

WHO WE ARE

Payoke is one of three government-recognized NGOs in Belgium with the mission of assisting and protecting victims of human trafficking. Payoke’s mission is to reintegrate victims of human trafficking back into society, either in Belgium or in his/her country of origin, through legal, psychological, social, and administrative assistance. We provide our clients with services that cover the full spectrum of victim assistance and support, with a focus on human rights and confidentiality. Our team of specialists provides support and services to our clients in the form of:

<p>RESIDENTIAL CARE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer safety through placement in shelters • Provide support in coping with traumatic experiences • Offer an individualized support package with focus on social skills • Familiarise clients with country specific norms and values 	<p>ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request residence documents and work permits • Make arrangements with social services, health insurance services, etc.
<p>LEGAL ASSISTANCE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advise and assist through legal procedures • Make contacts with police, justice and legal professionals, and provide mediation • Start legal proceedings in name of the client and/or in name of Payoke 	<p>PSYCHOSOCIAL SUPPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide support with trauma • Assist in rebuilding of life • Develop realistic plans for the future • Attend social contacts, culture, sports
<p>INFORMATION AND TRAINING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sensitise public opinion • Provide accurate information concerning the protection and assistance possibilities for victims • Respond to questions raised • Formulate recommendations towards authorities concerned 	<p>AMBULANT CARE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to assess client progress and development • Provide support and problem-solving in everyday life situations

The organization is also actively engaged in training at the local, national, and international levels, with beneficiaries including military personnel, police, NGOs, universities, labour unions, and government officials. As the first NGO of its kind to tackle trafficking head-on in Belgium, Payoke has amassed over 25 years of experience; as a result, several countries have demonstrated the desire to learn more

about the Belgian and Payoke models, in order to develop similar approaches within their own borders. We provide technical assistance to outside organisations, government officials and bodies in the form of assessments, training program design and delivery, expert consultation, and if needed, project/program evaluation. Whether it is training NGO staff members on shelter operations, providing gov-

ernment officials with processes for stakeholder cooperation (using the Belgian counter-trafficking model), training police on victim identification, or educating peacekeepers on the phenomenon of trafficking, we bring a practical approach to counter-trafficking, focussing on the real needs of victims.

How WE EVOLVED

Payoke was built upon the passion of a few local neighbourhood women who wanted to create a better situation for others. In 1987, these women saw the terrible conditions of sex workers in the Red Light District of Antwerp and decided something had to be done – as a result, Payoke was created.

To be quite honest, when we started out, we did not necessarily know what we were doing. We had no knowledge or previous experience in starting an NGO, knew nothing of financial or strategic planning, had no clear concept of what type of crime and criminals we were confronting, and had no first-hand knowledge of what types of trauma or experiences our clients were encountering; however, that did nothing to dissuade us. We knew in our hearts that something needed to be done and that we could not turn away from people who desperately needed help.

As an organisation, our first goal was to offer counselling and medical attention to the sex workers. This was no easy task, considering that prostitution was a sensitive topic and those work-

ing within prostitution were highly stigmatized. Payoke worked hard to sensitize the public to the realities of working in the sex industry through political pressure, awareness raising, art shows, and media campaigns. We made people uncomfortable at times, and probably offended many, but we knew our purpose and continued in delivering the services we set out to provide. Through our outreach programmes, Payoke could offer assistance to those who needed it most; at the same time, we were exposed to a much darker side to life behind the Red Lights. We saw people in our neighbourhood working under conditions that were inhumane, unsafe, and degrading. We saw that a good deal of the work being done was beyond the control of the workers and

conducted without compensation. We saw that those people who were in the most vulnerable situations, especially those from foreign countries, were targeted more readily. We saw people going about their work out of fear, by force, and without power. What we had discovered was an even harsher reality – human trafficking. And this changed our focus.

From the early 1990s, Payoke turned its activities towards protecting and defending the rights of victims of human trafficking, and since then we have never looked back. Payoke was the first NGO in Belgium, and one of the first in Europe, to address this issue at a time when human trafficking was not well understood or known. Waking up stakeholders to its reali-

ties was not an easy task. In addition, people working at Payoke were up against criminals who did not like people interfering in their livelihoods.

After much work at bringing this issue to the forefront, things started to change in Belgium. In 1992, a publication came out by a well-known investigative journalist, Chris De Stoop, that addressed the reality of trafficking. In the same year, Payoke was honoured with the visit of King Baudouin and his Head of Cabinet (Mr. Van Ypersele de Strihou) and State Secretary for Migration Paula D'Hondt. The widely publicized event led to an increase of support for Payoke in the Belgian Parliament and the years that followed saw a substantial increase of political attention. This increased political attention led to

the development of a legal framework that identified the crime of trafficking, established processes for supporting victims, created victim protection and assistance programmes, protected third country victims with issuance of residence permits, and allowed victims the opportunity to assist in prosecuting criminals and gain retribution. Our shelter, 'Asmodee,' the first in Belgium focused on assisting victims of trafficking, was established to provide female victims with secure temporary lodging and customized assistance programmes. Two more centres opened soon thereafter. Mechanisms were also put in place to coordinate actions of the key countertrafficking stakeholders, and interagency directives were issued to provide guidance on implementation measures.

In many respects, Payoke pioneered the movement to fight human trafficking. Before the pressures exerted by Payoke at different political levels, there was no will to fight human trafficking – the journey toward the current cooperative Counter-Trafficking Model has been a long and arduous one. In our 25+ years of existence, we have worked non-stop not only to support our clients but also to develop policy, but also to assist in developing a legal framework to support victims at the national and EU levels, and create models of cooperation to ensure proper identification and protection of victims and efficient prosecution of the traffickers.

INSIDE THIS MANUAL

INSPIRATION FOR DEVELOPING THE MANUAL

This manual came about as the result of an idea that the Director of Payoke, Patsy Sørensen, came up with upon return from one of her many international capacity-building missions. Over the past decade, Patsy has taken part in a number of different missions and projects to assist countries across the world in developing models for counter-trafficking. In her travels, she has introduced the Belgian Cooperation Model as well as the Payoke Victim Assistance Model and has provided training to various stakeholders on how to implement processes that work towards the greater protection of victims. In countries where these models have been introduced, Mrs. Sørensen has been inundated with requests to share information on how Payoke has evolved into the successful NGO it is today, and to provide advice on how to start and operate a shelter. She has observed that while a great deal of passion, motivation, and goodwill exists in the countries where initiatives are taking place, there are few practical resources available to support endeavours. Based on the observations and feedback received from her numerous trips and interactions with key counter-trafficking actors, Patsy has identified the need for a manual that focuses on the practical information required to start and run a shelter. This manual is the result. Payoke is pleased to apply its 25+ years of experience in the field of assistance and protection to victims of human trafficking to create this manual, pro-

viding newly established shelters (and those in the planning stages) some practical guidance on how to operate effectively, looking primarily at the needs of trafficked persons and the type of assistance required to support their protection.

THE MANUAL'S PURPOSE

This manual has been designed to assist you in gaining more knowledge on the basics of how to set up and operate a shelter for trafficked persons. It aims to allow you to learn about the processes and procedures for planning and implementing shelter operations through an approach that we hope is practical and useful. The practical aspect comes from our own experience and 'lessons learned' in this particular field. We hope that by sharing how we work with victims of trafficking in Belgium, we can answer some of your questions and provide some helpful advice, providing you a strong foundation for establishing a shelter or centre in your own country (and perhaps save you from making some of the same mistakes we made in our process of development!).

WHO THIS MANUAL IS MEANT FOR

This manual has been written primarily to support the needs of those people who will be creating, managing, operating, and/or working at a shelter for victims of trafficking. This includes those individuals who will work day-to-day in the shelter in direct contact with the victims (shelter managers, shelter coordinator, assistance providers, and case workers). It is assumed that the majority of these individuals will be either employed by non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or work in close collaboration with them. While it is this audience that we are primarily targeting, we also feel that parts of the manual will be of benefit to key partners of the shelter (medical personnel, social services staff members, government representatives, legal personnel, law enforcement, representatives of the legal/judicial process, and others), and encourage these partners to read this manual to learn more about how to provide appropriate assistance and protection to victims of human trafficking.

WHAT YOU WILL LEARN

This manual was written to assist you in establishing and operating a shelter for victims of human trafficking. The topics of the manual have been selected based on an analysis of the types of questions we have received in our many years of experience, visits to numerous shelters for trafficked persons around the world, comments provided by victims of trafficking in relation to assistance provided, and general guidelines on best practices for safety and security of victims of trafficking. The topics range from general to specific, so it is suggested that the manual be worked through from the first section through to the last section to gain the most from its design and approach; however, we also recognise that many of you have already had some experience working at a shelter, working with victims, and/or managing assistance-related projects or programmes. If this is the case, you may want to read through the Table of Contents and choose those sections that are of specific use to you.

In Section 2 ('Working with Trafficked Persons'), we give you an insider's view of what type of client you will be assisting. The section aims to help you gain a deeper understanding of who your clients will be, how they arrived at your shelter, what might have led to their being trafficked, and the type of people who are responsible for their exploitation. This section will also review some of the difficulties you may face, with some advice on how to overcome challenges.

Section 3 ('Planning for your Shelter') focuses on the work that needs to be done before setting up your shelter, specifically in relation to planning needs. We bring in the related experience we have had in establishing the shelter, 'Asmodee,' by way of example. We also introduce some practical advice on establishing partnerships and creating your referral network, which are both necessities for targeted responses. By the conclusion of the section, we hope that the foundational aspects of establishing a shelter will be laid and that this will prepare you for the 'day-to-day' requirements of operating a shelter.

Section 4 ('Identifying Victims of Trafficking – Interviews and Intake') focuses on your shelter's intake procedure for victims. We discuss the importance of early identification, your role in the process, and the difficulties surrounding victim identification. We also focus on your interviews with presumed victims and the skills required in conducting them effectively.

In Section 5 ('Operating your Shelter'), we work toward supporting you in making the shelter fully functional and operational. To do this, we provide an overview on what to do with victims of human trafficking once they are at the shelter. We review some of the issues your clients may be facing and the problems that may arise in communal living, and provide some guidance on how to create a comfort-

able living environment. We also focus on developing a structure for your clients as well as creating a structure for yourself.

Section 6 contains the description of a training programme for medical personnel. It is very important to provide training for healthcare professionals who are associated with your shelter in order to enable them to understand and address the specific needs of trafficked victims.

At the end of the manual, you will find the references and resources that were consulted in the development of this manual.