti-Human Trafficking Act enables victims or potential victims of human trafficking to obtain restraining orders and also provides a means for victims to sue traffickers for compensation to rebuild their lives. The Act also establishes the 22nd of February as a Human Trafficking Awareness Day. Sr. Imelda had an opportunity to speak about RENATE's work in Europe, giving an example of networking between various countries united by the same mission and vision of the Membership.

5.2 NETWORKING

Internal and External Communication

Communications within RENATE has been shared between the Core Group Members who meet via Skype every month (or more often if the situation requires) together with the Communications Person, the Secretary and Website Manager. Before a decision is taken, the Core Group – of which there were eight (including the President) – consult together. Since the preparatory meetings for the Assembly in Rome, the ad hoc member of the Core Group from Italy became permanent.

The RENATE Board is in constant flux with regard to numbers. The Board is represented by one person from each member country where RENATE has membership and also by the Core Group membership and by the President of RENATE. The next Working Board meeting will be held in November 2017 and it is envisaged that representatives from the several locations which were missing previously (e.g. Denmark, Portugal, Ukraine), will be present. One country, Belgium, is temporarily off the scene due to the relocation of the member who used to live and work in Brussels.

One member of staff based in Poland carries out the varied secretarial duties for the Network. She initiates conference calls, writes reports and minutes of the Core Group and Working Group

meetings as well as circulating them. She manages official email addresses of the Network. She coordinates requests which arrive via website contact forms under the President's supervision. She supports the logistics and the organisation of RENATE meetings.

Communication within the Membership of RENATE, as well as outside the Network, is the role of the Communications Person who is based in Ireland. She is the editor of the RENATE Newsletter and RENATE E-Bulletins and is responsible for digital presence through use of social media. The Communications Person is responsible for preparing and advising on materials in support of RENATE's awareness raising and campaigning, writing and editing print and online articles, stories and case studies to highlight the situation of Human Trafficking across Europe and the world. This year she takes lead of the important research project for RENATE – mapping exercise in child trafficking.

Since July 2016, the management of the RENATE website was passed on to an Albanian colleague and RENATE member. She is responsible for the on-going update of www.renate-europe.net (including both public and private domains). In liaison with the Website Developer she gradually improves website functionality. Her role also extends to graphic design of RENATE official documents, promotional materials, such as reports, fliers and info-graphics.

Last but not least, the RENATE Finance Officer, who is based in Albania. He works directly with RENATE's President and secures all financial and legal obligations of the Network arising from its establishment under the Dutch law and with an office in Albania. He prepares finance reports and any documents required for yearly audit. All RENATE Staff work part-time for the Network upon individual monthly work schedules approved by the President.

After it was recognised that RENATE is in real need of a full time fund-raiser to ensure that the full plan of action is realised, a recruitment process was planned. In July 2017 a new co-worker, Mrs. Namrata Majinthia based in London, UK, was appointed. Her official contract began on the 1st of August and she is responsible for fundraising for the Network. She will be introduced to the Board Members at the upcoming meeting in November 2017. Welcome on Board!

Extension of Membership

The Working Board of RENATE agreed that it is important to include all the European countries in the Network. Following this resolution, the RENATE Core Group sought ways of extension in the areas unknown to RENATE.

In the reporting period from October, 2016 until September, 2017, RENATE gained 25 new members from the States which were already represented in the Network, i.e. Albania (4), Ireland (1), Italy (5), Malta (3), Poland (1), Romania (1), Slovakia (1), Ukraine (2) and United Kingdom (7). By the end of September 2017, RENATE had 190 members representing 26 European countries which included numbers from East, Central and West Europe, and also single members outside Europe in the following five countries: Lebanon, Nigeria, Philippines, USA and Vietnam. All together 195 members and further extension follows.

RENATE Network in France develops New Website

Following the RENATE 2nd General Assembly, RENATE members in France have created their own website <http://renatefrance.wordpress.com>



Networking Dimension: from Slovakia to Austria

Since the 1st of February 2017, RENATE member, Bohdana Bezáková, CJ, was appointed Director of SOLWODI, Austria's new shelter and counselling centre in Innsbruck. This new centre is sponsored by SOLWODI Austria, under the Chairpersonship of RENATE member Patricia Erber, SDS, in conjunction with a number of Religious congregations and aid organisations. Sr. Bohdana is a professional psychotherapist and experienced social worker and counsellor. Our prayers are with Bohdana as she manages this new centre and coordinates its vital work.

Presence at the EU Platform

The RENATE Network is a member of the EU Civil Society Platform against Trafficking in Human Beings (launched in Brussels on 31 May 2013). The eighth meeting of the Platform took place in Brussels on 6-7 December 2016, where representatives of civil society organisations from EU Member States (MSs) and neighbouring priority non-EU countries working at national, European and international levels met.

On the first day, the Platform had a joint meeting with the Informal EU Network of National Rapporteurs or Equivalent Mechanisms (NREMs) followed by presentation of reports from the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator's Office ('Transposition report' under Article 23.1 of Directive 2011/36/EU and 'Criminalization report' under Article 23.2 of Directive 2011/36/EU). In addition to the Update from the European Commission on the latest developments at EU level, there were fruitful discussions on the work of the NGOs in three parallel workshops, and a briefing on the topic of children in migration by DG JUST.

The second day focused on the discussions of residence permits to third-country victims of trafficking. The topic of *children in migration* was considered and an emphasis was placed on the need for an integrated approach to issues relating to minors, especially those which relate to unaccompanied minors. It was agreed that more extensive cooperation amongst different actors (including NGOs and police) in Member States and sharing of best practices is required. The observed lack of protection systems or inadequacy of existing systems was linked to children becoming vulnerable, going missing and being subject to trafficking for all forms of exploitation.

This year on 30th – 31st May, members of the EU Civil Society Platform gathered to discuss issues related to trafficking in human beings. On the first day of the meeting, a plenary session was held, in which the EU Anti-Trafficking Coordinator welcomed participants, and the European Commission

delivered two presentations. The Office of the EU Anti-trafficking Coordinator presented the publication "EU anti-trafficking action 2012-2016 at a glance", and a capacity building session on navigating EU funding was organised with the relevant services in the Directorate-General for Migration and Home Affairs and the Directorate-General for International Cooperation and Development, responding to requests of several participants to the Platform. The presentations were followed by three parallel workshops, two focusing on areas that European Commission's reports identified as still needing improvement, and one organised in cooperation with the Directorate-General for Justice and Consumers, as a joint effort in the context of 2017- the European Commission's year of focussed actions to combat violence against women. The three workshops were as follows: (1) access to assistance, support and protection, (2) access to remedies, non-punishment and compensation, and (3) focused actions to combat violence against women. On the second day, the parallel workshops continued, followed by a plenary session in which appointed rapporteurs from each workshop summarised the outcomes of discussions.

Study Days on Human Trafficking organised in Partnership with ANDANTE in Durrës, Albania

Upon request and in partnership with ANDANTE, the European Alliance of Catholic Women's Organisations, RENATE has organised Study Days on Human Trafficking for the Membership of this sister-network organisation. 52 delegates arrived in Durrës in Albania to follow the programme on "Modern Slavery – an Old Crime in New Forms" from 3- 8 May.



52 delegates from thirteen countries attended the ANDANTE study days in Durrës, Albania where RENATE President, Imelda Poole, IBVM and ANDANTE President, Dr Mary McHugh (UK) and Vroni Peterhans-Suter (Switzerland), extended a warm welcome to all present. Mary and Vroni encouraged delegates to avail of the opportunities for interactions, dialogue and sharing in order to better impact on the eradication of exploitation and trafficking, old crimes in new forms of Modern Slavery. Prayerful reflection and joyful singing were the hallmarks of each Study Day, which began with morning Liturgy and concluded with amicable table fellowship each night.

The parable of the nameless Samaritan woman at the well (John 4:1-26) was referenced at the outset of our first morning, challenging participants to consider and live the lessons disclosed in it. This parable was selected because of its example of how the outcasts and marginalised people – including women and girls- were in the central sight-lines of Christ's ministry.

Acknowledging the centrality of women and their responsibility to actively engage in church and society, was a recurring theme throughout the Study Days. Delegates learned about the situation regarding Human Trafficking across Europe; Protection and rehabilitation processes for victims;

Prevention work against trafficking in Albania and creative approaches to prevention work across Europe in general. Presentations on activities underway by SOLWODI Romania, SOLWODI Germany, the Council of Europe, Zusterwerk (the Netherlands) were appreciated and very informative. In sharing extensively about the numerous initiatives underway in Albania and in partnership with other NGO's internationally, Mary Ward Loreto presented first-hand experiences which were exemplars of hope and possibility, when working in the prevention of human trafficking and exploitation and supports to survivors.

The implications for ANDANTE were comprehensively discussed by the delegates, who departed Albania with a heightened awareness of Modern Slavery and the positive and constructive actions that can be undertaken, however small, which can contribute towards bringing an end to human trafficking and exploitation.

Presence at the Talitha Kum Coordinators' Meeting in Rome

Rome, Italy – From 19-23 June 2017, Talitha Kum held its first International Coordination Committee meeting at its headquarters in Rome. The continental coordinators and leaders of Talitha Kum Rome met to discuss international collaboration and growth. The participants were Sr. Claudette Bastien, CATHII network, Canada; Sr. Ann Oesterreich, USCSAHT, the United States of America; Sr. Imelda Poole, Renate- European Network, Albania; Sr. Patricia Ebegbulem, Talitha Kum Africa, Nigeria; Sr. Adel Abamo, Talitha Kum Asia, Philippines; Sr. Noelene Simmons, ACRATH, Australia; Sr. Carmela Gibaja, Talitha Kum América Latina; Sr. Gabriella Bottani, Talitha Kum Rome, Italy; Sr. Florence de la Villeon, Migrants Network of the UISG, Italy and Sr. Patricia Murray, executive secretary of the UISG, Italy.

Incontro del Comitato di Coordinamento di Talitha Kum

Roma, 19-23 Giugno 2017



This conference aimed to facilitate greater collaboration amongst the Talitha Kum networks at the regional and global level, by defining the international role of the Committee, improving a collective database, and preparing for the 10-year anniversary of Talitha Kum in 2019. The participants met with partner organizations: the Section for Migrants and Refugees of the Dicastery for the Promotion of Integral Human Development; the Section for Women in the Dicastery for Laity, Family, and Life; Caritas Internationalis/COATNET; the director of the Catholic Sisters Initiative at the Conrad N. Hilton Foundation; Ambassadors to the Holy See and specialists from the Pontifical Universities. The sisters also met with Maria Grazia Giammarinaro, special rapporteur to the United Nations on trafficked persons.

The International Coordination Committee meeting was an important milestone for strengthening collaboration among grassroots organizations in source, transit and destination countries of trafficking in persons.

Presence at the Council of Europe INGOs Conference

In the reporting period, RENATE has strengthened co-operation with other networks involved in anti-trafficking work. One of the outcomes was ANDANTE's invitation (European Alliance of Catholic Women's organizations) to join the Council of Europe INGOs Conference in the last week of June. Marie Hélène Halligon, RGS, represented RENATE at this EU Council event and confirmed it was an exceptional opportunity to be involved in Civil Society efforts on the improvement of participative democracy. RENATE is grateful to ANDANTE for sharing one of their seats and will make every effort to become a member of INGOs in the future and bring the problem of human trafficking on the agenda.

5.3 CAPACITY BUILDING

Cross Cultural Experience for Capacity Building of Members

RENATE meetings rotate between each of the member countries. This arrangement affords the members a chance to get to know new surroundings, experience a different culture and understand new ways of working in the field of anti trafficking, while supporting the sisters and co-workers in the host country to extend RENATE's mission. Every gathering organised by RENATE is an enriching experience for all participants. In the reporting period, from October 2016 until September 2017, there were three important events: the 2nd General Assembly of RENATE Membership in Rome, Italy; Core Group Meeting in Palermo, Sicily (report in 5.5 section of this document) and Training on Migration & Human Trafficking, which took place in Ravenstein, Netherlands. All three enabled members to learn more about the local situation in the countries where these events were organised. In addition, other possibilities occurred allowing the Membership to broaden their horizons and gain new knowledge and skills. An example being the ERSTE Course on Leadership and Teams in Sarajewo, Bosnia & Hercegovina, described below.

ERSTE Course on Leadership and Teams in Sarajewo, Bosnia & Hercegovina, 6-7 October 2016

MWL and RENATE were invited to avail of an opportunity to participate in the Regional Training Programmes offered by the ERSTE Foundation, during the period 2016/2017. Professor Michael Meyer, the Viennese University of Economics and Business, facilitated the first course in Sarajewo on the 6th and 7th of October. The course focused on Leadership and Teams. Two members of the MWL staff and two members of RENATE were amongst the seventeen course participants from different organisations in Albania, Austria, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Kosovo, Romania, Serbia and the UK.



Participants of the ERSTE Course in Sarejevo, October 2016

The main topics of this course were separated into three sessions: Team Work & Group Dynamics (Attractiveness of Teams, Constituent Elements of Groups, Group Performance and Individual Performance); Problem Solving (Decision Making, Problem Solving, The Logic of Successful Decisions) and Leadership Theories (Consistency and Commitment, Power, Authority). This short course was well organised, with role-play and very practical exercises.

RENATE's 2nd General Assembly in Rome, Italy



As the Jubilee Year of Mercy drew to a close, 130 members of the RENATE network gathered together in Rome for their 2nd General Assembly. *Ending Human Trafficking Begins with Us* was the theme leading representatives from the 23 member countries throughout the week. They met to share best practice, network, dialogue and pray.

Prayer was the fulcrum around which the work of the week rotated, with live streaming of Opening and Closing Liturgies available on the RENATE website. Cardinal Turkson presided at the Opening Mass, with Fathers Anyadike Tobechei, Roman Lahish, Algirdas Toliatas, Luigi D'Alessandro and Monsignor Cicero presided at the Closing Mass. Each day began with morning Mass, with specific member countries leading the Liturgies on any given day.

A sound bedrock of Theological Reflections underpinned the Assembly theme, based on Catholic Social Teaching and enunciated by Dr. Anna Rowlands, Deputy Director of the Centre for Catholic Studies, Durham University. Anna pushed the boundaries of our understandings as she related the challenges of daily life to the teachings and witness of the Gospel. We were humbled to hear the prophetic words of Jesus which challenged our comfort zones and encouraged us to seek faithfully

to align ourselves with the marginalised, oppressed, voiceless and forgotten. Each night, we paused, reflected and prayerfully responded: *Speak Lord, for your servant is listening*.

From the opening Liturgy through to the final closing ceremonies, participants bonded and built connections. There were opportunities for sharing during the workshops; the market-place events in the evenings after dinner; during the visit to the Vatican; during the excursions to the shelters and on the Loreto Pilgrimage. Each meal-time was an opportunity to create connections and strengthen the bonds of the Network.

The Assembly was welcomed to Rome by Italian Religious and clergy. The first guest speaker of the conference, Sister Regina Cesarato, USMI Italy, called on all at the Assembly to strive to work together to stop human trafficking. This message was endorsed by Monsignor Sorondo, Chancellor of the Vatican Pontifical Academy of Science and Social Science, when he also spoke about the importance of collaboration and cooperation. Sister Eugenia Bonetti, MC, and Sister Gabriella Bottani, CMS, of Talitha Kum, spoke of the potential to make a greater impact on preventing human trafficking, when participants collaborate across borders and work together to eradicate this horrible crime against humanity. This call for strengthening of the network and the value of collaboration, were recurring themes running throughout the Assembly.

Ms Myria Vassiliadou, the EU International anti-trafficking co-ordinator, emphasised the Assembly theme *Ending Human Trafficking Begins with Us*, when she addressed the Assembly via video. She discussed the importance of working together in order to continue the EU's fight against the organised criminal gangs that prey on the most vulnerable in society.

The possibilities for the network to effect change was brought home to the Assembly at the launch of the RENATE Mapping Report, when Sister Patricia Mulhall, CSB, spoke about the extent of the network from the UK to the Ukraine and the enormous amount of activities and successful collaborations that are in evidence but not entirely acknowledged. Much of this work has not been documented. Copies of the Report were given to each member present at the Assembly. It is also available on the RENATE website. This consideration of the Religious as being self-effacing and reluctant to take credit for their pioneering and visionary work, was emphasised by Mr. Luke de Pulford, from the ARISE Foundation in the UK and again by John Studzinski, who shared some insights as to how to be strategic in approaching benefactors who may be possible sponsors.



Assembly Participants with Pope Francis, Vatican, 7 November 2016

Another launch took place at the Assembly, that of the RENATE film: *Called to give a Voice to the Voiceless*, directed by Sister Iva Kúšiková, SSpS. This film documented the various activities undertaken by a cross-section of RENATE members. A copy of the DVD was given to each participant.

The highlight of the Assembly was a special audience with Pope Francis in the Vatican, on Monday 7th November. It was a great honour for RENATE to meet him and a very special privilege for each person to shake his hand and speak with him in person.

Sister Imelda Poole, IBVM, President, addressed Pope Francis on behalf of RENATE. She spoke about the various activities and initiatives underway by women Religious and their associates and co-workers across Europe, in efforts to bring an end to human trafficking. She thanked him for his gift of leadership in the Church and in the world, which is a rich blessing for us. Particularly, the Assembly see it as a rich blessing for the many victims of human trafficking and for all who work in this field. She concluded by affirming his stance on human trafficking as he made it a mark of his papacy to denounce this 'vile trade' in human lives. She concluded with: "You have brought the love of God; the compassion of God; the joy of God and above all the mercy of God to us and to the world."

In response, Pope Francis commended the work of RENATE in raising public awareness about the extent of "this scourge which especially affects women and children". He praised them especially for their "faithful witness to the Gospel of Mercy, as demonstrated in their commitment to the recovery and rehabilitation of victims". He acknowledged the work of the RENATE Network whose members often risked their own lives to save victims from the criminals who network to traffic and exploit the vulnerable. Pope Francis assured the Assembly of his prayers and encouraged the group to keep their eyes focused on the importance of their work, stating, "As you well know, one of the challenges to this work of advocacy, education and coordination is a certain indifference and even complicity, a tendency on the part of many to look the other way where powerful economic interests and networks of crime are at play". He concluded his remarks by expressing his confidence that the members of RENATE would contribute "to a more effective witness to the Gospel in one of the great peripheries of society".

During the Assembly, a number of presentations featured on a daily basis. All of these are available in the Members' Area on the RENATE website. A critical component of the Assembly was the discernment process to arrive at a mandate for the next five years. On the final day, following reflection, discussions, group work and plenary sessions, the Assembly engaged in "dotmocracy", to prioritise the work for the coming term and arrived at a Commitment Statement which will act as a 'roadmap' for the journey ahead from 2016-2021. In conclusion, participants began the Assembly, each carrying a single symbolic building brick which they placed as a wall at the entrance to the auditorium. By the end of the Assembly, the brick wall was deconstructed and each brick was then used to build a bridge, symbolising the building of a network that is stronger together and capable of traversing whatever powerful undercurrents of resistance encountered.

Training on Migration & Human Trafficking in Ravenstein, Netherlands

Training on Migration & Human Trafficking for the RENATE members took place in Ravenstein, Netherlands, from 19-25 March 2017.



Participants at the RENATE Training in Ravenstein, Netherlands

Thanks to the efforts of the Core Group member, Mrs. Ivonne van de Kar, the group had been booked into the beautiful venue of Soeterbeek Conference Centre, part of the Radboud University of Nijmegen. 29 members from seventeen European countries attended the training.

It was a full week, situated within the broader, expansive world-view proposed by *Laudato Si*, which acted as a unifying thread running through the entire week.

A wide range of experienced practitioners from the Netherlands shared their wisdom and knowledge relevant to the topic. The following are some of the themes covered:

- understanding the distinctions between 'Trafficking', 'Smuggling', 'Fraud' and 'Grey areas', and the complexities therein;
- the influence of the media and how it might be harnessed positively as means of awareness-raising;
- the practicalities of offering shelter and support in the Netherlands, to victims and survivors;
- *Forgiveness* as a means of healing;
- the *Right to Protect*;
- the complexities of considerations underpinning the *Safe Return/Voluntary Return* programme;
- the impacts of EU legislation and international legal frameworks on humanitarian actors who are often deterred from providing assistance as a result of the consequences of such legislation and frameworks;

- experiential learning at the STEK Centre in the Hague, where representatives from the Dutch Council for Refugees presented on the ecumenical projects for refugees and undocumented people at the centre.

An overview of the week's training was presented in a report by the Communications Person and published in the public domain of the RENATE website.

5.4 THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Trafficking

Individuals, friends, families and communities were united in prayer on the 8th of February, feast of Saint Josephine Bakhita. This was in response to Pope Francis' invitation to the world to honour the Third International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Trafficking.

Press releases with resources have been circulated in countries worldwide by numerous organisations working to combat human trafficking. These resources, inter-faith prayer services, prayers, songs and intercessions were readily accessible on the public domain of the RENATE website to all who wished to avail of them.



St. Josephine Bakhita

Samples of events that took place, and resources shared throughout the RENATE Network:

- Mary Ward Loreto shared the anti-trafficking video which they developed as part of their activities to mark the 8th of February. In collaboration with the URAT Network, they held a Liturgy in honour of St. Bakhita's Day. They prayed together for the victims of trafficking, called for an end to this action and lit candles for the victims.
- RENATE members working together in Hungary in the local SARA Network organised a Prayer Evening in the Church.
- In Italy, USMI organised a Prayer Vigil with the theme *I am a Child, not a Slave*, which took place on the 4th February. It was a moment of meditation, reflection and sharing of experiences by sisters working at various levels to assist and protect the victims of human trafficking. Another event which took place was a seminar titled *Women and Children on sale* which took place in the Parish of St. Frumenzio on the following day. The Slaves No More Association in collaboration with the Be Free Association, together with the Church and the Government organised another seminar on the issue of human trafficking on the 8th of February. Approximately 130 people attended it. This enriching seminar offered an opportunity to view the issue of human trafficking from different perspectives. Also the UK Ambassador to the Holy See, Mrs. Sally Axworthy, arranged a roundtable discussion to mark the world day of prayer against human trafficking, at which many Ambassadors to the Holy See from different countries were invited. There was also representation from USMI, JDP, UISG and Talitha Kum. It is noteworthy that there is an increasing level of activities focused on the 8th of February each year, with events taking place in Palermo, Milan, Bergamo, Brescia and other communities.
- In the Dutch city of Breda, the International Day of Prayer for victims of Human Trafficking started with a Mass in the Ecclesia St. Bakhita, where all young victims were

commemorated. After Mass, there was a screening of the film *Called to Give Voice to the Voiceless*, on the work of RENATE. This was followed by a discussion on the topic.

- On the first Friday of the month (3rd February), the Bakhita Network in Poland prepared a Night Vigil at the Basilica of the Holy Cross, Warsaw. The theme was *Turn Night into the Power of Mercy*. Preceded by references to the issue of human trafficking in the press, on radio, in advertisements on websites and social media, the Vigil was open to all who were touched by the tragedy of our enslaved brothers and sisters. A special invitation was extended to those who made extra efforts to pray the Divine Mercy Chaplet at 3.00 am on the first Saturday of every month throughout the year. The Divine Mercy Chaplet focused specifically on praying for the victims of human trafficking, the perpetrators of their suffering and an appeal to bring an end to human trafficking in the world. A full account of this special initiative can be found in the news section of the RENATE website.
- STOP Human Trafficking-Caritas Slovakia organised a Liturgy at the Franciscan Church in Bratislava on 8th February 2017. During the Liturgy, several Slovakian victims of human trafficking spoke of their personal experiences. Each story was accompanied by a candle, symbolising the light of hope and the candle was subsequently placed on a map of the world, as a gesture of solidarity in prayer for the victims of human trafficking worldwide. The church choir, Chorus Salvatoris, accompanied the Liturgy with Taizé hymns. Full details of the event are available on the website.
- Our colleagues at Accion Social, CONFER in Spain, devised a prayer service, which was available at their website www.confer.es
- On the occasion of the International Day of Prayer and Awareness against Trafficking, 8th of February 2017, staff at the Medaille Trust in the UK walked ten miles to create awareness and raise funds for victims of modern slavery. They also hosted a Coffee Morning.

Say a Prayer and Light a Candle.

Wisdom gained through Theological Reflection informs every RENATE action. On the RENATE website, a unique prayer widget invites web browsers to say a prayer and light a candle. There is a choice of prayers in different languages or the possibility to add one's own. RENATE is happy to see the number on the prayer-counter growing from over 66,000 at the beginning of October 2016 to over 70,000 prayers said for the victims of human trafficking by the end of September 2017.

5.5 STRUCTURES

Care of Members was given special attention by the European philanthropic body supporting the work of RENATE. It highly values the work being done by the members. Our sponsors greatly encouraged the network to look at ways in which care of members would be considered. This included a chance to rest as well as a chance to take opportunities to improve knowledge, information and skills. RENATE identified the following areas of support for its Members:

- English Language Training for the Membership
- Emergency Fund for Local Projects
- Emergency Relief from Work / Burnout Prevention
- Retreat for the Working Board/Core Group

Core Group Meeting in Palermo, Sicily

The RENATE Core Group together with its staff members, co-workers from MWL and guests, met together in Palermo, Sicily, from 15-21 January 2017. They gathered to discuss and elaborate the Strategic Plan for RENATE, including five years, 2016 – 2017. They took a distant look at the mission and vision of the Network and its further development.

RENATE's presence in Palermo was also a response to the cross-border work with migrants in Sicily. Core Group members and staff visited a 'Primary Centre' near Palermo, which provides shelter and support to minors. The centre, which is categorised as a "Primary Centre", is housed in a property owned by a doctor & leased to a local social co-operative. A non-profit venture, the centre offers shelter and support to minors. Currently the centre is home to fifty youths, who hail from countries on the African continent, in addition to Syria and Bangladesh. Each of the teenagers has arrived alone and frightened on the shores of Sicily, having survived perilous land and sea journeys, with memories of experiences and encounters that no human being should ever have to endure. Some come to Europe looking for their families; some in search of a better life with money and work. Others come with the intention of tracing their family members who have moved on to other EU countries.



RENATE Core Group, Staff and Hosts in Palermo, Sicily

The visit to Palermo also provided an opportunity to join Sr. Valeria Gandini and some of her colleagues on a night mission on the city streets of Palermo. Confident in their ministry and fully believing in God's protection and presence during their journey, Sr. Valeria, Fr. Lorenzo and Maggie, a lay volunteer, spent several hours on a bitterly cold January night, with women and girls working on the streets.

Fund for Members

One of the major objectives of RENATE is to support the members in their daily work and to build capacity for this task. To achieve this objective, RENATE has a Fund at the disposal of its members who can request grants for their needs. To avail of this fund the applicant must comply with RENATE's Criteria and the Donor's Guidelines. The criteria were reviewed this year (2017) and published on the website in June.

It is envisaged that the Fund will be used for:

A. Member Only

- English language course
- short respite care for worker
- upskill a worker in the field of Human Trafficking or in a short English language course (not planned for in the Project's Annual Budget)

B. Local Projects

- To meet the needs of those who have been trafficked or may be at risk of being trafficked (not for infrastructure). *Examples: health issues; homelessness: 6 months' rent to help families become independent (resettlement); education of woman or childcare fees so as to be free to avail of any educational course.*

The criteria and application form is added to the Member Area of the RENATE website. Members can take advantage of the fund by returning the completed form (electronically) to RENATE's official email address: renatenetwork@gmail.com The Secretary informs the applicant of the outcome of the Core Group's decision.

X 2016 – IX 2017, Successful Applications to the RENATE Fund for Members

(all amounts stated in euro, list in chronological order)

	Initials	Country	Date	Project	Amount granted	Notes
1	SB	Albania	02.12.2016	English course in AL.	1,000.00	complete
2	EP	Albania	07.12.2016	Specialised Course in AL.	1,000.00	complete
3	AB	Poland	29.12.2016	English course for group in PL	2,000.00	complete
4	SM	Romania	14.02.2017	English course in RO	400.00	complete
5	KG	Poland	10.05.2017	English course 2 members PL	2,000.00	complete
6	TV	Italy	30.06.2017	English course for group in IT	1,000.00	complete
7	TV	Italy	30.06.2017	local project in IT	2,000.00	complete
8	AB	Romania	01.07.2017	German course in RO	1,000.00	complete
9	AB	Romania	01.07.2017	local project in RO	2,000.00	complete
10	DV	Lithuania	04.07.2017	local project in LT	2,000.00	complete
Total in EUR					14,400.00	

The agreed maximum donation for a course is **1,000.00 EUR**
and **2,000.00 EUR** for a local project (per applicant per annum)

From October 2016 until September 2017, RENATE supported ten applications from five different Eastern European countries at a total amount of €14,400.00. Four persons received individual funding for an English course in their respective home countries and one person received funding for a specialised course in psychotherapy. Another beneficiary chose to improve her command of German and was supported for this cause. Two local projects, in Italy and Poland, were granted funding to enable a group of staff and shelter inhabitants to follow an organised English course. Three other local initiatives, in Italy, Lithuania and Romania, received financial aid respectively for awareness raising and renovation of adaptation-housing.

Skype Conference Calls

The RENATE Core group met via Skype ten times from October 2016 until September 2017. A detailed list of conference calls is included at the end of this report. Each meeting took from 1.5 to 2 hours and was finalised with written minutes from the Secretary. This communication system enables the smooth flow of information and assists the completion of tasks.

6. CHALLENGES

Working on anti-trafficking issues in areas of prevention and protection, from victim support through shelters, to education-awareness, policy and advocacy, recovery and reintegration, as well as campaigning, it is only natural to have encountered challenges along the journey of the past year.

There are the ongoing challenges of endeavouring to build the dignity of the victims of human trafficking so they no longer see themselves as victims but as survivors. From the survivor's perspective, there is always the promise of possibility and hope for the future. One of the graces bestowed on RENATE members at grassroots level in RENATE is that we get to assist each person re-establish herself or himself in the community and move towards greater dignity and independence.

More often 'unseen' and marginalised in society, it has been exceedingly fulfilling and yet challenging, to offer a comprehensive package of supports that will provide the best opportunity possible for them and assist them in planning a pathway of recovery and reintegration.

In this regard, RENATE constantly reaches out, working to strengthen relationships with others at local, national and international levels, with a view to not only ending human trafficking at the macro-level, but also at the micro-level, assisting survivors strive towards some level of stabilisation in order to live a life of dignity, respect, opportunity and the ability to discern their own voice.

Another key dimension of such out-reach has been the challenge to continue building the profile of RENATE within the wider anti-human trafficking sector. In this regard, we are optimistic about the potential to be realised through the renewal of the RENATE website.

The power of 'story' is central to any organisation's work and none more so than RENATE's work. Our story is best conveyed through the sharing of best practice from amongst our members throughout the network. There have been considerable achievements in the areas of

communications, which have greatly enabled this sharing. We are working towards achieving greater contributions from the membership with regards to showcasing local projects, initiative and campaigns. We Religious are so focused on 'doing and giving,' that too often, the recording of such great effort and its impact is often lost. Proactively engaging with and pursuing RENATE members for their 'story' has been challenging and is going to animate our work in the time ahead.

Every organisation has been reminded in recent years that we operate within a complex web of social, cultural and economic relationships that envelop the globe. Increasing the number of new individual and corporate donors to the NGO annually and building upon relationships with current supporters, is an ongoing challenge. It presents us with opportunities to build and improve upon past successful fundraising appeals whilst continuing to monitor and review campaigns and ensure that contingency plans are in place and implemented where necessary to achieve targets.

A subtle yet omnipresent challenge in an age of ever-evolving communications capacities, internet and the dark web, is RENATE's ability to maintain flexibility in its mission, enabling RENATE to respond rapidly and appropriately to the changing needs of its members as they, in turn, respond to needs on the ground. This capacity has been made manifest in the organic growth of RENATE since its first Strategic Plan, in line with increased demand from the network.

The Strategic Plan 2016-2021 outlines the objectives set for the next five years. We would like to be able to do more, but we are constrained by budgetary conditions which limit us. We are grateful to all those who have supported us in many different ways in the past and we hope that we can rely on that support into the future.

And finally, through it all, the challenge to find God in the mundane; in our losses as well as our successes and in sustaining our hearts in the face of the relentless presence of human trafficking.

7. CONCLUSIONS

This has been an extraordinary year for RENATE which began with the 2nd Assembly in Rome. There, Pope Francis blessed the membership during the private audience in the Vatican. The mandate then given by the Assembly followed after much reflection on powerfully presented papers which proved to be a great source of light in creating this statement. The 5 year strategic plan was formulated to the backdrop of the mediterranean in Palermo, where so many trafficked victims had lost their lives or been rescued from the muddy waters of the sea. This is now our guide as we seek to be faithful to the discernment which took place in Rome.

There is a constant reminder of the call to us all, as members dedicated to combatting human trafficking. We remain strong in the midst of adversity and challenge. We know that together we can continue to be a force for good in this mission. We will develop effective networks against this modern day slavery across Europe and the World, linked to Talitha Kum and all Religious continental networks, and many other local, national and international networks, striving tirelessly to stay faithful to this call.

A minister against trafficking in Ontario, Canada, said: "Human trafficking is a deplorable crime as well as a human rights violation that robs the safety, livelihood and dignity of those who are exploited and abused. The Thomas Reuters Foundation has recently spoken of a new initiative whereby victims of human trafficking will form a first-of-its-kind "brains trust" to advise policymakers in Canada's Ontario province on how to combat the crime." (August, 2017). Here they have a survivor of trafficking working in the ministry against trafficking. The voice of the exploited is being heard. The initiative comes after human trafficking survivors voiced concerns about their exclusion from the mainstream debate on how to prevent modern-day slavery. Human trafficking is the world's fastest growing criminal enterprise worth an estimated \$150 billion a year, according to the International Labour Organization (ILO), with nearly 21 million people victims of forced labour and trafficking.

RENAME and the world need to understand better how those who have been made victims are given a voice, are given human rights and justice, whilst those who are the clients and the traffickers are criminalised. We can but live in hope.

"Each year," said Pope Francis, "thousands of men, women and children are innocent victims of sexual and organ trafficking, and it seems that we are so accustomed to seeing it as a normal thing. This is ugly, it is cruel, it is criminal." He called **human trafficking**, "an aberrant plague," and, "a modern form of **slavery**," renewing his appeal for universal commitment to ending the practice." 30th July 2017 – World Day Against Human Trafficking.

8. TIMELINE OF EVENTS FROM OCTOBER, 2016 UNTIL SEPTEMBER, 2017

DATE	EVENT
6 – 7 October 2016	ERSTE Foundation Course, Sarajevo, Serbia
18 October 2016	European Day Against Human Trafficking – various activities
24 October 2016	Core Group conference call via skype
6 – 12 November 2016	2nd General Assembly of RENATE, Rome, Italy
22 November 2016	Core Group conference call via skype
6 – 7 December 2016	EU Civil Society Platform Meeting, Brussels, Belgium
19 December 2016	Core Group conference call via skype
21 December 2016	Tenth Edition of RENATE Newsletter
15 – 21 January 2017	Strategic Planning Meeting for RENATE, Palermo, Sicily, Italy
6 February 2017	Core Group conference call via skype
8 February 2017	St. Bakhita's Day, International Day of Prayer against Trafficking
6 March 2017	Core Group conference call via skype
19 – 25 March 2017	Training on Migration & Trafficking in Ravenstein, Netherlands
31 March 2017	Eleventh Edition of RENATE Newsletter
3 April 2017	Core Group conference call via skype
2 – 4 April 2017	<i>Populorum Progressio</i> Encyclical Letter – 50th Anniversary, Rome, IT
3 – 4 April 2017	OSCE 17th Annual Alliance Against Trafficking in Persons, Vienna, AT
25 April 2017	Core Group conference call via skype
3 – 8 May 2017	ANDANTE Study Days on Human Trafficking, Durrës, AL
15 May – 1 June 2017	RENAME President speaks about Anti-Trafficking work in Toronto, CA
17 May 2017	Symposium on Human Trafficking & Migrant Smuggling, Brussels, BE
30 – 31 May 2017	EU Civil Society Platform Meeting, Brussels, BE
6 June 2017	Core Group conference call via skype
16 June 2017	Twelfth Edition of RENATE Newsletter
3 July 2017	Core Group conference call via skype
4 September 2017	Core Group conference call via skype

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May God continue to bless the work of each member of the Network.

SIGNATURE:

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