



# ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 2018 - SEPTEMBER 2019



Mary Ward Loreto  
Foundation

Albanian Mission Against Human Trafficking

# ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 2018 - SEPTEMBER 2019





## CONTENT

Introduction.....	7
Mary Ward Loreto Foundation.....	9
MWL Women's Project.....	17
MWL Men's Project.....	29
MWL Youth Project.....	33
MWL Education Project.....	37
Challenges & Lessons Learned.....	41
Appreciations .....	42

## MARY WARD LORETO ORGANOGRAM



## INTRODUCTION



*Reading this report draws us deeper and deeper into a dynamic of transformation that is unbelievably hopeful and energizing. I congratulate all of the staff of MWL, who over the last year, have implemented the most incredible action related to the mission against Human Trafficking. This mission brings new life to all those who have been partners and protagonists in this work. The report itself will detail the joys and the sorrows, the challenges and the successes of the combined team*

*members and their colleagues, who are the participants and stakeholders in the field. The action has taken place right across Albania and mainly in the most vulnerable, isolated and abandoned parts of the country from Tropoje in the north to Konispol in the South. Why do we continue to work against Human Trafficking when we know the way is hard and the amazing empowerment of others and transformation into new life is always at a great cost to the human soul? We weep with the suffering and the marginalised, the outcast and the sold, the bought and abused. We walk alongside the abandoned as friends and partners. What gives us the fire and passion to continue in this task? The answer is always love and being loved in return and the cost is never too great.*

*Martin Luther King's words and those of Pope Francis, encourage us to stay strong in this mission with the exploited and to rejoice with those who survive and who stand up and say with us: "Enough is Enough."*

*To end these brief words of hope it seems appropriate to share with you, our readers, a new organogram for MWL. This foundation is now in a stage of a radical transformation of its structures, organized on the Teal model, into self-managing teams. As CEO I have now stepped down and handed the reigns over to a very capable MWL Executive Team who in turn are leading seven other self-managing teams of Advice and Service centres in six regions of Albania. I wish them well as they steer the MWL foundation into new paths. I will work hard with them, as President of the Foundation, to ensure their security both financially and humanly in this difficult road of combatting human trafficking from our world today.*

Imelda Poole IBVM





## MARY WARD LORETO

Mary Ward Loreto Foundation is closing the chapter on the 6th year of work against human trafficking across Albania. This year has brought us into a new approach to our work and a more robust position to make real change.

MWL recognizes the absolute imperativeness of networks in the fight against human trafficking and modern slavery. We're honored to be members of networks, both nationally and internationally, that help contribute to best practices and make the end to modern slavery a more feasible goal.





We are proud to continue our partnership with RENATE (Religious in Europe Networking Against Trafficking and Exploitation), URAT (The United Response Against Trafficking), Vatra, Different and Equal, (both of the latter working for the Rehabilitation of Trafficked Victims), and Shkej – Little Angels Project for Roma Street Children. Within Albania we are also in partnership and collaboration with many other organisations; Peace Corps, DevAID, Roma Organisation, YUNUS Social Business, Terres de Hommes and Medaille Trust UK. These partnerships are indispensable to our mission and enable us to help the most vulnerable within Albania and across Europe.



Collaboration and partnership cannot be exclusive to the NGO sector due to the complexity of human trafficking and service-based work. This year, MWL has expanded upon relationships with Government Ministries, Municipalities, and Universities: The Ministry of Education, The Ministry of Anti Trafficking, Municipality of Lezhe, Municipality of Tropoja, the United States Embassy, ICITAP, and 3 Albanian Universities.

Awareness raising and campaigning are powerful tools in Anti-trafficking work. MWL's presence on committees, networks, and partnerships speaks to the reality of trafficking in Albania, giving voice to the most vulnerable and creating systems that can combat the crime on every level.

This year, MWL was involved in 3 lobby and advocacy campaigns, including the UN Gift Box Campaign which travelled to Elbasan for the EU Anti-Trafficking Day. This was made possible by URAT and the U.S. Embassy Small Grants Programme. This campaign spread awareness to students and citizens about the reality of trafficking in their community.

An exciting development within MWL was the awarding of Imelda Poole with her MBE, becoming a Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Order in November 2018. This award highlighted her work against human trafficking and gave the work of MWL in Albania a higher profile.





## GRASSROOTS WORK



MWL's work at the grassroots level has been identified as filling the gaps in the chain of services for victims and potential victims of trafficking. This year, we were accepted onto the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), giving us a vital position to help identify, protect, support, and refer people in the Advice and Service Centres (ASC) in the 6 areas we work.

Each ASC is based in a different community, requiring us to constantly learn and adjust our work to the needs of the individual communities. This has led us from being project-based to service-based, giving the most holistic care for our clients. When we put the individual from the periphery at the center of our work, we can make the most progress toward our mission of ending human trafficking.

Through our direct action, 31 victims of trafficking, men and women, have been referred to us. This is more than twice as many as last year. Additionally, 621 women and their families received access to services across the country through our Advice and Service Centres.



## STAFF DEVELOPMENT



The staff of MWL is constantly looking to the horizon, for what is next and what to improve upon. This year, the entire staff took part in a Character Driven Leadership Training powered by the McCain Institute with trainer Edlira Gjoni. The training was an in-depth analysis of our individual leadership strengths, the ethics within leadership, and how to become efficient and effective leaders in our current roles and beyond.

In addition to staff-wide trainings, individual staff are encouraged to pursue their individual professional development. This year, staff participated in trainings with the Erste Training Foundation, certifications, and pursued master's degrees in their respective fields.

MWL's influence has broadened and strengthened this year, due in part to the sheer number of meetings our staff hosts and participates in. We are always looking for opportunities to collaborate, build a bridge, and further our mission.



## FUNDRAISING

MWL has invested in the position of Development Officer heavily during this year. This initiative has been important to the organisation, helping develop new income streams, network, submit applications, and pursue fundraising full-time for the organisation. Just as with other staff members, the Development Officer underwent capacity building in international fundraising conferences and workshops in the Netherlands and in London.



Multiple applications were submitted throughout the year for funding nationally and internationally. With the growing importance of cross border anti-trafficking work between UK and Albania, particular attention has been given to building relationships between the two nations and their funding bodies and grassroots work. MWL understands that this bridge is one of the most important for the sake of trafficked victims and the UK Government's ability to help.

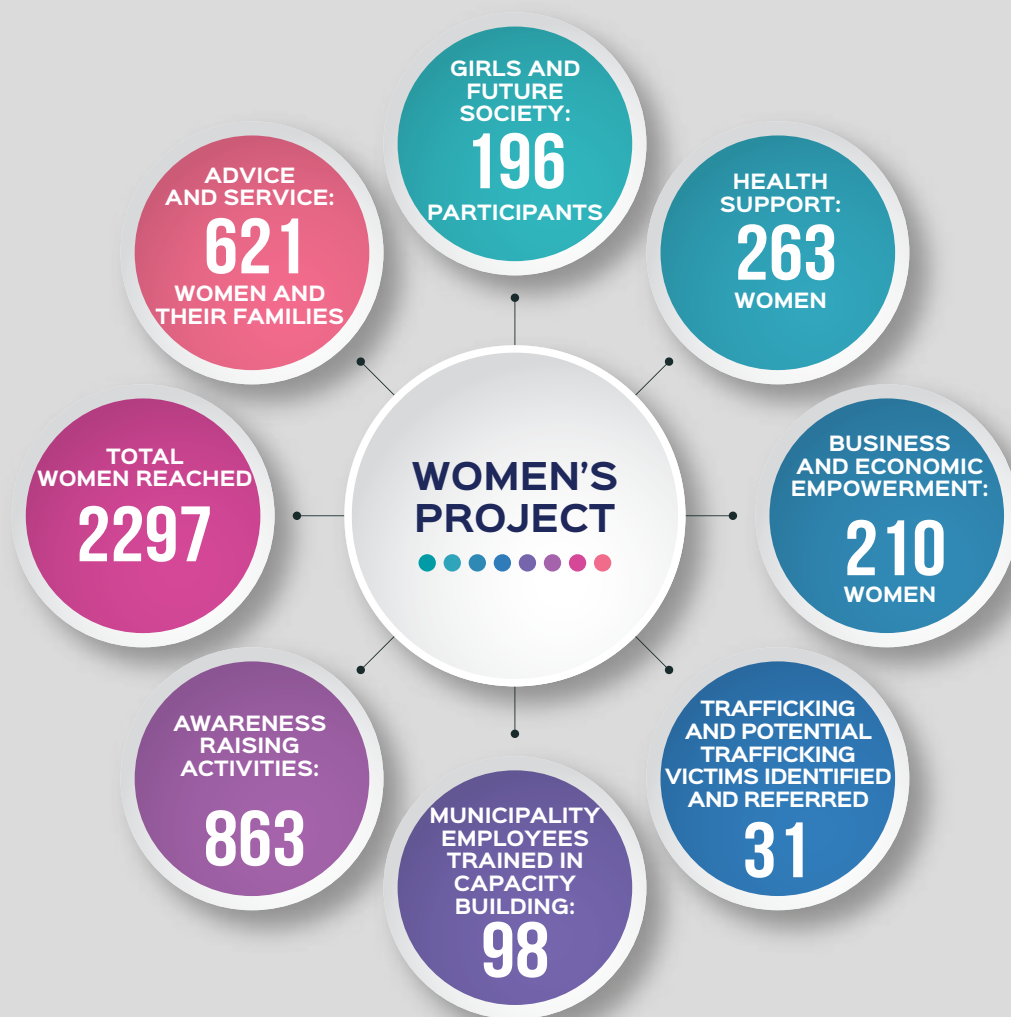
MWL executed its first Fundraising Gala Night in December of 2018, which was a project of the Development Team. The night was a great success with an exciting auction, dinner, and dancing to celebrate our work and our partners, advocates, and supporters.

## ORGANISATION DEVELOPMENT

The organisation has seen a natural progression in structure and focus this year. We feel a true call to shift from project-based to service-based, with a self-managing team structure across our 6 regions of work, flowing from our Advice and Service Centres. This transition has happened naturally and is proving to be the right way forward, in the charism of Mary Ward, to continue relentlessly pursuing our mission and vision.







## MWL WOMEN

The Women's Project at Mary Ward Loreto aims to end trafficking and exploitation of women and girls. In the spirit of Mary Ward, we answer these vast and systemic problems with a holistic approach that addresses human development at every level and to every human need.

Women and girls are the most vulnerable to trafficking because of their position in society and their limitations in opportunity and education. The programme provides assistance to women and girls in communities, to be protected through inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable activities. The project seeks to achieve this goal through training, coaching, assisting, and empowering the women and girls to have access to rights and to have the freedom to reach their full potential.

In addition to empowering women, MWL works to bridge the gap in systems that are already in place and designed to help. By increasing the capacities of municipality employees, statutory services can work better for those who need them. This year 98 employees from protection and health and social services were trained.

A total of 2,277 women and girls were reached this year in the MWL Women's Project in the 6 regions we work in across Albania.



## GRASSROOTS WORK

Poverty multiplies vulnerability to slavery and human trafficking. This vulnerability can lead to desperation when families struggle with food insecurity, health care costs, and educational fees. Offers to travel abroad, illegally, in the hopes of a better life become a more feasible option. Many cases of human trafficking and modern slavery have what seen to be harmless beginnings of a promise of sustainable work. By addressing economic empowerment and opportunity in Albania, we can provide incentive to stay, decreasing the vulnerability to trafficking and exploitation.

Awareness raising and training is the frontline of fighting against the phenomenon of human trafficking. This year, 863 women and girls participated in awareness raising activities and campaigns, empowering them and their families to better understand trafficking and how it preys upon those most vulnerable.



### BROAD-BASED ORGANIZING:

The Broad-Based Organizing Methodology continues to bear fruit to the communities where it is implemented. The methodology coordinates cooperative efforts and campaigning carried out by local residents in order to promote the best interests of their community, by their community.

Trainings across Albania this year have produced the necessary fruit for the women and their communities.

Here are a few examples:

- In the area of Tropoja, a road has been built from Dushaj to Raja, securing transportation to and from school for children of the area, decreasing their vulnerability. The road is being maintained by the Municipality.
- In Shendelli, after 2 years of community organizing with the municipality, a kindergarten was built and has opened.

The community group in Hot I Ri continues to advocate and negotiate for better road infrastructure to increase safety for the community. The process has been addressed to the Court and the women continue to advocate for change.





## HEALTH

263 women were provided with health support this year. 17 were referred at the Advice and Service Centre (ASC) in Tirana, while 246 were from the other 5 areas of the project. This shows the need, especially in informal areas of the country, for social services and health benefits. When women are secure in their health, they can better provide for themselves, their families, and be full and active citizens in their communities.



## ADVICE AND SERVICE CENTRE MODEL (ASC):

The Advice and Service Centre Model has been implemented in the 6 areas MWL works; Tirana, Shkodra, Lushnja, Tropoja, Sarande/Konispol, and Lezhe. This model has proven to be a much-needed piece that was once missing from society and fills the gaps, reaching those who fall between the cracks of the statutory and private services. The vision for these centres was to have a welcoming place for women and girls in need to come to for aid and services in the city of Tirana. That has expanded to be 6 service-based centres that respond to the needs of each community individually. The types of cases referred are poverty, domestic violence, mental health care, asylum seeking, legal aid, and even needing simple access to social services.

The Ministry of Interior accepted the application for MWL to be a part of the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) this year, increasing the reach and reputation for MWL as an important link in society for those who need our help.



32 women received counselling and psychotherapy support at ASC Tirana and 15 Albanian trafficked women in the UK received therapy online to cope with domestic abuse, post trauma from human trafficking, and other psychological distresses.

Through our partnership with Food Bank Albania, 17 families were supported with 129 kilograms of food, 19 packages of clothing, and 50 packages of seeds.

Through the ASC in Tirana and Lezhe, MWL identified 31 victims and potential victims of trafficking. The services provided were identification, psychological evaluation, referral to the Competent Authority within the NRM structure, referral to the police, shelter, health and legal support and therapy.





## MWL SOCIAL BUSINESS:



This year, the Social Business has provided income to 25 women and their families in 3 areas; Lezha, Tropoja, and Shkodra. €10,800 of income were generated by the women. Additionally, 148 women and girls in 6 areas have been supported through capacity building for employment through vocational training for the tourism industry as chefs, waitresses, bartenders, cleaners, and receptionists. 44 of them are employed as a result. MWL makes these opportunities possible by facilitating and liaising with different businesses and institutions.



## EDUCATION AND LEADERSHIP PROGRAMME:

115 girls participated in an Education and Leadership camp in 3 areas from July to August 2019. The girls were taught about leadership and were given ownership of the camp themselves, teaching them organisational skills. Education is the key to fighting vulnerability, especially of women. 11 girls are being supported in their education and 17 took part in a course preparing them for their University education. 25 other girls in Matosh Uka School in Dushaj attended the training "Career Counseling: University Application, Procedures and Exam Stress Management".







## NETWORKS:

Networks are the backbone of our work, both in Albania and in anti-trafficking work across Europe. The URAT network is particularly important to the Women's Project. The membership of this network consists of 4 religious congregations, 9 national NGOs (two of them run shelter for survivors of HT) and Peace Corps. St. Bakhita – the International Day of Prayer against HT, has been a successful activity of this network in February 2019.

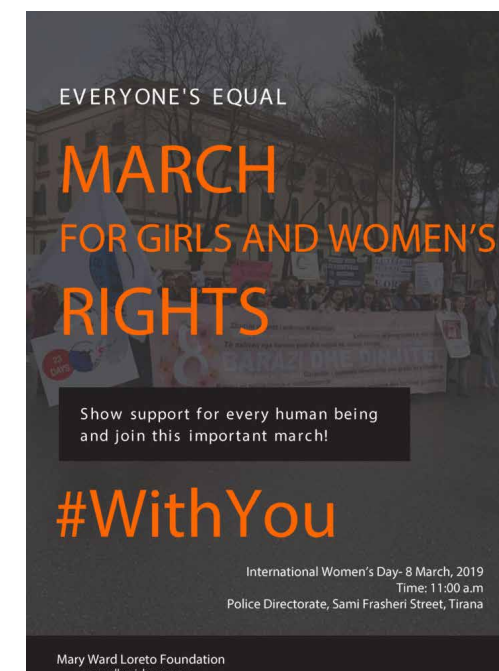




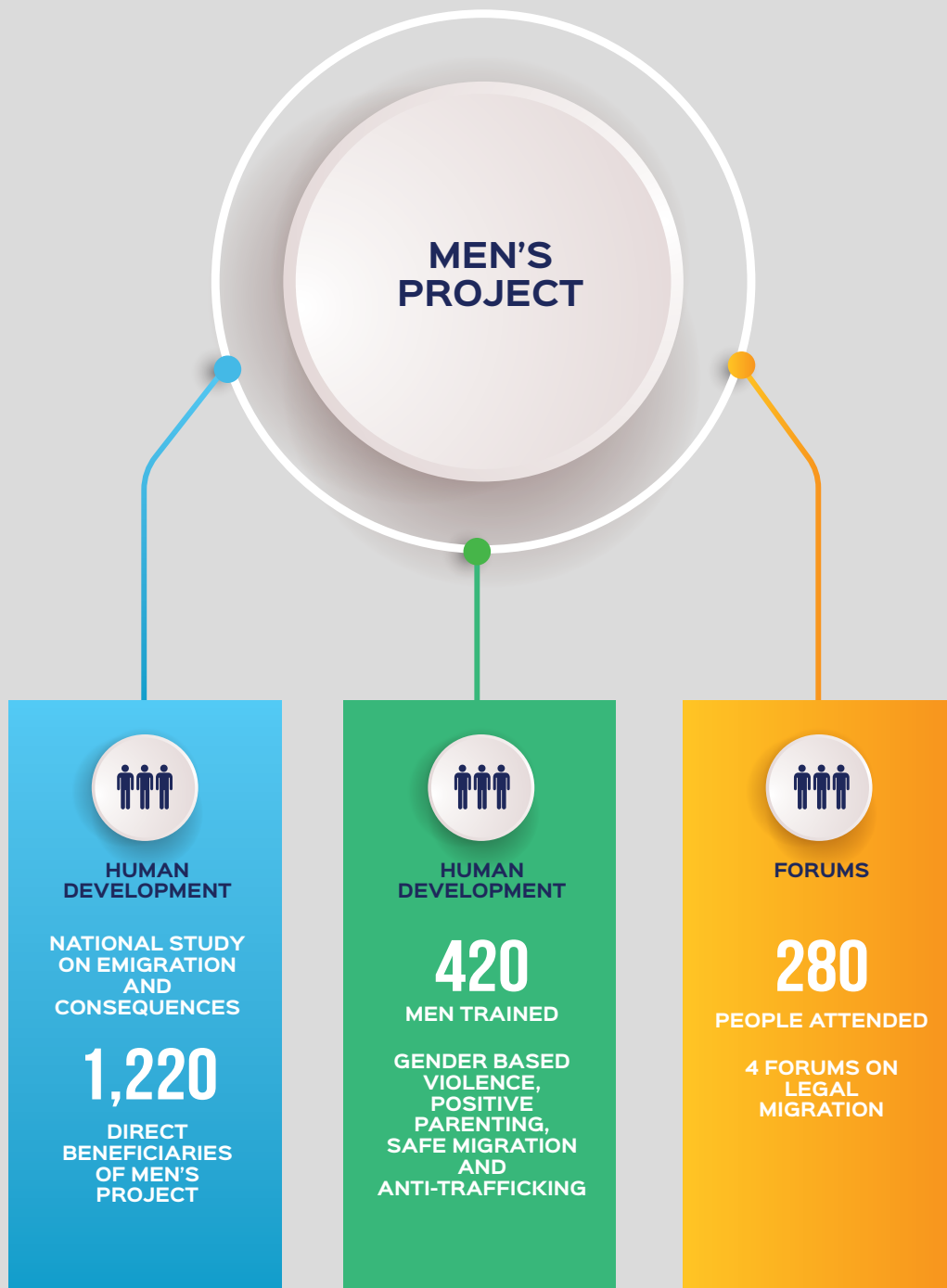


The Peace Corps. Collaboration this year in Tropoja and in Saranda have been very fruitful for MWL Women, helping with projects and implementation.

MWL's presence in the National Referral Mechanism has increased our influence and presence in the chain of services, making us more relevant and able to contribute our best practices to the network.







## MWL MEN

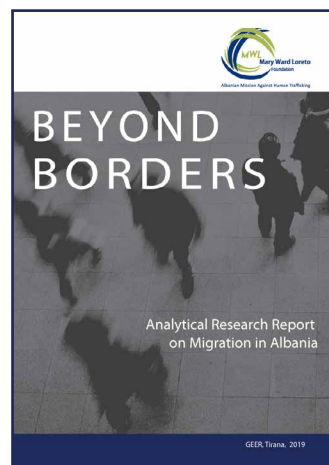
The Men's project of MWL has always been an innovative and necessary element of addressing human trafficking, exploitation, and emigration. When men are empowered to be allies for the cause, systemic change can be realized.. The MWL Men's Project approaches this mission by addressing the needs of the individual holistically and with dignity.

The objective of this project is to strengthen the role of men in combating gender-based violence, abuse, and exploitation, and to promote progress toward human and economic development and the welfare of men as a whole. This year we have seen signs of positive impact, especially in the areas where we are implementing our projects.



## RESEARCH:

One of the most notable achievements of this reporting period was the launching of the National Study on Emigration and Consequences. This study consisted of 20 interviews, 1,105 questionnaires, and 9 focus groups, taking a comprehensive look at not just the phenomenon of emigration from Albania but explored the reasons and issues leading to it and the indications of human trafficking and illegal migration. The launch was held in April in Tirana, where researchers and guest speakers spoke on the findings in the perspective of Albania's current political climate and the best steps forward for MWL and partners. (See website for full report)



## HUMAN DEVELOPMENT TRAININGS:

In this reporting period, 420 men have been trained in the following topics: Gender-Based Violence, Safe Migration and Anti-Trafficking, and Positive Parenting. The age of participants ranges from 25 to 55. We are seeing an increase in engagement by participants in these sessions, with the presence of women producing a positive environment with varying points of view, facilitating deeper and more impactful discussion.



## COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT:

After our 2016 research, "Challenges and Perspectives of Men in the Albanian Society", we understood that change would require a community-based approach. This has resulted in community gatherings to discuss and learn. In this reporting period, 4 forums were hosted across the country, with 280 people in attendance.

With the Men's Project coming to a close, we are so proud of the work accomplished and how we have been able to do our part in combatting human trafficking from one of the hardest to reach corners of society.





## MWL YOUTH

Our goal of systemic and significant change requires an inclusive approach to society. We accomplish this by providing opportunities and giving hope to disadvantaged young people in areas across Albania.

### HUMAN DEVELOPMENT TRAINING PROGRAMME:

Awareness raising and training is the grassroots level work that is making headway toward systemic change. This year, MWL's Human Development Training Programmes reached 1,722 young people vulnerable to exploitation. Our Youth Project team has conducted 64 trainings and workshops in Social Media and Online Trafficking Phenomenon, Addiction Phenomenon, and Awareness Raising Training against Human Trafficking and Exploitation in 23 areas of Albania.

All trainings are vital to our mission and are linked with the fight against trafficking by raising awareness through education and information.





## FOCUS GROUP PROGRAMME:

Our Focus Group Programme accomplishes community and invests in the younger generation in a way that society cannot.

Students are vocationally trained for employment, given ownership of community, organize and participate in voluntary activities, are trained in human development, and are counseled and supported through the employment process.

Trainings range from electrical work and mechanics to cooking and hairdressing. They are also trained in the trainings from the Human Development Programme with additional trainings specific to their needs in the Focus Group; Learn Entrepreneurship, Job Search, and Different and Equal.

We are providing a pathway to employment and empowerment; in a community of empowered and employed youth, trafficking cannot survive. This program, which has flourished in Shkodra, Lushnja, Puka, and Rrëshen, is vital to the systemic change that we are driving to achieve.

Through the work of our staff and the utilization of our network, this year 73 youth in 4 areas were involved in this program. 70 youth completed the programme and 48.6% of them are currently employed as a direct result of their involvement.



## LEADERSHIP AND PARTICIPATIVE DEMOCRACY PROGRAMME:

Youth leaders and advocates are the vital element of anti-trafficking work that ensures its longevity, sustainability, and effectiveness. The Leadership Programme helps establish within the young people confidence in themselves and confidence in their communities, giving them the motivation and ambition to invest their skills and abilities into their communities. This year, this programme has focused on 3 areas, Durrës, Lushnja, and Rrëshen. Each group was approached differently and according to their specific needs.

47 youth have been trained and certificated by MWL as leaders in their community.

The Leadership Handbook and methodology of the programme has been shared with ad hoc facilitators in other communities in hopes that the programme can grow and thrive with groups that need it most.





## MWL EDUCATION

The MWL Education Project is solely focused on advocating for ethical standards and the eliminations of the corruption in the education system. Our education project is combating human trafficking and exploitation by emphasizing the importance of fighting corruption with democratic processes for the current generation and the generations to come. The education of our youth is the front lines of this fight for sustainable systemic change. Since the completion of our extensive research titled “Ethics in the Education System in Albania”, Mary Ward Loreto’s Education Project has proven more than necessary.

With our research having been distributed to all institutions and schools involved, this year saw discernment of the right steps forward for the Education Project. The MWL Education Board found that the next steps are to expand upon the effective Service-Learning aspect of the project, training in Ethics education to a selected group of teachers and to expand upon the root causes of the lack of ethic in the education system and how to address it.



### EDUCATION RESEARCH

RESEARCH  
LAUNCHED  
IN A CONFERENCE  
IN VLORA,  
WHERE

**150**

EDUCATION STAFF  
AND CIVIL SOCIETY  
PARTICIPATED

### SERVICE LEARNING

**37**  
STUDENTS  
AND

**16**  
TEACHING STAFF  
ENGAGED LEZHA  
ROGATIONIST SCHOOL



## SERVICE LEARNING COMPONENT OF THE MWL EDUCATION PROJECT:

Service Learning aims to create community among students, parents, and governmental bodies, creating a healthy environment of accountability and collaboration, free of corruption, while developing the students' interpersonal development and leadership skills. All stakeholders have an active role, which makes the implementation of MWL's goals and methodology tangible.

Currently 37 students and 16 teaching staff have been engaged with this project in the Lezhe Rogationist School. These teachers and students will be the peer group trainers as this project is expanded further into three new schools in the upcoming year.

Service Learning Methodology involves learning through action related to the school curriculum, networking with the local municipality and in partnership with the local community. Most of the community protagonists were parents of the children at the school. The goal is achieved through service action in the local community.



The students apply what they learn in class to community issues and at the same time learn from the experience as they achieve real objectives within the community. The introduction training session was accomplished with 16 teaching staff. There was exceptional positive feedback and support for the project from the staff members. After this event, 37 students from the School were trained in the details and stages of the methodology as well as being given an introduction to the stages of project implementation.





## A GUIDE BOOK FOR THE METHODOLOGY OF SERVICE LEARNING IN ALBANIA



will be forwarded with a further research on the causes of the high levels of corruption in this system, the teaching of ethics throughout the country and developing the service learning in three new regions. The hope needs to be made a reality.

A small booklet Called 'Service Learning Pilot Project in Lezhe', was produced and launched in December 2018. The booklet includes a film of the whole project, the stories resulting from the interviews regarding the era and impact of communism in Lezha, the training methodology of the Training Against Bullying, and the process of Service Learning implemented during this reporting period.

Continuing the important work of the Education Project is vital to cement the transformation in ethics in the education system of Albania. We look forward to gaining the capacity to make this project and research fully known and implemented across the country. It is hoped that the project

## CHALLENGES & LESSONS LEARNED

### PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED:

The nature of anti-trafficking work can feel like an uphill battle. It seems as if more can always be done, but when faced with corruption and lack of solutions from institutions and systems, we have to reroute and find innovative solutions to otherwise straight forward problems. This leads us to reach out, make more connections in network, and to find solutions in partnership.

Our perseverance in establishing relationships and partnerships with municipalities, ministries, and institutions has created environments where our work can flourish and fight human trafficking systemically.

Funding is also a source of difficulty for our work. We continue to work toward seeking funding from all potential sources, particularly in partnership, so as to sustain and expand our work. This year has also seen the expansion of our fundraising efforts abroad which we hope will bear fruits for Albania and anti-trafficking work.

### LESSONS LEARNED:

An important lesson we have learned this year and are directly acting upon is our organisation's structure and approach to the work. We are shifting to a self-managing model commonly known as a teal structure. We believe this is the best way forward for those we serve, putting their needs and the needs of their families and communities at the center of our focus. It also draws our colleagues and grass roots partners into the decision making process for the unfolding of the mission day by day.



## THANK YOU!

“None of this work could have been accomplished without the generous contribution of our donors, Mary Ward Loreto board members and volunteers.



We appreciate each one of you who has partnered with us in this challenging mission.

You have encouraged and supported us to continue this crucial and important work to fight human trafficking and the root causes of this endemic phenomenon.

You have enabled us to go a long way this year in empowering many members of the Albanian society.

*We are grateful! Thank you!"*



# ANNUAL REPORT

OCTOBER 2018 - SEPTEMBER 2019

[www.albaniahope.com](http://www.albaniahope.com)

**Donate directly on our website:**

<http://www.albaniahope.com/get-involved/>

*To donate directly in UK bank account:*

*The Loreto Albania Donation Account  
Royal Bank of Scotland  
sort code 16-00-15  
account number : 10118924*

*Cheque by post :*

*Sister Jacinta Davenport IBVM(Loreto  
Loreto Community, 28 Hartley Road  
Altrincham, Cheshire. WA14 4AY  
United Kingdom  
+44 0161 928 1440  
UK Registered Charity No: 250607*



Mary Ward Loreto Foundation  
Address: Rr. Skenderbej, 4.1.14, Tirana, Albania  
e-mail: [info@marywardloreto.net](mailto:info@marywardloreto.net)  
FB: MaryWardLoreto