



Moving On.
**Family and Community
Reintegration Among
Indonesian Trafficking
Victims**

2017

Rebecca Surtees



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Cover photo: Sunrise over rice paddies a village in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

Photographs in this report illustrate various aspects of daily life in Indonesia. Unless stated otherwise, individuals in these photographs are not trafficking victims.

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This research is dedicated to our friends and colleagues: Mr. Fahrurrozi (*Solidaritas Buruh Migran Cianjur* or SBMC), Ms. Syarifah (Former Migrant Domestic Worker from Karawang, member of *Solidaritas Buruh Migran Karawang*), Ms. Reytha Kurnia Dewi (Social Worker, Ministry of Social Affairs), Mr. Aryudha Yalсандhi (RPTC staff, Tanjung Pinang Riau Island) and Ms. Anik Sulistyowati (Directorate of Social Rehabilitation for Victims of Trafficking and Victims of Violence, Ministry of Social Affairs). They have not only contributed to this research but have also worked tirelessly for many years to prevent and combat human trafficking in Indonesia.

Foreword from the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection

Assalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb. Greetings to all of us,

The criminal act of trafficking in persons is an act that seriously harms human values and human rights. Networks of traffickers operate in very veiled and covert ways as well as with rough and overt means of kidnapping or using violence. Women and children are particularly vulnerable to becoming victims of trafficking.

Rampant cases of trafficking in persons have encouraged the formulation of various policies, programs and activities in efforts to eradicate the criminal act of trafficking in persons in Indonesia. In addition, studies have been conducted to determine the causes of the increasing numbers of trafficking victims. Various factors suspected to lead to human trafficking include poverty, low education, lack of information, divorce and social problems. Therefore, awareness, care and cooperation of all parties are needed in order to eliminate human trafficking in Indonesia.

The handling of the criminal act of trafficking in persons commenced in 2002, with the enactment of Presidential Regulation No. 88/2002 on the National Action Plan for Eradication of the Criminal Act of Trafficking in Persons 2002-2007, followed by the National Action Plan for Eradication of the Criminal Act of Trafficking in Persons and Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children 2009-2014, and finally the National Action Plan for the Prevention and Handling of the Criminal Act of Trafficking in Persons 2015-2019. In addition, as part of the effort of prevention and handling of the criminal act of trafficking in persons, the Task Force on Prevention and Handling of the Criminal Act of Trafficking in Persons was established as mandated by Article 58 (paragraph 3) of the Law on the Eradication of The Criminal act of Trafficking in Persons (Number 21, Year 2007). The establishment of the Task Force on the Prevention and Handling of the Criminal Act of Trafficking in Persons was also reinforced through Presidential Regulation No. 69/2008, which established the Coordinating Minister for Human Development and Culture as the Chair and the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection as the Daily Chair of the Task Force.

Every witness and/or victim of trafficking is entitled to health rehabilitation services, social rehabilitation, legal aid, repatriation and social reintegration. Social reintegration and empowerment of trafficking victims are very important in preventing victims from falling back into the same situations that led to trafficking in the first place. This publication, *Moving On. Family and Community Reintegration Among Indonesian Trafficking Victims*, provides an overview of the experiences of the victims, survivors and families of trafficking victims who are living their lives after the traumatic events that have affected them. This publication is expected to give encouragement and understanding to increase efforts to prevent the criminal act of trafficking in persons and to support victims of human trafficking.

We greatly appreciate the role of NEXUS Institute in conducting research on human trafficking in Indonesia. We also thank and express our highest appreciation to the authors and contributors, especially to Rebecca Surtees for her work and careful attention to issues

related to the criminal act of trafficking in persons. Ms. Surtees has devoted her energy and thoughts to the writing of this publication. Hopefully *Moving On. Family and Community Reintegration Among Indonesian Trafficking Victims* can advance our common mission in realizing the protection of Indonesian women's rights, in particular victims of the criminal act of trafficking in persons.

Wassalamu'alaikum Wr. Wb

Jakarta, July 2017

Deputi Bidang Perlindungan Hak Perempuan



Vennetia R. Danes 

Foreword from the Ministry of Social Affairs

First of all, we are grateful to God the Glorified and Exalted for the blessing and grace for the result of this research. The research entitled *Moving On. Family and Community Reintegration Among Indonesian Trafficking Victims* has been successfully published by the NEXUS institute. We hope that this report will become a reference for inputs into program development in conducting reintegration for victims of trafficking in Indonesia. We acknowledge and appreciate NEXUS Institute for the many research reports and in-depth studies that it has conducted on the issue of human trafficking in Indonesia.

The report *Moving On. Family and Community Reintegration Among Indonesian Trafficking Victims* will hopefully provide guidance and be a resource for stakeholders, the national government, regional governments and the society at large in providing social reintegration assistance to victims of human trafficking.

With the publication of the report *Moving On. Family and Community Reintegration Among Indonesian Trafficking Victims*, we hope that service providers can provide the optimal level of reintegration assistance and with full commitment to trafficking victims in their work. We trust that all stakeholders involved in the reintegration of victims of trafficking will actively participate such that trafficking victims can be successfully reintegrated according to regulations, procedures and established standards.

Thus, our hope, may God always bless all of us. Amen



Dr. Sonny W. Manalu, MM
Director of Social Rehabilitation for Socially Disadvantaged and Victims of Trafficking, Ministry of Social Affairs
Jakarta, February 2017

Preface

Moving On. Family and Community Reintegration Among Indonesian Trafficking Victims is the final installment in our three-part research series that pioneers the use of longitudinal methods in the field of human trafficking research. With this series NEXUS has sought to introduce a broader and deeper perspective over time than is common for current research in this field. This research has involved more than 100 trafficked individuals – both men and women, including a number who were trafficked as children – as well as many family members and community members. Nearly 150 other key officials at all levels of government and civil society were also interviewed over three years. With this sweeping effort, the NEXUS Institute has begun to explore and weave together the broader contours of the lives of individuals and their families before and after trafficking.

The broader perspective of this research includes examining vulnerabilities, needs, life challenges and family and community dynamics in the lives of these individuals before they were trafficked. It explores how problems and challenges that existed before trafficking were accentuated by the experience of trafficking. And it presents how rescue, escape and returning home rarely, if ever, made those issues disappear and the complexity of family and community life after trafficking. There is great value in incorporating the fuller picture of these individuals' lives in the context of listening and learning to more comprehensively and effectively support their recovery and reintegration. The perspectives shared in this report, taken together, provide one of the most comprehensive and complexly interwoven pictures to date of what “home” can mean for the prospects of success or failure of recovery after trafficking.

For many years, officials around the world have condemned human trafficking, dedicated themselves to ending it and proclaimed their respective government's commitment to supporting the recovery of victims of trafficking by assisting and protecting and, ultimately, “reintegrating” those who have survived being trapped in modern slavery.

There has been some important progress – especially in the adoption of international and national anti-trafficking frameworks. In reality, however, implementation continues to lag and meaningful reintegration of trafficked victims has likely been the most overlooked area of engagement by governments around the world. Many countries do not differentiate in any meaningful way between the concepts of “return” and “reintegration”. As a result, “reintegration” typically means only that survivors return to their home communities. In most countries, the possibility of access to true long-term reintegration support is virtually

nonexistent. For most victims in many countries, there would be no reintegration if not for the loving and compassionate support of their families and communities.

This study explores the complex dynamics of the environment into which victims of trafficking return. It presents our research focusing on family and community members and describes the circumstances to which victims come back after their escape or rescue. Despite many daunting challenges upon return, it was often the support within families and communities that gave rise to resilience and this was an essential foundation for recovery and reintegration success.

But families are an uncertain and varying source of support. Certainly a well-considered policy supporting reintegration must incorporate the strengths of family and community support. However, the assumption that victims' families and communities will be able or willing to provide for all of the long-term assistance needs that arise in long-term recovery and reintegration is not a sound model for ensuring a nation's policy and humanitarian objectives toward victims of human trafficking.

There are many lessons to be learned here that have implications for understanding what help and support trafficking victims and their families may need. The picture formed by the many individuals interviewed for this research series provides compelling reasons to further study strategies for understanding and working with families and local communities to support their roles as providers of critical, although not exclusive, safety nets for victims. We hope that researchers will continue to expand this examination to other contexts and communities.

From our inception, our vision of our work at the NEXUS Institute has focused on contributing to the body of independent in-depth research and analysis on human trafficking for the purpose of supporting the development and implementation of more effective laws, policies and practices to combat human trafficking and to support victims of trafficking to recover and rebuild their lives. I believe that this work is true to this vision. I hope that you find this research is helpful to your understanding of human trafficking and that it will inspire committed innovative and impactful approaches to combat this pernicious crime and human rights violation and support those who have survived.

This field research was undertaken by NEXUS within the framework of a multi-year research project supported by the United States Department of State's Office to Monitor and Combat

Trafficking in Persons. I wish to thank everyone in that office and others at the United States Department of State who have supported this work.

I thank those who participated in this research in communities in Indonesia. We appreciate the courage that is required. This study would not have been possible without the willingness of so many survivors, family and community members and others to contribute to this work.

I also thank NEXUS' research team. The dedication of NEXUS' lead researcher Rebecca Surtees to expanding understanding about human trafficking and providing insights about the path to recovery for over twenty years – often on issues of first impression and at the cutting edge of knowledge about human trafficking – is remarkable and inspiring to those of us who work in this field to further discover and apply more effective and humane responses to the human toll of trafficking in persons. Any government looking to improve their programs of care and support for victims of trafficking in meaningful ways would be well-served to start by reviewing the knowledge, evidence and findings that can be found in the dozens of research reports that she has authored. Our entire research team – Thaufiek Zulbahary, Suarni Daeng Caya, Laura S. Johnson and Pattarin Wimolpitayarat – bring significant expertise and purpose to their work. This work has involved sacrifices by all of them and I can only say that I am immensely grateful that they have agreed to dedicate their talents to this work.

Victims who have survived trafficking are often remarkably strong, resourceful and resilient. Nevertheless, while some are able to rebuild their lives and thrive, many remain in a continuous process of partial success and setback. This series of research studies tells the stories of both. For all, there is a need for our greater understanding and collective commitment to support their challenging journey to move on through more nuanced, tailored and sustained assistance and care.

As always, I invite those who care about human trafficking and related issues and are interested in being part of seeking solutions to follow our work at www.NEXUSInstitute.net and @NEXUSInstitute. I also encourage you to look at NEXUS' photo essay associated with this research at <https://medium.com/@NEXUSInstitute>

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The project (*Protecting the Unassisted and Underserved. Evidence-Based Research on Assistance and Reintegration in Indonesia*) is generously funded by the U.S. Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP) and so our thanks begin here. We are thankful for J/TIP's support and dedication to enhanced reintegration efforts in Indonesia and globally.

Thanks are also due to the Government of Indonesia – namely, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection (*Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak*) and the Ministry of Social Affairs (*Kementerian Sosial Republik Indonesia*) – which have supported the research project from the outset, recognizing the importance of an enhanced reintegration response to better assist Indonesian trafficking victims, their families and communities. We have been grateful for the chance to work closely with both Ministries at national and local levels to improve reintegration work.

We are especially grateful to the many Indonesian men and women who participated in this research, sharing the successes and challenges they faced after trafficking as they sought to reintegrate into their families and communities. These were very personal (and often painful) experiences to relate and we are grateful for their willingness to speak with us about them. We are also grateful to victims' family members who generously gave their time to help us to understand what life is like after trafficking, not only for trafficked persons but also for their families. Victims' friends, neighbors and community members have also contributed to this study by sharing their experiences and insights on the complexity and sensitivities of reintegration after exploitation.

Thanks are also due to the many professionals working on victim assistance in Indonesia who were interviewed for this study, often on multiple occasions over the course of the project. Staff of the following government institutions were generous with their time, knowledge and expertise:

- *Kementerian Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Perlindungan Anak* (Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection of Indonesia), particularly *Bagian perlindungan korban perdagangan orang* (Victims of Trafficking Protection Unit) and *P2TP2A (Pusat Pelayanan Terpadu Perlindungan Perempuan dan Anak* or Integrated Service Center for Protection of Women and Children) in Sukabumi, Cianjur, Bogor and Jakarta.
- *Kementerian Sosial Republik Indonesia* (Ministry of Social Affairs), including: *Direktorat Rehabilitasi Sosial Tuna Sosial dan Korban Perdagangan Orang* (Directorate of Social Rehabilitation for the Socially Disadvantaged and Victims of Trafficking); *RPTC (Rumah Perlindungan dan Trauma Center or House of Protection and Trauma Center)* in Jakarta and Sukabumi; *Rumah Perlindungan Sosial Wanita* (Social Protection Home for Women); *Panti Sosial Bina Remaja* (Youth Center); *Panti Sosial Karya Wanita* (Social Homes for Women); *LK3 (Lembaga Konsultasi Kesejahteraan Keluarga* or Family Welfare Consultation) including *LK3 Kesuma* in Bogor and *LK3 Dinsos Sukabumi*; *Dinas Tenaga Kerja, Sosial dan Transmigrasi Kabupaten Bogor* (Social, Manpower and Transmigration Bureau of Bogor); *Dinas Sosial Kabupaten Sukabumi* (Social Bureau of Sukabumi); and *TKSK (Tenaga Kesejahteraan Sosial Kecamatan* or Voluntary Community Workers) of Ciawi of Bogor.

The following organizations also gave generously of their time and expertise, meeting with us and discussing issues and challenges faced by victims over the course of recovery and reintegration. Thanks to: *ATKI (Asosiasi Tenaga Kerja Indonesia* or Association of Indonesian Migrant Workers); *LBH Jakarta (Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Jakarta* or Jakarta Legal Aid Institute); *PBHI Jakarta (Perhimpunan Bantuan Hukum dan HAM Indonesia Jakarta* or Indonesian Legal Aid and Human Rights Association of Jakarta); *PBM (Peduli Buruh Migran* or Caring for Migrant Workers); *SBMI (Serikat Buruh Migran Indonesia* or Indonesian Migrant Workers Union) – including *SBMI DPN (Dewan Pimpinan Nasional* or National Board of SBMI, *SBMI DPW (Dewan Pimpinan Wilayah Jawa Barat* or Regional Board of West Java), *SBMI Cianjur*,

SBMI Sukabumi, SBMI Cirebon, SBMI Banyuwangi; FORWA (*Forum Wanita Afada* or Afada Women Forum) of Sukabumi; SBMC (*Solidaritas Buruh Migran Cianjur* or Migrant Workers Solidarity of Cianjur); SBMK (*Solidaritas Buruh Migran Karawang* or Migrant Workers Solidarity of Karawang); SP (*Solidaritas Perempuan* or Women's Solidarity for Human Rights); SPILN (*Serikat Pekerja Indonesia Luar Negeri* or Overseas Indonesian Workers Union); TIFA Foundation; Solidarity Center; ICMC (International Catholic Migration Commission); IOM (International Organization for Migration); AAPTIP (Australia-Asia Program to Combat Trafficking in Persons); Bandungwangi Foundation of Jakarta; Bahtera Foundation of Bandung; *Institut Perempuan* (Institute for Women) of Bandung; FWBMI (*Forum Warga Buruh Migran Indonesia* or Citizen's Forum of Indonesian Migrant Workers of Cirebon); WCC (Women's Crisis Center Balqis of Cirebon); *Yayasan Kusuma Bongas* of Indramayu; Jalin CIPANNAS of Indramayu; Kesuma Foundation; APSAKI (*Assosiasi Pekerja Sosial Anak dan Keluarga Indonesia* or Social Worker Association of Children and Family); Bandung College of Social Work; Societa Foundation; Migrant Institute; Migrant CARE; JBM (*Jaringan Buruh Migran* or Network of Migrant Workers).

In addition, some organizations and institutions were of great assistance in contacting and facilitating access to the trafficked persons who have generously participated in this research project. This support was integral to the success of the research and we extend our sincere gratitude to: Yayasan Bandungwangi Jakarta; Yayasan Bahtera Bandung; Institut Perempuan Bandung; FWBMI Cirebon; WCC Balqis Cirebon; Yayasan Kusuma Bongas Indramayu; Jalin CIPANNAS Indramayu; Dinsosnakertrans Kabupaten Bogor; TKSK Ciawi Bogor; SP; PBM; SPILN; SBMK; SBMC; IOM; SBMI DPN; SBMI Cianjur, SBMI Cirebon, SBMI Banyuwangi and SBMI Sukabumi.

This research project would not have been possible without the hard work, dedication and expertise of my colleagues at NEXUS Institute. Thaufiek Zulbahary and Suarni Daeng Caya conducted extensive field research over the course of this multi-year project, travelling across West Java to meet with and learn from trafficking victims, their families and their communities. We have also spent long hours together discussing and analyzing this information and both reviewed and provided feedback into this study at various stages of the drafting process. Laura S. Johnson has also been an essential member of the team. She has not only reviewed and provided invaluable feedback into this study throughout the drafting process but also designed and copy-edited the report and provided extensive support throughout. Pattarin Wimolpityarat was of great assistance in cleaning and coding the transcripts as well as other support tasks. Sheila Berman provided administrative and moral support throughout the project. Peter Biro's compelling photographs of daily life in communities Indonesia are another important contribution to this study and project. Thanks also to the translators, transcribers and assistants: Umi Farida, Gracia Asriningsih, Idaman Andarmosoko, Achmad Hasan, Santi Octaviani, Nur Yasni, Ilmi Suminar-Lashley, Elanvito, Ismira Lutfia Tisnadibrata, Ni Loh Gusti Madewanti, Ratih Islamiy Sukma, Susiladiharti, Nike Sudarman, Chandrasa Edhityas Sjamsudin, Yunda Rusman and Raymond Kusnadi. Finally, sincere thanks to Stephen Warnath, Founder, President and CEO of the NEXUS Institute, for his oversight of the project and his input and technical advice on all papers within this research series. We are grateful for his support and guidance throughout this complex project.

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Acronyms and abbreviations

IDR	Indonesian Rupiah
NGO	non-governmental organization
RT	Rukun Tetangga (harmonious neighborhood)
SMK	Sekolah Menengah Kejuruan (secondary vocational education)
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
UAE	United Arab Emirates
USD	United States Dollar

Executive Summary

1. Introduction

A trafficking victim's escape or exit from exploitation is a significant moment. It signals safety, freedom and a way back to one's life, family and community after months and even years of exploitation and abuse. But "moving on" from trafficking is not uncomplicated. Rather, it is, commonly, a complex, taxing and complicated process that involves significant challenges and setbacks along the way. This paper explores the different levels at which reintegration takes place – individual, family and community – and the (often different, sometimes contradictory) actions and reactions within families and communities over the course of recovery and reintegration. It also outlines some of the tensions, issues and challenges faced within family and community settings during reintegration, issues that are often multi-layered, mutually reinforcing and coterminous.

Tensions and issues within the family center around financial problems (no remittances and the burden of debt); being stressed and distressed following trafficking; feelings of shame and being blame; and damaged or destroyed personal relationships. Community tensions are tied to failed migration and not returning with money; criticism of victims' "ambition"; victims' stressed or "problematic" behavior once home; discrimination because of "unacceptable" behaviors (e.g. prostitution, pregnancy); and jealousy about victims being assisted. The study also identifies sites of resilience and support within the family and community, which support, bolster and galvanize reintegration success.

This paper is part of a research series of papers produced in the context of the NEXUS Institute's longitudinal research project *Protecting the Unassisted and Underserved. Evidence-Based Research on Assistance and Reintegration, Indonesia*, which aims to enhance the evidence base about successful reintegration of trafficked persons in Indonesia.

2. Research methodology

2.1 Methodology and data sources

This longitudinal research, conducted with 108 Indonesian trafficking victims, has five data sources as outlined below:

1. **Repeat interviews with trafficked persons** in Jakarta, West Java, Central Java, East Java and South Sulawesi. First round interviews were conducted with 108 victims (49 males, 59 females); second round interviews were conducted with 66 respondents (24 males, 42 females) approximately six to nine months after the first interview.
2. **Informal communication with 30 trafficked persons** between formal interviews - speaking by telephone, exchanging text messages and/or meeting informally during fieldwork. Informal communication was often on-going with these 33 respondents.
3. **Interviews with 34 family members of trafficking victims** (including spouses, parents, siblings, children, grandparents, aunts/uncles, nieces/nephews and in-laws) **and 31 friends/neighbors of trafficked persons**, to discuss how they experienced and coped with the trafficked individual's absence while trafficked, his/her return home and experiences and challenges during his/her process of recovery and reintegration.

4. **Participant observation in the family and community environment**, with the research team generally spending two of four weeks each month conducting community-based fieldwork. Interactions included informal conversations and discussions with individuals or groups, direct observation and participation in community events.
5. **Interviews with 144 key informants/stakeholders at the national, district, sub-district and village level** between October 2013 and April 2016, including representatives of the Indonesian government (32), national and international NGOs (97), international organizations (5), donors/embassies (4) and academics/researchers (6). Twenty-five (25) informants were interviewed more than once. Key informants included administrators, policy-makers, law enforcement, medical personnel, social workers, lawyers and paralegals, village chiefs, teachers/principals, trade unionists and migrant worker activists.

2.2 Research sample. About the respondents

Sex and age. Of 108 trafficking victims, 49 were male and 59 were female. Respondents were almost exclusively adults when interviewed, although two respondents were 17 years old. Twelve individuals were trafficked as children, but were adults when interviewed. Respondents ranged in age from 13 to 49 when trafficked. Age varied according to the form of exploitation. Women trafficked for sexual exploitation were generally much younger than victims of labor trafficking.

Education. Most respondents (n=65) had some level of elementary school (24 males, 31 females); 17 respondents attended junior high (7 males, 10 females); 20 respondents attended senior high school (13 males, 7 females) and five respondents attended vocational school.

Family situation. Most respondents (61 out of 108) were married when trafficked and had one or two children, although some had more. Thirty-one respondents were unmarried when trafficked and had no children, 14 were divorced or separated and two were widowed. However, trafficked persons' family situations changed after return from trafficking and over the course of the research project. Some had since married and had children (or more children); other marriages and families had dissolved. Some trafficked persons' marital status was in a state of flux during the project.

Area of origin and integration. Respondents originated from Jakarta (n=6), South Sulawesi (n=3), Central Java (n=15), East Java (n=1), Lampung (n=2) and seven districts in West Java (n=81), including Bandung (n=9), Bogor (n=5), Cianjur (n=11), Cirebon (n=11), Indramayu (n=16), Karawang (n=20) and Sukabumi (n=9). Most returned to live in their areas of origin after trafficking, although some were staying temporarily in Jakarta, permanently integrating in Jakarta and moving to new villages/communities in the province or district. Most respondents (102 of 108) were Sundanese (n=58) or Javanese (n=44).

Forms of trafficking. Victims were trafficked for sexual exploitation (n=20) as well as for different forms of forced labor (n=88), including construction (n=3), domestic work (n=39), fishing (n=32), factory work (n=4), work on plantations (n=8) and work in a cleaning service (n=2). Some suffered multiple forms of exploitation – most commonly women trafficked for labor were also sexually abused or exploited.

Country of exploitation. Respondents were trafficked within Indonesia (n=19) as well as abroad (n=86). Three individuals were first trafficked within Indonesia and then abroad. Those trafficked abroad were exploited in 17 destination countries including in the Middle East (n=28) – Bahrain, Jordan, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, UAE – and in Asia (n=35)

– Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan (Province of China). Most men trafficked for fishing (n=23) were trafficked in less common destinations such as Ghana, Mauritius, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay. Some victims were exploited in more than one destination.

2.3 Data analysis

All interviews and field-notes were cleaned, coded and entered into the qualitative data analysis software NVivo 10. Data was analyzed according to principles of thematic analysis and the research team worked collaboratively in the identification of critical themes and issues. Analysis was contemporaneous with data collection, allowing the team to follow up on issues and themes that arose during on-going fieldwork over time.

2.4 Ethical issues & considerations

Conducting research in communities was undertaken with the utmost care. We selected villages where we had relationships with authorities or civil society and worked together with them to identify possible respondents. Potential respondents were only approached if it was safe and ethical to do so. Respondents were first approached by an interlocutor (NGO staff, community leader, migrant worker activist, another migrant worker), who explained the study and also provided a written description of the study. They were then given time to decide whether to participate in the research. Respondents were, under no circumstances, persuaded or pressured to participate. Interviews were conducted in a location chosen by the respondent. Each interview began with a detailed process of informed consent, only after which the interview took place. Upon completion of each interview, the researcher gave respondents a written referral sheet with information about assistance options and also spent time explaining possible assistance options and how to access them. Compensation *per se* was not provided, to avoid pressuring respondents in ways that compromised informed consent. Instead we reimbursed costs associated with the respondent's involvement in the project – e.g. transportation costs and meals – and a small “gift” was given to each respondent to acknowledge and appreciate his/her important contribution to the project. Respondents were not immediately asked to participate in repeat interviews, but given time to reflect and decide about their subsequent participation. Researchers contacted respondents after several months to gauge their willingness to be re-interviewed and, if they agreed, the process detailed above was repeated. All interviews were strictly confidential; interview transcripts were shared only within the research team and secured according to NEXUS' internal data protection policies. This research was conducted in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection in Indonesia. It was overseen by a research reference group.

3. Supporting successful reintegration

3.1 What is reintegration?

Reintegration is the process of recovery and economic and social inclusion following a trafficking experience. Successful reintegration is often comprised of different components including living in a safe and secure environment, access to a reasonable standard of living, mental and physical well-being, opportunities for personal, social and economic development, and access to social and emotional support. There are specific considerations, which may, cumulatively, indicate that a trafficked person has successfully reintegrated. These center around different aspects of an individual's life and well-being as well as the broader family and social environment and may include: having a safe, satisfactory and affordable place to live; physical well-being; mental well-being; legal status; access to justice; safety and security; economic well-being; educational and training opportunities; healthy social environment and interpersonal relationships; and well-being of victims' families and dependents. Trafficked persons may reintegrate into different settings, depending upon individual needs, interests and opportunities, including in their home communities or a new

community. Reintegration also takes place at different levels – at an individual level; within the trafficked person’s family environment; within the wider community; and also within the overarching formal society.

3.2 What is reintegration assistance?

Comprehensive reintegration assistance includes the following services: housing or accommodation, medical assistance, psychological support and counseling, education and life skills, economic opportunities, legal and administrative support, legal support during legal proceedings, family mediation and counseling, case management and assistance to family members, if needed. Trafficking victims may require a single service (e.g. transportation, emergency medical care, job placement) or multiple services (e.g. a combination of housing, medical assistance, psychological care, legal support, education and vocational training). Services may be trafficking-specific – e.g. offered by anti-trafficking organizations and institutions – or they may be more general – e.g. offered by agencies/institutions working with vulnerable persons, returned migrants, community development, child protection.

Meaningful reintegration is a complex and costly undertaking, often requiring a full and diverse set of services for victims (and sometimes their families), who themselves have widely differing short- and long-term physical, psychological, social and economic needs. Once the immediate needs of trafficked persons have been met (e.g. emergency health needs, immediate protection and so on), many victims require assistance to reintegrate into their families and communities (e.g. vocational training, economic support, long-term access to healthcare, counseling, education, family mediation and so on). Because reintegration can take years to achieve, programs should provide a range of services and long-term case management.

Indonesian trafficking victims are exploited for different purposes (for sexual exploitation and different forms of forced labor) and their distinct experiences of exploitation inform the types and amount of services they may require, the time needed to recover and so on. Some trafficked persons need many, even all, of the services listed above at some stage of their reintegration after trafficking. Others require one or two services and are able to draw on their personal, family and community resources to support their reintegration. Not all trafficked persons will require reintegration services. And some trafficked persons will not want or need the services that are offered or available. Many trafficked persons reintegrate without any formal assistance, drawing on their personal, family and community resources. What services are required (if any) depend on the specific situation and needs of each trafficking victim.

4. About family and community in Indonesia

Supporting reintegration after a trafficking experience requires an understanding not only of what has happened to individual victims, but also the wider family and community dynamics. This, in turn, necessitates a finely grained understanding of family and community in Indonesia, including the various constellations to which Indonesian trafficking victims return and live as they move on with their lives. It is also helpful to situate where and why fault lines in family and community relations may emerge in life after trafficking and over the course of reintegration.

Roles and relationships within the family

Family is the central organizing structure of both Sundanese and Javanese societies. The nuclear family is the most important kin group in both cultures. Family members owe each other attention, care and various other mandatory obligations; neglecting familial obligations is a serious social infraction. Parents are at the center of the nuclear family and filial responsibility is critical to both Javanese and Sundanese. Children owe deference, obedience and respect to their parents. In daily life, not only are children expected to pay

deference and respect to their parents, but also to provide support and assistance, as needed. Mothers and fathers also have obligations vis-à-vis their children, whom they have to rear and protect. In Sundanese and Javanese cultures, the wife/mother is the center of the household and family. She controls the family finances, makes major decisions about household and family, is tasked with all aspects of child-rearing and deals with problems ranging from economic difficulties to more general family crises. A child's relationship with the mother is typically closer from birth and, over the course of life, mothers remain the primary caregivers and are primarily responsible for child-rearing and family life. A child's relationship with his/her father becomes more formal as the child ages. A Javanese and Sundanese father should receive "respect" from his children, which also implies a certain distance. This also implies the obligation on the part of the father to provide economically for his children. A mother and father's responsibility to support and raise their child(ren) is central to decision-making around migration, with children being a contributor, if not catalyst.

Gender roles and marital dynamics

Among both Sundanese and Javanese, the marital relationship is generally one of relative equality. While conjugal relations are not based on the wife's inferior status, men do occupy a relatively "higher" position in the marriage dyad. The husband/father is the head of the family and household head and the breadwinner. The woman is first and foremost responsible for the care of her family. While marriage is desirable in both Sundanese and Javanese cultures, separation and divorce are not uncommon in West Java. Remarriage is also commonplace.

Both women and men play important roles in the economic sphere – in both formal and informal income-earning activities or employment – and contribute to the household/family economy. Men are considered the primary breadwinner and head of the household and they are expected to support their family members. Male migration has been an aspect of income earning over the past decades, with men migrating for work within the country as well as for work in neighboring countries in Asia and further afield (e.g. for plantation work, construction, factory work, commercial fishing). Much male migration has been informal – for work in nearby Malaysia – although some sectors like fishing and factory work, and more distant destination countries, involve formal migration channels. Women's economic role is also accepted and encouraged. Women often have multiple tasks – i.e. taking care of the household and engaging in economic activities. Women's working role was further entrenched in the 1970s by state policies that encouraged women to join the wage-earning formal labor market and in the 1980s and 1990s, when the state began to promote transnational formal female labor migration.

Residence patterns and household composition

Residence patterns are largely governed by choice. That being said, "choice" is also linked with necessity and many couples live with the wife's parents before becoming economically and residentially independent. Javanese and Sundanese household composition is flexible and may include older members of the family (parents or parents-in-law), unmarried siblings or recently divorced relatives. There may also be fostering of another family member's children. This wider family framework offers potential for support as it extends the number of people one might rely for emotional (and financial support). But it may equally increase a victim's burden when he/she is responsible for caring for these extended kin.

Expectations within the extended family

Both Javanese and Sundanese follow a system of bilateral kinship. Social identity is derived from both parents; ancestors of both families are recognized as kin. There is some choice in relating to different kin and trafficked persons can potentially draw on both maternal and paternal family members for support and assistance.

There are two defined kin groups in Javanese culture – close relatives (first cousins) and distant relatives (second and third cousins). However, mandatory obligations towards relatives beyond the nuclear family are limited. The nature and intensity of relationships with close and distant relatives is fluid, practical and contextual. Close relatives living far apart may have little contact; distant relatives living close by may have intense relationships. Flexible family relations mean that some kin (close or distant) may provide support in times of crisis. Some victims turned to relatives for emotional and/or financial support in times of difficulty.

Social roles, obligations and expectations

Within Javanese society, the individual serves as a harmonious part of the family or group. The essence of being Javanese is to be civilized, to know one's manners and place in the world. Social interactions should be characterized by *rukun* (harmonious unity). Conflict should be avoided. While less hierarchical, Sundanese culture is similar in the desire for social harmony. Mutual cooperation (or *gotong royong*) is also a prominent characteristic in Sundanese and Javanese community life.

The “neighborhood” (*kampung*) is an important social grouping in both urban and rural settings in West Java. Membership in the *kampung* involves participation in mutual aid networks, self-identification with the local community and being identified by neighbors as being *of* rather than *in* the *kampung*. The *kampung* also offers an administration structure.

Social relationships within the community are not always homogeneous, compact and harmonious. Most *kampung* consist of a disparate collection of families and neighbors who may have competing interests. Social relations and support are also influenced by class dynamics and other social hierarchies. Moreover, while community (whether rural or urban) is still of great importance in daily life, the nature of community has changed and evolved over the past decades – triggered first by the economic and political transition following the fall of the Suharto regime in 1998 and since then by social and economic changes more widely, including decentralization, political reform, urbanization and globalization and global and local patterns of consumerism.

The trafficked persons interviewed for this study reintegrated in different community settings. Many went home to their home communities after trafficking, while others opted to integrate in new settings – in Jakarta, in other towns or in the home communities of their spouses. In all cases the primary community in which they functioned during reintegration was the neighborhood (*kampung*) and the social relationships and dynamics of the community impacted not only the immediate family environment, but also the individual trafficking victim's overall experience of reintegration.



5. Coming home. Experiences of family reintegration

Recovery and reintegration after trafficking involve not only individual trafficking victims, but also their family members and the family environment to which they return. Trafficked persons must recover and come to terms not only with the exploitation they have suffered, commonly involving multiple layers of violence, violation and hardship, but also the reactions and responses of their family members. Equally, trafficking victims' family members, who themselves have been directly and negatively affected by the victim's exploitation, must come to terms with all that their loved one has suffered, and also navigate, manage and ideally support the victim's return and reintegration, which is often fraught on many levels.

Family often provides important forms of support after trafficking – emotional, social, physical and economic – which contribute to an individual's reintegration success. At the

same time, the family environment also commonly involves vulnerabilities (and even destructiveness) that may work against recovery and reintegration. A victim's marital and family status have important implications for the viability and likelihood of reintegration and, in many cases, may account for at least some (if not many) of the "ups" and "downs" that he/she experiences in his/her post-trafficking life.

About family life

The family environment of respondents was diverse and highly complex, even, at times, contradictory. Indonesian trafficking victims returned and reintegrated into many different family and household constellations. In addition, some trafficked persons faced different reactions and responses from different people within the family. Reactions of family members – both supportive and unsupportive – were also often quite fluid, sometimes changing over time and in response to different events and situations.

The majority of respondents (61 of 108) were married and had a family of their own prior to trafficking. Most married respondents had one or two children, although some had more. Most returned to their nuclear families after their trafficking – to live with their spouses, children and also, at times, extended family members, most commonly parents and parents-in-law. Women trafficked for domestic work were more likely to be married when trafficked than women trafficked for sexual exploitation, aligning with the younger age of women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation. The majority of trafficked men (29 of 49) were married when trafficked. However, men trafficked for fishing were less likely to be married when compared with men trafficked for other forms of labor (on plantations, in factories, for cleaning services). Remarriage is relatively commonplace in Sundanese culture. A number of respondents were married on multiple occasions, including remarriage after divorce and remarriage after widowhood. Of the 61 individuals who were married when trafficked, six (all women trafficked for domestic work) were remarriages, having been divorced from their first husbands. Over the course of reintegration, 14 respondents remarried. Being married in many ways offered a supportive framework for reintegration, not least because it theoretically afforded victims support (financial and emotional) after trafficking, which, in turn, offered some time and space to recover and move on from exploitation. That being said, this assumes a safe and supportive family setting (with one's nuclear and/or extended family), which was not always the case. And married victims also had to consider and manage the needs and reactions of their family members, which also created additional pressure.

Thirty-one (of 108) respondents were unmarried when trafficked and had no children (19 males and twelve females). Most unmarried females were trafficked for sexual exploitation; most unmarried males were trafficked for fishing. Most returned to live with their parents during reintegration. Fourteen respondents (of 108) were divorced or separated when trafficked – 13 women (trafficked for domestic work and sexual exploitation) and one man. Being separated or divorced is generally without significant social stigma, although a number of (primarily female) respondents did speak about being looked down upon within families and communities as a consequence of their divorced status. An additional issue was the financial and emotional burden of separation/divorce (and single parenthood). Two respondents, both women trafficked for domestic work, were widows when trafficked. Widowhood involved many of the same vulnerabilities and pressures as divorce or separation, as widows largely bore their burdens alone including on-going grief over the loss of their spouse.

In some cases, marital status was more intricate and respondents lived in families with multiple marriages and complex family settings. In Indonesia, not all second marriages involve the dissolution of the first. Polygyny (a husband marrying more than one wife), while not common or socially normative, is nonetheless legal in Indonesia and was a feature in a number of victims' lives. Polygyny may introduce additional layers of complexities to the

process of family reintegration. In addition, infidelity in marriages was not uncommon, with eight women explaining that their husbands had been unfaithful while they were trafficked or after their return, and one man explaining that he planned to leave his wife because she had been unfaithful after his return from trafficking. It is likely that there were more instances of infidelity that did not come up in interviews due to the sensitive nature of this topic.

Changes in family life over time

Respondents' marital status and family composition were quite fluid and changed over the course of their lives – before migration, while trafficked and during reintegration. This was particularly the case for women. While 26 of the 39 women trafficked for domestic work were married when trafficked, this changed at later stages of their lives. Of five women who were divorced with children when trafficked for domestic work, four subsequently remarried within a year of returning to Indonesia. Two (of three) women who were unmarried when trafficked for domestic work married between one and three years after returning to Indonesia. Women trafficked for sexual exploitation also experienced fluidity in marital status over time. Of 20 women trafficked for sexual exploitation, six were married when trafficked. Two (of nine) women who were unmarried when trafficked then married, either while they were trafficked or after exit from trafficking. Pregnancy led to marriage for at least three women trafficked for sexual exploitation. Two (of five) women who were divorced with children when trafficked remarried over the course of reintegration. That being said, some women's situations remained the same over the course of their life after trafficking.

Trafficked men also experienced changes in marital status over time, although with less variation than women. Of 29 men who were married when trafficked, 26 remained married after trafficking. However, two (of 29) divorced or separated from their wives after returning home. And, in handful of other cases, men reported marital discord and problems that had the potential to lead to divorce. In some cases, it seemed possible that these marriages would not survive the pressure of trafficking and post-trafficking reintegration. Of the 19 men who were unmarried when trafficked, ten were still unmarried at the time of being interviewed. Eight men who were single when trafficked subsequently married over the course of their reintegration. However, not all marriages lasted.

Family environment and living arrangements after trafficking

In the majority of situations (65 of 108), trafficking victims returned to the same family environment as when they migrated/were trafficked. Married respondents often returned to live in a nuclear family setting – with a spouse and children. Many married respondents, though, lived in more extended family settings, with parents or parents-in-law also in the same household. In some cases, their parents or parents-in-law lived with them. But, more commonly, victims lived in the homes of their parents or parents-in-law, which typically involved different (and often more complicated) living arrangements.

Those who were unmarried commonly lived with their parents after return or, less commonly, on their own. Some unmarried victims lived with their extended family members, including siblings, aunts and uncles and grandparents. Some trafficked persons were single parents, due to divorce or widowhood, and lived with their children and with extended family or in-laws (usually parents or parents-in-law). Some trafficked persons were widowed or divorced and lived alone after trafficking. Some lived with small children whom they were raising alone. Others had adult children who either lived with them (sometimes along with their spouses and children) or lived elsewhere and the respondent lived alone. Some respondents did not return to live with their families at all.

Even when respondents returned to the same family environments where they had been living before trafficking, the family environment itself often changed over time, such as with an elderly parent moving in, getting married and having a spouse move in, having additional

children, a spouse leaving/migrating for work, caring for extended family and so on. These different arrangements directly informed and influenced life after trafficking and reintegration patterns and outcomes. Family composition and residential patterns often changed at various stages of reintegration, not least in response to changes in victims' marital status.

There is a wide range of family members who may be involved, to varying degrees, in the reintegration process, including at different stages, and the family environment is often a complex terrain with different layers of support and tensions. Even within any one family setting, different family members manifested various (and often contradictory) actions and reactions, attitudes and behaviors, especially over time and in response to external factors. Some family members were supportive and helpful; others were critical and unsupportive. All of these factors and variations differentially influenced reintegration outcomes for victims and their wider families – sometimes positively, sometimes negatively.

5.1 Supportive family environment

Family was, for almost all victims, the primary source of support after trafficking. Returning to family was most victims' preferred choice. But it was also a function of necessity – i.e. the general lack of services and support, including the limited reach of services and support at a local, community level.

Many respondents found that family generally was a safe, supportive and protective environment. They came from happy and healthy family settings before being trafficked and returned also to a generally positive family environment. Coming home was, in these cases, an emotional but happy time. Both trafficked persons and their family members described feelings of relief, joy and gratitude. In addition to emotional support, victims were also often able to rely on family for more tangible support and assistance, including a place to live, food and money, help in caring for their children and dependents and so on. Even relationships that were (or might have been) damaged during trafficking could, in some situations, be repaired.

5.2 Tensions, strains and challenges in the family setting

Even in positive family settings, reintegration was not uncomplicated and initial feelings of relief and happiness often gave way in the face of different stresses and pressures that emerged over time. Trafficked persons and their families experienced strain and tensions on different levels and in relation to various factors. In more complex families, trafficking victims often returned home to profoundly unsupportive settings. Tensions and problems that preceded trafficking (and may have contributed to the decision to migrate) were unresolved and trafficking introduced an additional layer of tension. Tensions were created by: financial problems in the family; conflict between victim and family; shame and blame; and damaged or destroyed relationships.

5.2.1 Financial problems in the family. The cost of migration to victims and their families

No remittances and the burden of debt

The most outwardly visible source of tension within families after trafficking victims returned home was related to financial and economic problems because they had not remitted money while trafficked nor come home with money. A small number of trafficking victims were able to remit or return home with some money, which eased at least the immediacy of financial issues. But any amount was far less than was promised to and expected by their families, either because victims had been paid a different amount than agreed in a contract or because they had their salaries largely withheld.

Debt also caused or contributed to tension within families. Some victims (or their family members) were in debt prior to migration and they migrated to repay this debt. Further, most trafficking victims incurred debt as part of their migration or to pay for transportation home. Some respondents owed money to family members who looked after children left behind. Some trafficking victims went into debt after trafficking, borrowing money when they were unable to work, due to injuries or illness induced by trafficking or lack of work in the community.

Trafficking victims' feelings and reactions to financial pressures

Trafficked persons expressed their dismay, frustration and disappointment at returning home without any money, often having worsened the family's financial situation. Some trafficking victims were divorced, separated or widowed, which meant that they had even less of a support system after their failed migration. For many divorced female respondents, ex-husbands had not supported their children during their absence or after return. Many victims described frustration and disappointment at how failed migration undermined their relationships with their children. Not being able to earn and remit money to one's family because of having been trafficked meant "failing" in that parental/spousal role.

Actions and reactions of family members

Failure to remit or return with money was a source of stress for family members who were left behind. Although grateful and happy about the return of their loved ones, there was often an overlay of concern and tension related to victims having come home with no money. Some trafficked persons described a great deal of pressure from family members due to having returned home without money, which influenced relations over time. Where debt was involved, this added an additional layer of stress. Not all family members behaved in the same way. Trafficked persons often faced both supportive and unsupportive family members in the face of these economic problems. Family reactions were not only about the trafficking victim failing in terms of the economic situation as a result of trafficking, but also about the family member's own inability to assist when a trafficked family member returned home.

Financial concerns were not always a primary source of tension, even in dire economic situations. In some cases, trafficked persons were supported and encouraged in by family members, whether parents, siblings, spouses, children or aunts and uncles. Some trafficking victims received financial help from different family members, which was of critical importance in their ability to move on from trafficking.

5.2.2 Stressed and distressed. Tensions and conflict between victims and family

Sources of stress and distress borne of trafficking exploitation

Indonesian trafficking victims, regardless of forms of exploitation, returned home in difficult circumstances. They were mentally and physically unwell as a consequence of what they endured, including poor living conditions, inadequate food and water, dangerous and hazardous working conditions, prolific violence and abuse and/or lack of medical care.

Living conditions for most trafficked persons were inadequate and substandard while trafficked. Trafficking victims lived in unhygienic and deplorable conditions for months and even years. Living quarters were often attached to the workplace, limiting options for free movement and contact with others. Victims generally received poor quality and insufficient food and, in some cases, limited access to drinking water. Without exception, trafficking victims (both male and female) were overworked, often inhumanely so. Indonesian trafficking victims were not provided with materials or equipment needed for their work, including appropriate work clothes and protective equipment. Violence and abuse were commonplace for the vast majority of trafficking victims. This included physical, psychological and sexual violence, inflicted on male and female victims. Many trafficking

victims suffered multiple forms of violence over the course of their exploitation, sometimes at the hands of more than one person. Violence and abuse often resulted in injuries or illness. Many victims were psychologically impacted, even traumatized, by trafficking – becoming stressed, anxious and depressed. Trafficking severely and negatively impacted the well-being of returned trafficking victims, both immediately and also in the longer-term.

Actions, reactions and behaviors of trafficking victims

Being mentally and physically unwell informed victims' behaviors and reactions, which, in turn, impacted relations with family members. A number of trafficked persons reported feeling anxious and irritable after return and over a period of time during reintegration. Other trafficking victims described being stressed or depressed at various stages of reintegration. Such behaviors were often difficult for family members to understand, accept and tolerate, particularly over the longer-term.

Sources of stress and distress among victims' family members

There were multiple sources of stress for the families of trafficking victims. Many family members struggled to come to terms with the knowledge of all that their loved ones had suffered while exploited. Another source of stress was victims' sometimes unstable or stressed behaviors during reintegration. And because family members often did not know the full story of what had happened while the individual was trafficked, it was often difficult for them to make sense of victims' behaviors, especially when behaviors continued for long periods after return. Family members were also affected by what the victim's absence meant in their lives, including economic problems and lack of contact for long periods. In some cases, victims whose initial relations were fraught with stress and distress reported improvements over time.

5.2.3 Feeling ashamed and being blamed. Responsibility and culpability between victims and families

Victims' feelings of shame, guilt and responsibility

Trafficked persons commonly expressed feelings of shame and guilt at return and over the course of reintegration. Some were ashamed at having failed at migration, coming home empty-handed or even in further debt. Victims – both men and women – were ashamed for being unable to support and care for family members, especially children. Victims were also ashamed to have failed in their filial responsibilities – to help parents and to care for them as they age. Feelings of shame and guilt were also, at times, a function of what their families – especially spouses and children – had suffered while victims were away and commonly out of communication. Shame played a role in some victims' decisions not to reveal the full nature or extent of their trafficking experiences to family members. Some felt ashamed of their migration “failure”, which they worried would lower them in the eyes of those they loved. Some trafficking victims also feared that they would be looked down upon and blamed for things that happened while trafficked – having been raped, beaten, humiliated and seemingly unable to look after themselves. Blame sometimes played out in the reverse, including trafficking victims being upset with family members – for example, when family was involved in the victim's trafficking. Some trafficked persons expressed frustration with family who did not hold up their end of the migration agreement – to care for the children left behind or to spend remittances in a responsible way.

Being blamed. Accusations and recrimination from family members

Many trafficked persons were blamed by their family members, in part or to degrees, for different reasons. One source of blame was for not having succeeded at migration, leading to reproach and accusations from different family members, including parents, spouses, children and siblings. Some blame was because of the burden that failed migration (i.e. trafficking) placed on family members. Other sources of blame included spouses and children who felt abandoned or neglected during the trafficking victim's absence. Parents,

particularly mothers, were blamed and rejected by their children who experienced their absence as abandonment and neglect. In some cases, family members were upset with the trafficking victims for being gone during challenging times for the family, such as during illness or death. Women trafficked for sexual exploitation faced blame for their involvement (albeit forced) in prostitution. Some men trafficked for labor were accused of having frivolously spent their money abroad.

However, blame was not inevitable and a number of returning trafficking victims described their families' fatalistic acceptance of their bad experiences and a general lack of blame. Even when victims suffered blame in their families at the outset, these situations were not irreparable. Negative reactions from family members often changed over time. Initial recriminations often gave way to some level of acceptance, at least within different segments of the family and to degrees.

5.2.4 Relationships were damaged or destroyed. Managing fissures and fractures

Causes of fissures and fractures

Indonesian trafficking victims were away from home and family for long periods of time – from a few months to several years – often with little or no contact with their family members. In some cases, victims continued to suffer separation from their family members even after they had escaped from or exited trafficking – e.g. during detention abroad. Opportunities for contact in these situations were also very limited (often only a call prior to their return home and sometimes not even that). Some victims also had limited contact and communication with family members after they had returned home either because they needed to work away from their families (in another city, province or country) or because they were pursuing a case against their traffickers and staying in the place where the legal case was being handled. Trafficking separations, compounded by lack of communication and contact, led to fissures and fractures in family relationships. Many family relationships were disrupted and even destroyed as a result of trafficking separation and distances. Problems in the family environment before trafficking also meant that some “reunions” were especially difficult and more prone toward family fractures.

Disrupted parent/child relations

One of the main “casualties” of trafficking in many victims' lives was in their relationships with their children. Trafficking prevented them from being a part of the early lives of their children; some victims returned home to children who barely knew them. Some children had also developed negative feelings towards a trafficked parent as a consequence of what they were told by others during his or her absence. Parental absence affects children's well-being and, in many cases, disrupts their support network. This is especially the case for trafficked mothers as mothers are typically the main sources of emotional support for Indonesian children.

Marriages were damaged and destroyed

Tensions and problems emerged in many marriages during a victims' absence. In some instances, these were “minor” and predictable tensions related to financial issues, being ashamed and blamed and being stressed and distressed. However, in some cases relationships with spouses were disrupted and even destroyed during trafficking absences. Infidelity was a not uncommon problem faced by trafficked women. Some women were abandoned or divorced by their husbands while trafficked. Trafficked men also experienced disruptions in and destruction of their marriages as a consequence of trafficking. Most commonly, marital problems were a function of an inability to remit money while away, bring money upon return and/or support the family after return. Another important factor in marital problems was failing to stay in touch with family while exploited. In some cases,

domestic violence was an issue within marriages after trafficking and at various stages of reintegration.

Damage to marriages was not easily resolved and many victims described the on-going problems in their marriage as one of, if not the most, pressing issue over the course of reintegration. Some marriages collapsed over time, under the weight of financial and interpersonal pressures. Twenty of the 108 respondents had separated or divorced since being trafficked and/or since returning from trafficking. Several others described marital discord and problems that had the potential to lead to divorce.

Tension in the immediate and extended family

Some family members were a key source of support. Others, in difficulties, presented additional conflict and problems. This included parents (and parents-in-law), siblings, aunts and uncles, grandparents as well as a range of other close and distant relatives. Victims also described fractures and fissures in many of these relationships.

A number of victims migrated to help and support their adult parents and their failed migration was a source of tension with their parents. Many parents of trafficking victims had cared for their grandchildren, with the understanding that their children would remit money for the grandchildren and return with money to improve the family situation. Failure to do so was a source of strain, the degree of which varied by family.

This was further complicated when failed migration meant that adult parents had to support their child/trafficking victim and commonly also the victim's spouse and children after return. A victim returning home with a child or children born of trafficking was another source of stress in the wider family. Many victims also described tension with various members of their family-in-law. In some cases, family tragedy occurred while trafficking victims were away, having a devastating impact on the individual and the wider family environment. In some cases, family members were involved and complicit in the individual's trafficking, which made for a complicated (and potentially unsafe) situation during reintegration.

5.2.5 Multiple issues, tensions and vulnerabilities within the family

The challenges and vulnerabilities discussed above are seldom self-standing. Trafficked persons and their families faced many, most and sometimes all of these issues and tensions, to different degrees and at different stages. That is, financial difficulties commonly created or increased conflict and tensions within the family, including feelings of shame and blame, as well as fractured relationships. Being physically or psychologically unwell often meant being unable to work, which amplified economic problems, as well as issues of stress and blame within the family. Issues and tensions were most commonly mutually reinforcing and coterminous and victims and their families struggled on many levels in moving on from trafficking.

5.3 Different reactions within the family – supportive and unsupportive, positive and negative

Family is not a homogeneous unit; family members reacted differently to trafficking victims at return and over the course of reintegration. Some respondents found "home" to be both supportive and unsupportive, healthy and destructive, positive and negative. Not only did individual family members react differently to the trafficked person's return, but reactions also changed over time. Overall, trafficked persons described a wide range of family environments following trafficking. For many trafficked persons, family was an important foundation for successful reintegration, with family members providing emotional, social and/or economic support. Other respondents described unhealthy and negative (sometimes even dangerous) family relationships, which challenged reintegration. And some trafficked

persons faced mixed reactions from different family members, which were fluid and changed over time.



6. At home. Experiences of community reintegration

The community environment is an important factor in and feature of the reintegration process. The community includes any number of individuals of varying degrees of intimacy and distance to the trafficking victim – friends, acquaintances, neighbors, peers, work colleagues, community leaders and so on. Whether returning to the home community or settling into a new community setting, reintegration is directly impacted by the wider socio-cultural environment in which victims live over time. And, as with family, the community setting can be a complex and contradictory environment, which is both supportive and unsupportive and entails different (even contradictory) reactions from friends, neighbors and others, including changes over time.

About community life

The community environments in which trafficking victims lived after trafficking differed substantially. Some victims returned to live in their home communities; others integrated in new communities. And some victims moved between different community settings at different stages of reintegration, based on changes and developments in their lives.

Many victims (79 of 108) reintegrated in their home communities, returning to the same or similar living arrangements as when they were trafficked. By contrast, some victims (29 of 108) integrated in “new communities”. However, this meant different things in different victims’ lives. In some cases, integration in a new community was only temporary. In the other cases (18 out of 29), victims were living permanently in a new community, having settled there after trafficking. In a handful of cases (7 of 29) this was integration in a community setting where they were exploited, most commonly women who had been trafficked for prostitution in Jakarta and had since remained in the capital city. Other victims (8 of 29) integrated in a new community with a spouse, living with his or her family. In some situations, this meant moving quite far from their home communities (and support networks) including to villages in different and sometimes quite distant provinces. In still other instances (3 of 29), victims integrated in entirely new areas after being trafficked, locations where they had no connections.

Some individuals eventually moved from new communities back to their home communities. Others who had been reintegrating in their home communities later moved to new communities for work or due to marriage. Living situations were fluid over time and some victims moved multiple times over the course of interviews.

About community life over time

Some living arrangements changed over time and in response to evolving (or deteriorating) family situations. For example, two women who initially lived in their home communities subsequently integrated in their husbands’ communities and then, after divorcing from their husbands, returned again to their home communities. In addition, some respondents had longer-term plans to move their households.

An important factor in many victims’ reintegration success is having support within the community. In some situations, the community setting was a constructive and supportive setting, which offered fertile ground and opportunity for recovery and reintegration. In other cases, victims were exposed to discrimination, exclusion, vulnerability and structural inequality in their community environments. At the same time, the reaction of community was often uneven and trafficking victims described different reactions from different friends, neighbors and community members. The nature of community impacted how trafficking

victims were (or were not) received. Some communities were close, cohesive and supportive, others were not. Some victims had long-standing relationships within their communities, others were new to the area.

6.1 Supportive communities

Many victims described a positive reception and a supportive community setting when they returned home from trafficking and moved on with their lives. Trafficking victims described receiving reassurance and encouragement; pity and sympathy; support and kindness; and overall acceptance from friends, neighbors, peers and community members. Some friends and neighbors offered tangible support, including financial support, food and basic needs and assistance in finding work. A supportive community was more common among those who were trafficked for labor and less common among those trafficked for sexual exploitation. In some cases, this was because a woman's involvement in prostitution was known in the community where she lived and she was looked down upon as a consequence. It was also, arguably, because many women trafficked for sexual exploitation integrated into new communities and, therefore, could not rely on existing contacts and relations with friends and neighbors.

6.2 Tensions, issues and challenges within communities

While some trafficking victims found support in their communities, this was not always the case. Many trafficking victims felt uncomfortable, stressed and even ashamed in the wider community because of their exploitation and failed migration. In a number of cases, shame and discomfort were a function of how victims themselves felt rather than judgments or critiques from friends, neighbors or community members. Shame was particularly acute when others in the community had migrated successfully. However, some victims were ashamed, embarrassed and uncomfortable because of how they were treated in their communities at return and during reintegration. Many victims faced gossip, discrimination, criticism and censure. There were different triggers for these negative reactions and attitudes, including: failed migration and not returning with money; criticism for being "ambitious"; reactions to stressed or "problematic" behavior at home; discrimination because of "unacceptable" behavior (e.g. prostitution, pregnancy); and jealousy about being assisted.

6.2.1 Not returning with money; failed migration; not being "successful"

A number of trafficking victims were criticized and gossiped about because of their failed migration, for not having returned home with money nor having remitted money while abroad. In some cases, "failed migration" (i.e. trafficking) led to unfair and untrue accusations from friends and neighbors – e.g. that they had squandered their salaries on themselves while abroad or that they had not worked hard. Failed migration also meant that victims/migrants were unable to realize their social obligations within the community – e.g. to bring gifts for friends and neighbors or loan (or sometimes give) money from their earnings. Many trafficking victims did not reveal that they had been exploited (or the full extent of their exploitation) to friends and neighbors, which led to miscommunication and misunderstanding. Negative responses from community members not only impacted victims' mental well-being, but also influenced their decision of where to live and what to do after trafficking.

6.2.2 Criticized for ambition, "aiming too high"

Another source of tension was what was perceived as the individual's "ambition" – i.e. "aiming too high", wanting too much, not being satisfied with what they had (not appreciating life in the village). Even in situations when the trafficking victim had suffered a great deal, he/she was still sometimes exposed to such criticism.

6.2.3 Because of stressed or “problematic” behavior at home

Many trafficked persons returned home stressed, anxious, depressed and generally unwell. Many were also stressed and depressed for some time after their return – months and even years. This often led trafficked persons to behave and react in stressed ways, behaviors and actions that were a source of gossip and criticism among neighbors and friends. This type of criticism was especially likely to be the case when community members did not know what had happened to victims and many victims chose not to share their stories with their families, let alone within the community. This meant that friends and neighbors did not always understand why the individual was behaving in erratic and stressed manner, leading to misunderstanding and also maltreatment.

6.2.4 Discrimination because of “unacceptable” behavior - prostitution, pregnancy, being arrested

Some victims were subjected to discrimination and censure because of things they had been forced to do while trafficked. Women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation often faced discrimination, as well as harassment and abuse, within their communities because of their involvement in prostitution. Blame was levied at sexually exploited women and girls even when the forced nature of their prostitution was known by community members. Trafficking victims also suffered discrimination and criticism because of things that occurred while they were trafficked – e.g. rape, pregnancy out of wedlock. Victims were also discriminated against as criminals when they were arrested and detained as irregular migrants.

6.2.5 Jealousy about being assisted

Some victims described problems because community members were jealous that they had been assisted over the course of their reintegration. In other cases, victims described how others in the community resented them being able to buy or afford things that they could not and “doing well” when they themselves were not doing as well.

6.2.6 Multiple sources of tension and issues within the community

In some instances, issues and tensions between victims and community members were multiple, coterminous and mutually reinforcing. Community gossip and censure severely impacted some relationships with community members when individuals were regularly and over a long period of time exposed to negative stories.

6.3 Different reactions – some positive, some negative

In many communities, reactions to and treatment of trafficked persons during reintegration differed from person to person. Some friends and neighbors were a source of support or comfort to victims, while others gossiped, criticized and discriminated against them. Some respondents faced mixed reactions within their communities – receiving support and understanding from some friends and neighbors, but not others. Even in the midst of an overall negative response within the community, it was often possible to find someone (or some people) who were supportive. In a number of instances, community reactions changed over time. But time did not inevitably lead to an improvement in community relations for victims.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

Indonesian trafficking victims bore substantial scars and burdens from their exploitation – physical, psychological, economic, emotional – and often struggled to recover and move on after trafficking. They also returned to face pre-existing problems and vulnerabilities in their lives and families, which they had hoped to address or alleviate through their migration. Reintegration policies and programs should address the wide range of victims’ needs and vulnerabilities. But it is insufficient to consider reintegration after trafficking only from the perspective of individual trafficking victims. Reintegration takes place within a wider social field of family and community. It involves often very many different family and community

members, each of whom has the potential to (positively or negatively) influence and impact the recovery and reintegration of trafficking victims.

The family is a key factor in either the success or failure of a trafficking victim's reintegration. In addition to managing their own individual challenges, trafficked persons must navigate and manage the reactions and responses of their various family members when they return from trafficking and also family reactions and responses over time. Trafficking exploitation took a heavy toll on the families of Indonesian trafficking victims – their children, spouses, parents, siblings and relatives. Equally important is to take into account the social environment into which trafficked persons reintegrate or integrate. Whether returning to their home communities or settling into a new community setting, reintegration was directly impacted by the wider socio-cultural environment in which victims lived over time. And, as with family, the community setting was a complex and contradictory environment, both supportive and unsupportive and involved different (sometimes contradictory) reactions from friends, neighbors and others, including those that changed over time.

The many challenges and vulnerabilities in the family and community settings were seldom self-standing. Trafficked persons and their families faced many, most and sometimes all of the issues and tensions discussed, to different degrees and at different stages. At the same time, in addition to tensions, issues and challenges faced within the family and community settings, there were also significant sites of resilience and support, which supported, bolstered and galvanized victims' recovery and reintegration. This is a significant finding in a setting where so many victims are unidentified and unassisted and indicates a great need to identify and replicate indigenous and informal forms of support and assistance.

These findings highlight the need to better understand the complex and contradictory family and community environments to which trafficked persons return when designing and implementing reintegration (and all protection) interventions. Identifying and disentangling common points of tension and resilience help us to better understand reintegration within families and communities after a trafficking experience. Taking into account family dynamics and community relationships in the design of reintegration responses can contribute substantially to more efficient and appropriate assistance and protection. Failure to take the trafficking victim and the family and community into account in any discussion or intervention misses an important, arguably pivotal, factor in the reintegration process and the likelihood of its success. The following recommendations are aimed at improving reintegration policy and programs for trafficking victims and are offered to practitioners and policymakers to support their work with victims and their families to “move on” from trafficking.



Recommendations for supporting individual trafficking victims

- Offer long-term, comprehensive assistance programs aimed at reintegration.
- Offer assistance to meet all of victims' needs and address all vulnerabilities.
- Offer assistance to all trafficking victims.
- Enhance victims' access to services at a village level.
- Ensure that trafficking-specific needs are identified and addressed.
- Increase the role and competency of social workers at a local level.
- Protect victims' rights when assisting family members.



Recommendations for work with trafficking victims' families

- Identify the impact of trafficking on victims' families.
- Include trafficking victim's family members in the provision of assistance.
- Understand and accommodate the family setting in all reintegration work.
- Offer opportunities for family mediation and counselling.
- Provide assistance that takes into account the various needs and situations of victims (with their different families, constellations and needs).



Recommendations for enhancing reintegration of trafficking victims within their communities

- Recognize and accommodate community dynamics in reintegration programs and policies.
- Sensitize community leaders to the issue of trafficking, including all forms of trafficking and all types of victims, and the rights/needs of victims.
- Work with community leaders in the identification and referral of trafficking victims.
- Address discrimination, marginalization and stigmatization as part of reintegration efforts in communities.
- Identify different causes of community tension, stigma and discrimination for different victims, forms of trafficking and in different settings.
- Offer assistance that is not visible within the community.

1. Introduction

For trafficking victims, the moment of escape or exit from their situation of exploitation is a significant one. After months and even years of exploitation and abuse, it signals safety, freedom and a way back to one's life, family and community. Many trafficked persons described this period as one of relief, gratitude, happiness and excitement. As one woman, trafficked for domestic work, put it: "I thanked God that I could go home... I was so happy in my heart. I was certain that I could meet my children and my family. That was all. Hopefully I could go home to meet my children. I kept praying for that". Said another trafficking victim: "*Alhamdulillah*¹ [thank God], I met my family and I was back in my homeland. I was so glad to return that I did not even eat on the plane. I wanted to see my children and my parents... I was just too happy".

But "moving on" from trafficking is not uncomplicated. Rather, it is, most commonly, a complex, taxing and complicated process that involves significant challenges and setbacks along the way. This is because of the different levels at which reintegration² takes place – individual, family and community – and the (often different, sometimes contradictory) actions and reactions within families and communities over the course of trafficking victims' recovery and reintegration.

At an individual level, trafficked persons must recover from and come to terms with their trafficking exploitation, which has commonly involved multiple layers of violence, abuse, maltreatment and trauma, as well as economic hardship and insecurity. They must also come to terms with any pre-existing problems and issues in their lives that may have contributed to or even directly led to their trafficking exploitation – for example, financial issues and debt, poor physical or mental health, lack of education, constrained economic opportunities, legal issues, conflict or abuse in personal relationships and so on. Moreover, trafficking victims must find the means of "moving on" from trafficking to be able to recover and reintegrate into their lives, families and communities.

But reintegration after trafficking does not happen in isolation. It takes place within a wider social field of family and community. It often involves many different family and community members, each of whom has the potential to (positively or negatively) influence and impact the recovery and reintegration of trafficking victims.

The family environment, to which many trafficked persons return and into which they commonly seek to reintegrate, is a key factor in either the success or failure of a trafficking victim's reintegration. In addition to managing their own individual challenges, trafficked persons must navigate and manage the reactions and responses of their various family members when they return from trafficking as well as family reactions over time. Family members have also been deeply affected by the trafficking of their loved one and, moreover, are often struggling to come to terms with how the victim's trafficking has impacted their own lives. Family members may play different (and sometimes conflicting) roles in either supporting or undermining a victim's reintegration and may further behave differently over time and in response to different issues and factors.

¹ An Arabic expression meaning "thanks be to God", which is frequently used by Muslims due to its centrality to the texts of the Qur'an and the words of the Islamic prophet, Muhammad. It is an expression commonly used in Indonesia, among Muslims.

² The specifics of reintegration vary for each individual. Trafficked persons may reintegrate into different settings, depending upon their individual needs, interests, opportunities and situations. Some trafficking victims reintegrate into their home communities, while others integrate in a new community or a new country. This study focuses on the reintegration of trafficking victims who have returned to Indonesia (or who were trafficked within Indonesia) and who are reintegrating in their home communities or integrating in a new community.

Equally important is the community environment into which trafficked persons reintegrate or integrate. This social sphere includes friends, neighbors, peers and other persons within the community. It includes those close to and intimately involved in the lives of a trafficking victim as well as those within the victim's wider social spheres. Whether returning to the home community or settling into a new community setting, reintegration is directly impacted by the wider socio-cultural environment in which victims live over time. And, as with family, the community setting can be a complex environment, which is both supportive and unsupportive and entails different (even contradictory) reactions from friends, neighbors and others, including changes over time.

This study explores the different levels at which reintegration takes place, including the actions and reactions of individual trafficking victims, their family and community members, and the interplay of these persons across these social layers. It also disentangles the (often different) actions and reactions of individual victims, family members and those within the community, including if and how these actions and reactions change over time and in response to different dynamics and factors.

This paper outlines some of the tensions, issues and challenges faced within the family and community settings over the course of reintegration, issues that are often multi-layered, mutually reinforcing and coterminous. Tensions and issues within the family centered around financial problems in the family (no remittances and the burden of debt); being stressed and distressed after trafficking; feelings of shame and being blamed; and damaged or destroyed personal relationships. Tensions and issues within the community centered around failed migration and not returning with money; criticism for "ambition"; community perceptions of stressed or "problematic" behavior at home; discrimination because of "unacceptable" behavior (e.g. prostitution, pregnancy); jealousy about being assisted. As importantly, the study also identifies sites of resilience and support among family and friends, which support, bolster and galvanize reintegration success.

Identifying and disentangling common points of tension and resilience offers better understanding of reintegration within families and communities after trafficking. This complex and layered understanding should, in turn, contribute to improved reintegration programs and policies for trafficking victims.³ With this information and insight, practitioners and policymakers can better work with victims in their efforts to "move on" from trafficking.

This paper is part of a research series of papers produced in the context of the NEXUS Institute's longitudinal research project *Protecting the Unassisted and Underserved. Evidence-Based Research on Assistance and Reintegration, Indonesia*, which aims to enhance the evidence base about successful reintegration of trafficked persons in Indonesia. Other papers in the research series include: *Going Home. Challenges in the Reintegration of Trafficking Victims in Indonesia* (2016); *Our Lives. Vulnerability and Resilience Among Indonesian Trafficking Victims* (2017); *Being home. Exploring family reintegration amongst trafficked Indonesian domestic workers* (2016); *Doing no harm. Ethical challenges in research with trafficked persons* (2016); and *Assistance and protection for trafficking victims. An overview of policies and programs in Indonesia* (2016). The project is generously funded by the United States Department of State Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons (J/TIP).

³ This research study builds on and expands another paper in this series, which explores the challenges in family reintegration among 39 Indonesian domestic workers interviewed for this project between 2014 and 2016. Please see Surtees, R. (2016) 'Being home. Challenges in family reintegration for trafficked Indonesian domestic workers' in Piotrowicz, R., C. Rijken and B.H. Uhl (Eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Human Trafficking*. London: Routledge. This current paper extends this analysis to the experiences of family and community reintegration among 108 Indonesian male and female trafficking victims exploited for sexual exploitation, as well as various forms of labor.

2. Research methodology

2.1 Research methodology and data collection

This is a longitudinal research study conducted with Indonesian trafficking victims. There are five main data sources for the study:

1. Two rounds of interviews with trafficked persons (n=108);
2. Informal communication with trafficked persons between formal interviews;
3. Interviews with family and friends of trafficked persons (with victim's consent);
4. Participant observation in the family and community environment; and
5. Interviews with stakeholders from government and NGOs, at a national, district, sub-district and village level, including service providers, community/village leaders, migrant worker organization staff, local authorities and law enforcement.

Two rounds of interviews with trafficked persons

The research team conducted two rounds of formal interviews with 108 Indonesian trafficking victims between September 2014 and April 2016.⁴

We interviewed 108 trafficking victims in the first round of interviews, including 49 males and 59 females. Respondents were almost exclusively adults when interviewed,⁵ although two respondents were 17 years old. In addition, twelve respondents were trafficked while children (ranging from 13 to 17 years), although they were interviewed when adults.

The research was primarily conducted in Jakarta and seven districts in West Java (Bandung, Bogor, Cianjur, Cirebon, Indramayu, Karawang and Sukabumi). We also conducted select interviews in Central Java, East Java and South Sulawesi as a means of capturing specific trafficking experiences and diversifying the sample to ensure saturation within a sub-group of trafficked persons and/or relative to a specific issue or theme that emerged in the data.

Second interviews were typically conducted between six to nine months after the first interview.⁶ We chose this time frame as it allowed us to retain contact with most respondents while allowing for change and developments in their lives, which would shed light on the reintegration process. We were also concerned that too frequent contact would be taxing and intrusive for respondents. We conducted second round interviews with 66 respondents – 24 males and 42 females. We were unable to conduct second round interviews with 42 of 108 respondents (17 women and 25 men) for reasons discussed in more detail below.

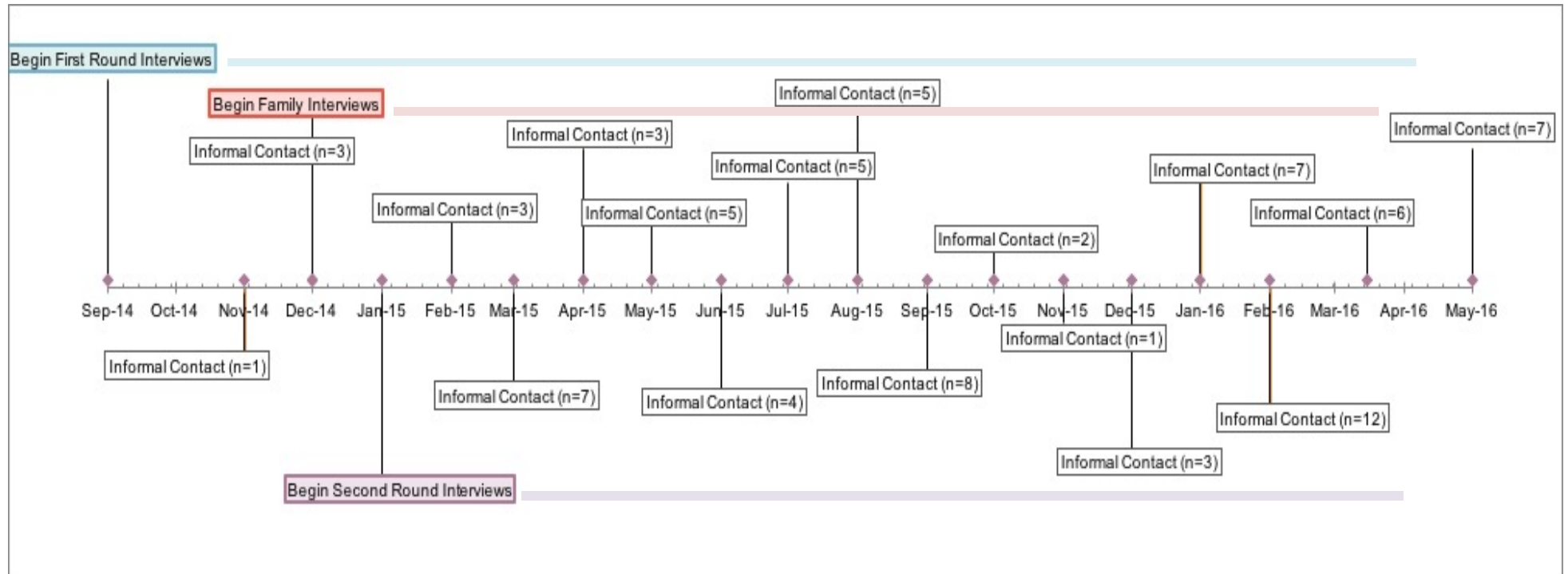
As illustrated in Diagram #1 (below), we also maintained informal communication with study participants over the course of the project and conducted interviews with trafficked persons' family members. This is discussed in more detail the following sections.

⁴ The use of longitudinal research methodology is limited in the trafficking field. Exceptions include: Brennan, D. (2014) *Life Interrupted: Trafficking into Forced Labor in the United States*. United States: Duke University Press; Miles (2010, 2011, 2012, 2013) *The Butterfly Longitudinal Research Project*. Cambodia: Chab Dai, with additional research reports from the Butterfly Longitudinal Research Project available at <http://chabdai.org/publications>; and Zimmerman, et al. (2014) *Health and human trafficking in the Greater Mekong Subregion. Findings from a survey of men, women and children in Cambodia, Thailand and Viet Nam*. Geneva: IOM and London: London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

⁵ We focused on adult respondents due to the complicated and sensitive nature of this longitudinal study, not least the challenges of ethically gaining consent from children.

⁶ Interview intervals ranged from four to nine months, depending on circumstances.

Diagram #1. Timeline of interviews and informal contact⁷



⁷ The research team had informal contact with respondents beyond the official project duration and, in some cases, this contact continued at the time of publication.

Of the 42 individuals with whom we were unable to conduct second round interviews, six respondents made a conscious choice to withdraw from the study. For some, this was triggered by a significant event in their lives. One woman had recently lost a child and did not want to be re-interviewed. For others, reasons for attrition were more “banal”. One woman initially agreed to be interviewed but road conditions prevented the researcher from reaching the village and upon return a few weeks later the woman did not feel like being interviewed that day. Some “drop-outs” were because of the respondent’s family members. One woman’s husband refused to let her be re-interviewed, although she herself was willing to continue with the study. One man’s parents-in-law discouraged him from participating in a second interview as they did not want him to be distracted from his current work. Two women agreed to be interviewed but then did not show up for the interview. In both cases we scheduled a re-interview and after the second time that the woman did not attend, we viewed this as “dropping out”.

In 16 instances, “attrition” was a function of the individual’s specific circumstance. In one instance, the NGO staff who had assisted the researcher lost contact with the respondent. In another instance, the respondent left the program (essentially running away from the shelter where she was staying). One man was sick during the time of the second fieldwork, another respondent had work commitments, five respondents had moved back to their home villages in other provinces, one had moved to her husband’s home village in another province and six were working outside of their home communities when second interviews took place.

In 20 cases, “attrition” was due to practical constraints within the research project. There were individuals with whom we could not conduct a second interview due to lack of time. Because we continued to include new respondents over the course of the study, some were interviewed too close to the end of the project to be re-interviewed. In other cases, it was not always possible to conduct subsequent fieldwork trips because of limitations of time, distance and resources. This was especially the case for interviews conducted in locations beyond West Java where the study was primarily focused.

In addition, “attrition” fluctuated over time. Some respondents initially agreed to be re-interviewed but then declined. In some instances, trafficked persons consented to and arranged the second interview but cancelled at the last minute because of urgent issues like needing to help a friend or a family emergency. In most cases, it was possible to arrange and undertake the second interview at a later time and so people who initially appeared to have “dropped-out” in fact remained in the study.

We conducted in-depth interviews with two main categories of respondents – 1) trafficked persons who had been assisted in some way (either by anti-trafficking organizations or through other assistance programs) and 2) unassisted trafficking victims, including those who were never identified, those who were never offered assistance and those who declined assistance.⁸ This was to off-set the bias of sampling only among those who have been identified and assisted, allowing us to explore and understand trajectories of reintegration for trafficked persons who had to recover and cope without formal support.⁹ However, these

⁸ This was done by conducting research in high sending communities for migrant workers and through local organizations, institutions or migrant workers themselves, reaching out to migrant workers who had “bad migration experiences”. Through interviews we were able to determine whether these migrant workers were in fact trafficked and, if so, to include them in our research. This allowed us to interview and meet trafficking victims who were never in contact with the anti-trafficking framework for identification or assistance.

⁹ Most research with human trafficking victims relies on interviews with or data about trafficking victims who have been identified and/or assisted. However, the experiences of unidentified and unassisted victims are often empirically different from those who have been identified and/or received assistance. Please see Brunovskis, A. and R. Surtees (2007) *Leaving the past behind? When victims of trafficking decline assistance*. Oslo: Fafo and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute, pp. 150–51; Goździak, E. and M. MacDonnell (2007) ‘Closing the Gaps: The Need to Improve Identification and Services to Child Victims of Trafficking’, *Human Organization*, 66(2); Jordan, J., B. Patel and L. Rapp (2013) ‘Domestic Minor Sex Trafficking: A Social Work Perspective on

two categories of respondents were generally not mutually exclusive and victims fell into different categories during their post-trafficking lives.¹⁰ Interviews were conducted with trafficked persons from a cross-section of ages, sexes, ethnicities, forms of trafficking, destination countries and at varying stages of the reintegration process.¹¹

Interviews were conducted using standardized questionnaires – one for the first interview and another for the second interview. Researchers adapted lines of inquiry according to the specifics of the individual's experiences, but standardized probes assisted researchers in maintaining commonality and consistency in terms of lines of inquiry. The first research tool was retrospective – documenting key stages of the respondent's life and experiences up until the present including family situation, life before trafficking, previous migration and/or trafficking experiences, reasons for migration, experiences during trafficking (including changes over time), escape/exit from trafficking, return (home or new community), experiences immediately upon return (including individual well-being, family dynamics, community relations) and experiences at the time of the first interview (including individual well-being, family dynamics, community relations). The second research tool explored the same issues after a set interval, to document what had changed since the last interview.

Interviews were conducted by two professional Indonesian researchers, after having been trained by the Lead Researcher and mentored throughout the research project. The Lead Researcher and two field researchers worked as a team over the course of the project – conducting fieldwork, regular debriefs and on-going analysis. This not only ensured quality control in terms of the data, but also meant that the team was able to discuss and address any issues faced in interviewing and data collection and to deal with any practical or ethical issues that arose during the research.

Interviews were conducted in Bahasa Indonesian and recorded with the respondents' permission and later transcribed verbatim in Bahasa Indonesian. Professional translators then translated transcripts to English.¹²

Informal communication with trafficked persons

In addition to formal interviews, researchers had informal contact and communication with 30 respondents - speaking by telephone, exchanging text messages and meeting informally in villages during on-going fieldwork. Some contact was initiated by respondents and involved sharing recent developments in their lives (negative and positive) – including a life crisis, the birth of a child, the death of a spouse, a new marriage or problems and

Misidentification, Victims, Buyers, Traffickers, Treatment, and Reform of Current Practice', *Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment*, 23(3); Reid, J. (2010) 'Doors Wide Shut: Barriers to the Successful Delivery of Victim Services for Domestically Trafficked Minors in a Southern U.S. Metropolitan Area', *Women & Criminal Justice*, 20(1-2); Shigekane, R. (2007) 'Rehabilitation and Community Integration of Trafficking Survivors in the United States', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 29(1); Surtees, R. (2013) *After Trafficking: Experiences and Challenges in the Reintegration of Trafficked Persons in the Greater Mekong Sub-region*. Bangkok: UNIAP and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute; Surtees, R. (2013) 'Another side of the story. Challenges in research with unidentified and unassisted trafficking victims', in Yea, S. (Ed.) *Human Trafficking in Asia: Forcing Issues and Framing Agendas*. London: Routledge; and Surtees, R. and S. Craggs (2010) *Beneath the surface. Methodological issues in research and data collection with assisted trafficking victims*. Geneva: IOM and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute.

¹⁰ Some trafficked persons were unidentified and unassisted in the destination country, but were identified and assisted upon their return home. Some were identified and assisted abroad, but then declined to be assisted in their own country upon return. Other trafficked persons initially declined to be identified and/or assisted but later sought out assistance. And some moved between categories over the course of the project, not least because the research protocol involved referring trafficked persons for assistance when needed and desired.

¹¹ As outlined in Section 2.2: Research sample. About the respondents.

¹² All quotations in this paper have been transcribed and translated verbatim from Bahasa Indonesian to English. We use verbatim translation to stay as true as possible to the respondent's voice and meaning.

interactions with assisting organization¹³ – and researchers took this opportunity to learn about these changes in their lives as well as follow-up on any key issues from the formal interview.

In some cases, informal contact with respondents was initiated by the researchers to follow-up on critical problems that the respondent shared during the interview. This included health concerns or a medical crisis, the status of a legal case, violence in the family, marital problems and so on. In a handful of cases, respondents faced emergencies in their lives and the research team assisted respondents in accessing help, including referring them for and facilitating their access to appropriate services.

Informal communication was not initially planned in the project (to avoid over burdening respondents) but it came up organically during fieldwork. It was valuable in tracking the challenges and successes realized over time and illustrated the fluid nature of reintegration, as trafficked persons face risk, but also build resiliency along the way. This informal contact, coupled with repeat interviews, was key in charting “ups” and “downs” in people’s lives after trafficking and the complexity of the reintegration and inclusion process.

Interviews with family and friends of trafficked persons

We also interviewed 34 family members, including spouses, parents, siblings, children, grandparents, aunts/uncles, nieces/nephews and in-laws. In many instances we interviewed more than one family member and sometimes as many as five or six family members. The focus of these interviews was to learn about how family members experienced and coped with their loved one’s absence while trafficked and their feelings and experiences during this time. Interviews also focused on how family members had experienced their loved one’s return home and the respondent’s process of recovery and subsequent reintegration.

We also interviewed 31 persons from respondents’ social environments – primarily friends and neighbors. These interviews and conversations focused on how the respondent had coped and reintegrated after trafficking including his/her interactions with friends, neighbors and community members. This allowed us not only to widen our lens and analytical frame to this broader social field, but also to triangulate data collected from victims and key informants.¹⁴

Interviews with family members and friends were approached carefully for fear of “outing” respondents or drawing unwanted attention to their past trafficking experiences and exploitation. We only conducted interviews with family or friends after having completed a first round interview with the respondent, which allowed us to assess the appropriateness and advisability of interacting with his/her family members or friends. If we felt that a family interview would be safe and appropriate, we discussed the prospect of such interviews with the victim/respondent. Family interviews were only conducted with the victim’s full knowledge and informed consent. In some cases, we opted not to interview a family member

¹³ For instance, one woman who was seemingly successfully reintegrated after a few years at home was in contact about three months after the first interview to request help as she faced an urgent issue in her family and she did not have access to any services. This crisis triggered a severe setback in her life, including in terms of the success of her small business, demonstrating the fragility of success and underlying vulnerability of some (arguably many) trafficked persons. In some cases, assistance was needed by the trafficking victim (e.g. finding a job or accessing health care). In other cases, assistance was needed by the children of trafficked persons (e.g. enrolling in school or accessing healthcare). A critical aspect of the project (as anticipated in the project design) was to ensure that the research team had accurate, comprehensive and up-to-date information about assistance options for trafficked persons and their family members and that the research team spent the time needed to explain available assistance and, as importantly, how to access these services.

¹⁴ Few studies of trafficking victims have included interviews with family members. This data set introduced a new and different perspective on issues, challenges and opportunities for reintegration after trafficking. At the same time, it was not possible in all cases to interview family members due to ethical concerns and such interviews were undertaken only with great caution.

or a friend because of concerns that this might cause problems for the victim. In other cases, the victim expressly declined to involve his/her family or friends in the research.



A woman and her family in their home community in West Java Photo: Peter Biro.

Participant observation

We also undertook participant observation over the course of fieldwork. The research team generally spent two of four weeks each month conducting community-based fieldwork in different communities in Jakarta and West Java. This included interactions with various persons in the communities from which respondents originated, including respondents' families and neighbors, community leaders, teachers, religious leaders, community members and so on. Interactions included informal conversations and discussions (with individuals or groups), direct observation and participation in community events. This allowed the research team to observe the community environment and social interactions over time, including discrepancies between what participants said and actual behaviors. All conversations and discussions were recorded by researchers and then transcribed and translated. In addition, the research team prepared detailed field-notes for each field site according to a standardized tool developed for the project.

Interviews with key informants

We also conducted 144 interviews with key informants between October 2013 and April 2016. This included government officials at the national, provincial and district level – e.g. administrators, policymakers, law enforcement, medical personnel and social workers. This also included officials at the village level – e.g. village chiefs, administrators, teachers/principals and medical personnel. We also conducted interviews with staff from NGOs and IOs assisting trafficked persons and migrant workers – at a national, provincial and district level as well as within village communities. This included social workers, lawyers, paralegals, medical personnel, trade unionists and migrant worker activists.

The research team conducted fieldwork in Jakarta as well as seven districts in West Java (Bandung, Bogor, Cianjur, Cirebon, Indramayu, Karawang and Sukabumi). The 144

stakeholder interviews were conducted with representatives of the Indonesian government (32), national and international NGOs (97), international organizations (5), donors/Embassy staff in Indonesia (4) and academics/researchers (6). Twenty-five (25) informants were interviewed on more than one occasion; some informants were interviewed on multiple occasions. In addition, NEXUS researchers participated in a number of government consultations and NGO meetings on a range of subjects that intersected with reintegration – e.g. handling trafficking cases, assistance to migrants, restitution to trafficking victims, return of migrant workers, and regulations and legislation on trafficking and migration.

Literature review

This study also benefits from a review of existing literature on human trafficking in Indonesia and on reintegration and assistance for trafficking victims more broadly. It also draws on a review of laws, policies and regulations on assistance for trafficked persons, migrant workers and Indonesian citizens generally. It merits mention that there has been very limited research on trafficking in Indonesia, with some aspects particularly under-explored (e.g. trafficking in men and trafficking for labor). Moreover, there are no studies specifically on Indonesian trafficking victims’ experiences of reintegration.

2.2 Research sample. About the respondents

Respondents for this study were diverse, representing individuals of different sex, ages, family situation, education, ethnicity, area of origin, forms of trafficking, country of exploitation, as detailed below.

Sex and age of respondents

A total of 108 trafficking victims were interviewed in the first round of interviews, including 49 males and 59 females. Second round interviews were conducted with 66 respondents – 24 males and 42 females. Respondents were almost exclusively adults when interviewed, although two respondents were 17 years old. In addition, twelve individuals were trafficked as children, although they were adults when interviewed. Respondents ranged in age from 13 to 49 when trafficked.

Table #1. Age of respondents when trafficked, disaggregated by sex and form of trafficking

	Males (n=49)		Females (n=59)	
	Trafficked for fishing	Trafficked for other forms of labor	Trafficked for domestic work	Trafficked for sexual exploitation
Under 18 years	0	1	2	11
18-29 years	17	7	20	5
30-39 years	14	6	14	4
40-49 years	1	3	3	0
50+ years	0	0	0	0

Age varied to some extent according to the form of exploitation. Most women trafficked for domestic work were between 18 and 29 years of age (n=20) or in the 30-39 age range (n=14). Three women trafficked for domestic work were between 40 and 49 years of age and two women interviewed were children (16 years of age) when trafficked for domestic work to the Middle East. In these cases, the broker seemingly manipulated and falsified the girl’s documents to state that she was an adult.

Women trafficked for sexual exploitation were generally younger at the time of trafficking. Of the 20 women interviewed who had been trafficked for sexual exploitation, eleven were children at the time that they were trafficked (between the ages of 13 and 17). Five women

trafficked for sexual exploitation were between 18 and 29 years of age when exploited and four women were between 30 and 39 years of age.

Men trafficked for fishing were generally under 40 years of age – between 18 and 29 years of age (n=17) or between 30 and 39 years of age (n=14). One man was 41 years old when trafficked for fishing. Men trafficked for other forms of labor exploitation (e.g. in factories, construction and on palm oil plantations) ranged in age from 19 to 49 at the time of exploitation. One boy (16 years old) was trafficked for construction work in Singapore, having used fraudulent documents to enter Singapore on a tourist visa.

Education

The educational background of trafficked persons varied widely – from those who had not completed elementary school to those who had completed senior high school or vocational education.¹⁵ The majority of respondents (n=65) had only some level of elementary education (n=24 males and n=41 females); 17 respondents had attended junior high school (n=7 males and n=10 females) and 20 respondents had attended senior high school (n=13 males and n=7 females).¹⁶

The vast majority of women trafficked for domestic work (31 of 39) had only some elementary school education. Four women trafficked for domestic work had attended junior high; only three had attended high school. As noted in the previous section, eleven of the 20 women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation were trafficked between the ages of 13 and 17; girls trafficked for sexual exploitation only had some elementary or junior high education when trafficked. Of the women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation, only four had attended senior high school.

Male respondents were generally more educated than female. Nearly twice as many male respondents had attended senior high school (n=13) than female respondents (n=7). And all respondents who were educated beyond senior high school (n=5) were men who were trafficked for fishing. These men had attended vocational schools for various fields of work including fishing, automobile mechanics and engineering.

Table #2. Education level of respondents, disaggregated by sex and form of trafficking

Level of education	Males (n=49)		Females (n=59)	
	Trafficked for fishing	Trafficked for other forms of labor	Trafficked for domestic work	Trafficked for sexual exploitation
Some elementary school (grade 1-6)	15	9	31	10
Junior high school (grade 7-9)	4	3	4	6
Senior high school (grade 10-12)	8	5	3	4
Vocational school	5	0	0	0
Did not answer	0	0	1	0

¹⁵ While the National Education Law provides for nine years of compulsory education (six years of elementary school and three years of junior high school), access to education in rural areas remains limited. USAID (2013) *Reflections on Education in Indonesia*. Washington, D.C.: United States Agency for International Development.

¹⁶ The mean years of schooling is 8.2 years for Indonesian males and 7 years for Indonesian females. Approximately 40% of females and 50% of males over age 25 have at least some secondary education – i.e. junior high or high school. UNDP (2015) *Human Development Report*. New York: United Nations Development Programme.

Family situation

Many respondents (61 out of 108) were married when they were trafficked. Most married respondents had one or two children, although some had more (one woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, had six children). Thirty-one respondents were unmarried when trafficked and had no children. Fourteen respondents were divorced or separated (13 women and one man) and two women were widows when trafficked.

Men trafficked for fishing were either married and had children (n=15) or unmarried (n=17) and did not have children at the time of trafficking. Men trafficked for other forms of labor were largely married (n=14) and had children. Two men trafficked for other forms of labor were unmarried and did not have children at the time of trafficking; one was only 16 years old himself when trafficked, having used fraudulent documents to enter Singapore. One man (trafficked for other forms of labor) was divorced when trafficked.

Women trafficked for domestic work were largely married when trafficked (n=26), although a handful were divorced (n=8), widowed (n=2) and unmarried (n=3). Most were mothers when trafficked and typically had between one and three children; four women had four or more children. Six (of twenty) women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation were married when trafficked, five were divorced or separated and nine were unmarried. Of the 20 women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation, nine had children when they were trafficked. The majority (n=11), however, did not, due, in large part, to the fact that many were under 18 years of age when trafficked (n=11).

Table #3. Family situation of respondents at time of trafficking, disaggregated by sex and form of trafficking

	Men trafficked for fishing		Women trafficked for domestic work	
Marital status (at time of trafficking) ¹⁷	Married ¹⁸	15	Married	26
	Unmarried	17	Unmarried	3
	Divorced ¹⁹	0	Divorced	8
	Widowed	0	Widowed	2
Number of children (at time of trafficking)	0	18	0	6
	1	9	1	12
	2	4	2	13
	3	1	3	4
	4+	0	4+	4
	Men trafficked for other forms of labor		Women trafficked for sexual exploitation	
Marital status (at time of trafficking)	Married	14	Married	6
	Unmarried	2	Unmarried	9
	Divorced	1	Divorced	5
	Widowed	0	Widowed	0
Number of children (at time of trafficking)	0	3	0	11
	1	5	1	5
	2	6	2	3
	3	2	3	0
	4+	1	4+	1

¹⁷ Marital status changed for some individuals after their return from trafficking as well as over the course of the research project and between interviews.

¹⁸ This includes individuals who were married once and still married, remarried after divorce or widowhood, as well as polygynous marriages, as discussed in Section 5 on experiences of family reintegration.

¹⁹ This includes separation, formal divorce and informal divorce (*talak*) as discussed in Section 4 on family and community in Indonesia.

Trafficked persons' family situations changed after their return from trafficking and, in many situations, over the course of the research project. Some had married and number of respondents also had children (or more children). For example, six men trafficked for fishing had married since returning home, as had two men trafficked for labor exploitation. Twelve women trafficked for domestic work had given birth to children (some to their first child, others to additional children) since their return. Seven of the women trafficked for sexual exploitation were unmarried when trafficked but had since married. Many had also become mothers (or given birth to additional children) since being trafficked (n=12), including some women who became pregnant as a result of their trafficking experiences.

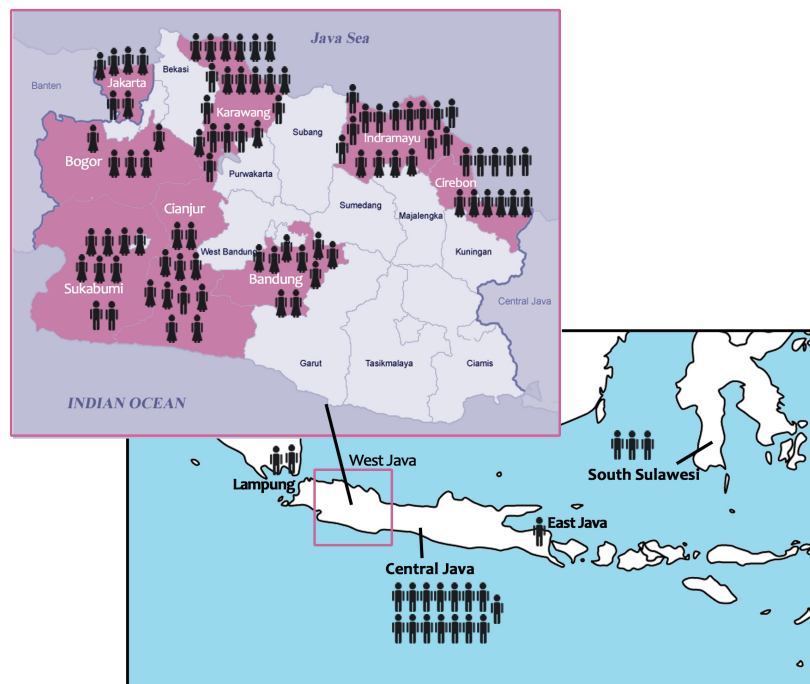
In other cases, marriages ended after trafficking, either due to divorce or spouses passing away. Three women trafficked for domestic work had divorced or separated from their husbands after returning from trafficking. Two women trafficked for domestic work were married at the time of the first interview, but had separated from their husbands by the time of the second interview. One woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, divorced from her husband after trafficking. One woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, was single when she was trafficked, married after exit from trafficking, but was divorced by the time of her first interview. Similarly, one man, trafficked for fishing, was single while trafficked, married after trafficking and separated from his wife at the time of his first interview. Another woman trafficked for sexual exploitation was single at the time of trafficking, married and then widowed by the time of her first interview.

Moreover, in some situations trafficked persons' marital status was in a state of flux over the course of the research project. A number of respondents (both men and women) were in the process of separation or divorce at some stage in the research project. Two women trafficked for domestic work were divorced when first interviewed but had remarried by the time of the second interview. One woman was married upon her return, but had recently divorced when we interviewed her the first time. She had remarried at the time of the second interview and subsequently became pregnant with her second husband. However, at the time of our subsequent informal contact with her, she and her second husband had recently separated. A number of men trafficked for fishing and labor were in the process of separation and/or divorce from their wives. One married man trafficked for fishing contacted the research team shortly after his first interview because he was in crisis over the failure of his marriage; the marriage had been formally dissolved by the second interview some months later.

Area of origin and integration

Respondents originated from Jakarta (n=6), South Sulawesi (n=3), Central Java (n=15), East Java (n=1), Lampung (n=2) and seven districts in West Java (n=81), including Bandung (n=9), Bogor (n=5), Cianjur (n=11), Cirebon (n=11), Indramayu (n=16), Karawang (n=20) and Sukabumi (n=9).

Map #1. Districts and provinces of origin for 108 respondents



Respondents originated primarily from districts in West Java and most had returned to live in their areas of origin after trafficking. However, some individuals were living in new locations when interviewed – some staying temporarily in Jakarta, some having integrated in Jakarta and others having moved to new villages/communities in the province or district after their return.

Table #4. Reintegrating in home community; integrating in new community

Reintegrating in home community	# of respondents	Integrating in a new community	# of respondents
West Java	62	West Java	14
Jakarta	3	Jakarta	15
Central Java	9		
South Sulawesi	3		
East Java	1		
Lampung	1		

Ethnicity

The majority of respondents were Sundanese (n=58) or Javanese (n=44).²⁰ The large number of Sundanese respondents is largely a function of the research having been conducted in West Java where Sundanese is the main ethnicity. Javanese respondents also came from some districts in West Java as well as from East Java and Central Java. Three

²⁰ Javanese and Sundanese are the two largest ethnic groups – accounting for 40% and 15% of the population respectively. Ananta, et al. (2013) ‘Changing Ethnic Composition: Indonesia 2000-2010’, *International Union for the Scientific Study of Population*, pp. 7-14. There are strong similarities between Sundanese and Javanese cultures. However, Sundanese culture is typically more overtly Islamic and less rigid in terms of its system of social hierarchy, including being more egalitarian, independent and somewhat individualistic in social outlook. Hefner, R. (1997) ‘Java’s Five Regional Cultures’ in Oey, E. (Ed.) *Java*. Indonesia: Periplus Editions.

respondents from South Sulawesi were Bugis, which is the main ethnicity in that province.²¹ Three respondents were Betawi, which is a creole ethnic group primarily from Jakarta.²²

Table #5. Ethnicity of respondents, disaggregated by sex

Ethnicity	Male (n=49)		Female (n=59)	
	Bugis	3	Betawi	3
Javanese	35	Javanese	9	
Sundanese	11	Sundanese	47	

Forms of trafficking

Respondents were trafficked for sexual exploitation (n=20) as well as for different forms of labor exploitation (n=88), including construction (n=3), domestic work (n=39), fishing (n=32), factory work (n=4), work on plantations (n=8) and work for a professional cleaning service (n=2).

Some victims suffered multiple forms of exploitation – most commonly women trafficked for labor who were also sexually abused or exploited. Three of 39 domestic workers interviewed were raped while trafficked; nine suffered attempted rapes, sexual assault and sexual harassment. One man, trafficked for labor, reported sexual abuse while trafficked.²³

Table #6. Forms of trafficking exploitation, disaggregated by sex

Forms of trafficking	Male (n=49)		Female (n=59)	
	Fishing	32	Domestic work	39
Plantation work	8	Sexual exploitation	20	
Factory	4			
Construction	3			
Other labor sector	2			

Country of exploitation

Trafficked persons were exploited within Indonesia (n=19) as well as abroad (n=86). Three were trafficked first within Indonesia and subsequently abroad. Trafficking within Indonesia was generally rural-urban migration within a province, but it also sometimes involved trafficking to other provinces. Those trafficked abroad were exploited in 17 different destination countries. Many were trafficked in the Middle East (n=28) – Bahrain, Jordan, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, United Arab Emirates (UAE) – and in Asia (n=35) – Brunei, Malaysia, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan (Province of China). Most men trafficked for fishing (n=23) were trafficked in less common destinations such as Ghana, Mauritius, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago and Uruguay.

²¹ Bugis is the most numerous of the three major linguistic and ethnic groups in South Sulawesi. There are approximately six million ethnic Buginese; they speak their own language and most commonly practice Islam.

²² Betawis are a creole ethnic group from various parts of Indonesia (including Malays, Sundanese, Javanese, Balinese, Minangkabau, Bugis, Makassarese, Ambonese) and foreign ethnic groups (including Arab, Chinese, Dutch, Indian, Mardijker and Portuguese) who were brought or migrated to Batavia to meet labor needs. Betawi have a language and culture that is distinct from surrounding Sundanese and Javanese. Betawi is derived from Batavia, the colonial name for Jakarta, and refers to descendants of people living around Batavia, from around the 17th century.

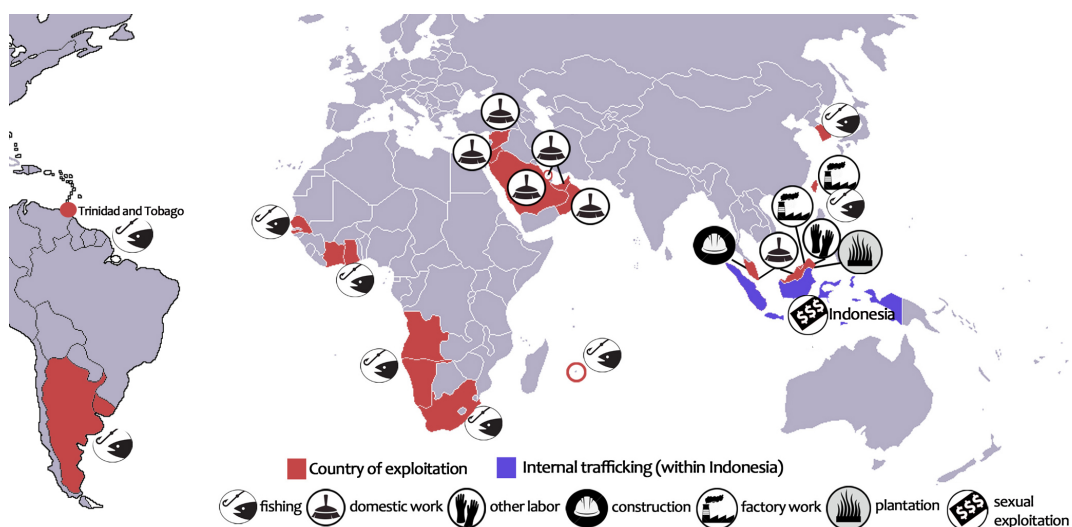
²³ This is likely an underreporting as some respondents did not disclose their experiences of rape in the first interview and we only learned about such experiences in later interviews and informal conversations. It is possible that some victims chose not to share this information or that more cases would be disclosed in future rounds of interviews.

Table #7. Countries of exploitation, disaggregated by sex & form of trafficking

	Men trafficked for fishing (n=32)		Women trafficked for domestic work (n=39)	
Country of exploitation	Ghana	5	Bahrain	1
	Mauritius	1	Brunei	1
	South Africa	7	Jordan	3
	South Korea	4	Malaysia	9
	Taiwan (Province of China)	5	Oman	1
	Trinidad and Tobago	9	Qatar	4
	Uruguay	1	Saudi Arabia	15
			Singapore	1
			Syria	1
			United Arab Emirates (UAE)	3
Country of exploitation				
	Men trafficked for other forms of labor (n=17)		Women trafficked for sexual exploitation (n=20)	
Country of exploitation	Malaysia	12	Indonesia	19
	Singapore	3	Malaysia & Singapore	1
	Taiwan (Province of China)	2		

Some trafficked persons were exploited in more than one destination. One woman was trafficked to both UAE and Oman for domestic work. Two of the men trafficked for labor were exploited in multiple destinations (one within Indonesia and then in Malaysia, the other in both Singapore and Malaysia). One woman was trafficked for sexual exploitation within Indonesia and then in Singapore and Malaysia. Trafficked fishers were often exploited in multiple destinations and moved through many borders and jurisdictions over the course of trafficking. Some men trafficked for fishing flew to Trinidad and Tobago where they worked before sailing onward to fishing grounds around South America (e.g. Argentina and Uruguay) and/or Africa (e.g. Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal). Others flew to West Africa before sailing to South Africa. One man was initially working in the waters off of Mauritius and then moved to vessels fishing around South Africa. Another was trafficked on a fishing vessel that moved along the coast of Angola, Namibia and South Africa.

Map #2. Countries of exploitation for 108 trafficked Indonesians



2.3 Data analysis

All interviews and field-notes were cleaned, coded and entered into the qualitative data analysis software NVivo 10. Data was analyzed following the principles of thematic analysis identifying key themes and patterns as well as variation within the dataset.²⁴ The research team worked collaboratively on the identification of critical themes and issues faced in the reintegration process. Analysis was contemporaneous with data collection, which allowed the team to look into and follow-up on issues and themes that arose during on-going fieldwork.

2.4 Ethical issues and considerations

Conducting research in communities was undertaken with the utmost care, in close cooperation with local anti-trafficking organizations, migrant worker groups or community leaders and members. We selected villages where we had a working relationship with authorities or civil society and worked together to identify possible respondents.

We approached interviews carefully and cautiously. Potential respondents were only approached if we were able to identify a safe and ethical channel to do so. Where potential risks or concerns were identified, requests for interviews did not take place.

Respondents were first approached by an interlocutor (NGO staff, community leader, migrant worker activist, another migrant worker), who provided them with written information about the study and a verbal explanation. They were then given time to decide whether to participate in the research. Respondents were, under no circumstances, persuaded or pressured to participate in the study. Those that agreed to participate were subsequently contacted by telephone and an appropriate time and location for the interview was arranged. Interviews were conducted in a location chosen by the respondent – sometimes in his/her home, in the office of the NGO/migrant workers' association, or in the home of the community activist who arranged the interviews.

Each interview began with a detailed process of informed consent, which included an explanation of the purpose of the study, what the interview would involve, the questions that would be asked, the respondent's right to decline to answer any questions or end the interview at any time and assurances of confidentiality. Once explained, the researcher sought the respondent's consent and, if s/he agreed, commenced the interview.

Prior to commencing the research, the research team compiled and validated a comprehensive listing of referral services available to trafficking victims. This was done in cooperation with the Ministry of Social Affairs, the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection and based on consultation with civil society organizations. This referral sheet was updated every two months over the course of the project as we became aware of new services or as needed to access specific types of referrals for respondents.²⁵ At the end of each interview, the researcher gave this referral information to each respondent and spent time explaining possible assistance options and how to access them. Given that many respondents in the study were unassisted (or under-assisted), the research team spent a great deal of time explaining the various assistance options and also researching additional

²⁴ Aronson, J. (1994) 'A Pragmatic View of Thematic Analysis', *The Qualitative Report*, 2(1) and Braun, V. and V. Clarke (2006) 'Using thematic analysis in psychology', *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3.

²⁵ The referral sheet was an important part of the project as respondents generally had very limited information about what assistance they are entitled to and how to access this support. The referral sheet was expanded and developed into the *Directory of Services for Trafficking Victims and Exploited Migrant Workers (Jakarta and West Java)*, which provides information about human trafficking and services available to trafficked persons and exploited migrant workers in Indonesia. See NEXUS Institute (2016) *Directory of Services for Trafficking Victims and Exploited Migrant Workers (Jakarta and West Java)*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute. Available at <https://nexushumantrafficking.files.wordpress.com/2016/04/directory-of-services-nexus-2016.pdf>

referrals, when needed. In urgent or “in-need” cases, researchers facilitated referrals – e.g. contacting service providers on behalf of respondents (with their informed consent), providing phone credit to respondents to be able to call service providers for assistance or accompanying respondents to the agency or department to access services. The research team also followed-up with some service providers (with the respondent’s consent) to ensure that their requests had been received and needs were being addressed.

Because compensation can potentially create a pressure to participate in research in ways that may compromise informed consent, compensation *per se* was not provided. Instead we reimbursed costs associated with the respondent’s involvement in the project – e.g. transportation costs, meals and accommodation, if needed. Interviews were set up in locations and, at times, that did not interfere with working hours or other commitments. In addition, a small gift was given to each respondent to acknowledge and appreciate his/her important contribution to the project.²⁶

Respondents were not immediately asked to participate in repeat interviews, but rather given time to reflect and decide about their subsequent participation. Researchers contacted respondents after several months to gauge their willingness to be re-interviewed and, if they agreed, the process detailed above was repeated.

Particular attention was paid to the privacy, confidentiality and safety of research respondents (as well as researchers). All interviews were strictly confidential; interview transcripts were shared only within the research team and secured according to NEXUS’ internal data protection policies.

This research was conducted in partnership with the Ministry of Social Affairs and the Ministry of Women’s Empowerment and Child Protection in Indonesia. Both Ministries were consulted and engaged in the research from the outset and regularly updated over the course of the research project. It was overseen by a reference group comprised of two research experts with experience in longitudinal research and research with trafficking victims.

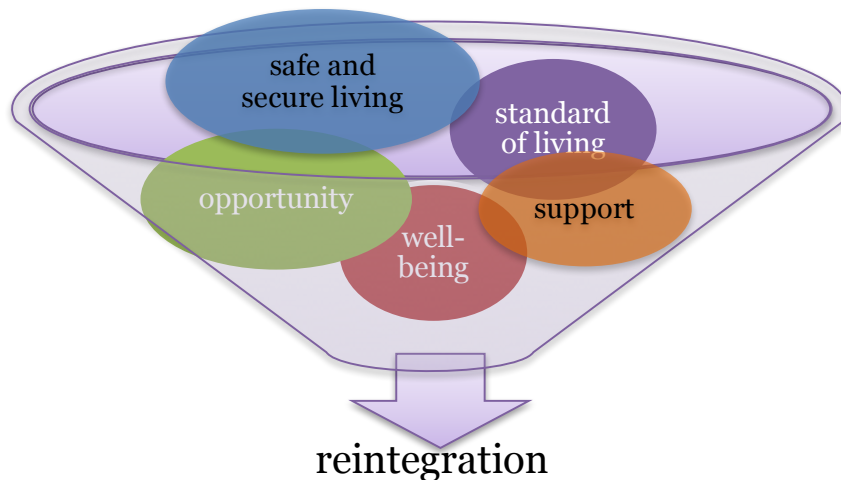
²⁶ This gift was typically *Sembako* – *Sembilan Bahan Pokok* – which are the nine necessities for daily living, namely, *beras* (rice), *gula* (sugar), *minyak tanah* (fuel), *garam* (salt), *ikan asin* (salted fish), *minyak goreng* (cooking oil), *kopi* (coffee), *telur* (eggs) and *gandum* (flour).

3. Supporting successful reintegration

3.1 What is reintegration?

Reintegration is the process of recovery and economic and social inclusion following a trafficking experience. It is best understood as a process that trafficked persons navigate as they recover and move on from trafficking exploitation. Successful reintegration is comprised of different components including living in a safe and secure environment, access to a reasonable standard of living, mental and physical well-being, opportunities for personal, social and economic development, and access to social and emotional support.²⁷

Diagram #2. Successful reintegration



There are specific considerations or “results” which may, cumulatively, indicate that a trafficked person has successfully reintegrated. These center around different aspects of an individual’s life and well-being, as well as the broader family and social environment.²⁸ These may include:²⁹

- **Safe, satisfactory and affordable place to live.** Access to a safe, satisfactory and affordable place to live.
- **Physical well-being.** Healthy physical condition and a general sense of physical well-being.
- **Mental well-being.** Mental well-being including self-esteem, confidence and self-acceptance.
- **Legal status.** Having legal status including access to identity documents.
- **Access to justice.** Having access to the legal process (criminal or civil) and best interests of victim/witnesses assured including informed consent.

²⁷ Surtees, R. (2008) *Re/integration of trafficked persons. How can our work be more effective?* Brussels: KBF and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute. See also Derks, A. (1998) *Reintegration of Victims of Trafficking in Cambodia*. Geneva: International Organization for Migration and Phnom Penh: CAS; and Lisborg, A. and S. Plambech (2009) *Going Back - Moving On: A synthesis report of the trends and experiences of returned trafficking victims in Thailand and the Philippines*. Geneva: International Labour Organization.

²⁸ This includes the cultural environment from which victims originate and into which they integrate or reintegrate. It also includes the broader structural and institutional framework in which victims live.

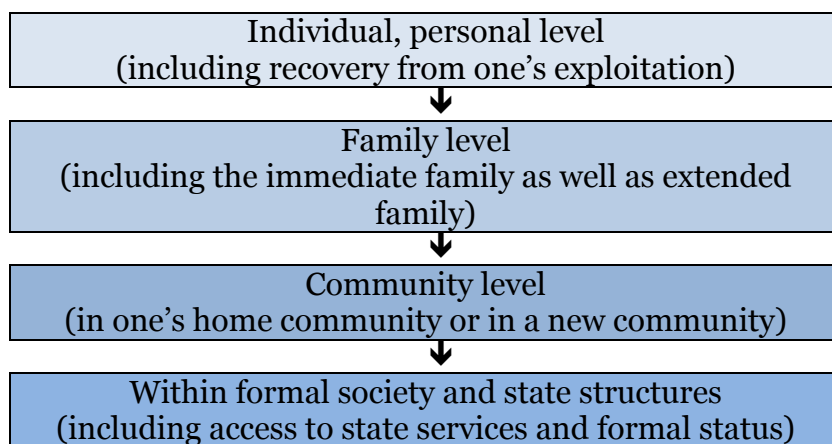
²⁹ Adapted from Surtees, R. (2010) *Monitoring anti-trafficking re/integration programmes. A manual*. Brussels: KBF and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute.

- **Safety and security.** Being physically safe and well, including safety from threats or violence by trafficker(s) or those within the family or community.
- **Economic well-being.** A satisfactory economic situation and access to economic opportunities – e.g. the ability to earn money and support one’s family.
- **Educational and training opportunities.** Access to and satisfactory attainment of education, life skills and professional/vocational training opportunities.
- **Healthy social environment and interpersonal relationships.** Positive and healthy social relations vis-à-vis peers, family, spouses/intimate partners and community and not being exposed to discrimination, stigma and/or marginalization.
- **Well-being of victims’ families and dependents.** General well-being of trafficked persons’ dependents, including children, spouses, parents and/or siblings.

The specifics of reintegration vary for each individual. Trafficked persons may reintegrate into different settings, depending upon their individual needs, interests, opportunities and situations. Some trafficking victims reintegrate into their home communities, while others integrate in a new community. This paper focuses on the reintegration of trafficking victims who have returned to Indonesia (or who were trafficked within Indonesia) and who are living after trafficking either in their home communities (reintegration) or in a new community in Indonesia (integration).

Reintegration also takes place at different levels – at an individual, personal level; within the trafficked person’s family environment; within the wider social environment of the community; and also within the overarching formal society and institutions.

Diagram #3. The different levels of reintegration



3.2 What is reintegration assistance?

Reintegration assistance (or reintegration services) refers to any type of support provided to a trafficked person that supports his/her eventual social and economic inclusion. To support the reintegration process, trafficked persons may need various forms of assistance and services. A comprehensive package of reintegration assistance includes the following services: housing or accommodation, medical assistance, psychological support and counseling, education and life skills, economic opportunities, legal and administrative support, legal support during legal proceedings, family mediation and counseling, case management and assistance to family members, if needed.³⁰

³⁰ See, e.g., Delaney, S. (2012) *(Re)Building the Future: Supporting the recovery and reintegration of trafficked children. A handbook for project staff and frontline workers*. Cologne/Geneva: Terre des Hommes; ILO (2006) *Child-friendly Standards & Guidelines for the Recovery and Integration of Trafficked Children*. Geneva: International Labour Organization; IOM (2007) *The IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of*

Trafficking victims may require a single service (e.g. transportation, emergency medical care, job placement) or multiple services (e.g. a combination of housing, medical assistance, psychological care, legal support, education and vocational training). Services may be trafficking-specific – e.g. offered by anti-trafficking organizations and institutions – or they may be more general – e.g. offered by agencies/institutions working with vulnerable persons, returned migrants, community development, child protection. This formal assistance – e.g. from government institutions, NGOs, international organizations, religious organizations and community groups – is outlined in Indonesia's laws, regulations and guidelines.³¹

Meaningful reintegration is a complex and costly undertaking, often requiring a full and diverse set of services for victims (and sometimes their families), who themselves have widely differing short- and long-term physical, psychological, social and economic needs. Once the immediate needs of trafficked persons have been met (e.g. emergency health needs, immediate protection and so on), many victims require further assistance to reintegrate into their families and communities (e.g. vocational training, economic support, long-term access to healthcare, counseling, education, family mediation and so on). Successful reintegration can take years to achieve. Therefore, reintegration assistance and programs for trafficking victims must provide a range of services and support and include plans for the long-term and include follow-up and case management.³²

Indonesian trafficking victims are exploited for a wide range of purposes (for sexual exploitation and different forms of forced labor) and their distinct experiences of exploitation inform the types and amount of services they may require and be interested in, the time they will need to recover following exploitation and so on. As a result, not all trafficked persons will require some or all of the reintegration services listed above. Some trafficked persons need many, even all, of the services listed above at some stage of their reintegration after trafficking. Others require only one or two services and are able to draw on their personal, family and community resources to support their reintegration. And some trafficked persons will not want or need the services that are offered or are available. Many trafficked persons reintegrate without any formal services or assistance, drawing on their own personal, family and community resources. What services are required (if any) will depend on the specific situation and needs of each individual trafficking victim.

Trafficking. Geneva: International Organization for Migration; Surtees, R. (2017) *Supporting the reintegration of trafficked persons. A guidebook for the Greater Mekong Sub-region*. Bangkok: UNIAP and World Vision and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute; and Surtees, R. (2010) *Monitoring anti-trafficking re/integration programmes. A manual*. Brussels: KBF and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute.

³¹ For details of these laws, policies and programs, please see Surtees, et al. (2016) *Going Home. Challenges in the Reintegration of Trafficking Victims in Indonesia*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute; and Surtees, et al. (2017) *Assistance and protection for trafficking victims. An overview of policies and programs in Indonesia*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute

³² See Surtees, R. (2010) *Monitoring anti-trafficking re/integration programmes. A manual*. Brussels: KBF and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute. See also Ezeilo, J.N. (2009) *Report of the Special Rapporteur on trafficking in persons, especially women and children*, UN Doc A/64/290; and IOM (2007) *The IOM Handbook on Direct Assistance for Victims of Trafficking*. Geneva: International Organization for Migration.

4. About family and community in Indonesia

Supporting reintegration after a trafficking experience requires an understanding not only of what has happened to individual victims, but also the wider family and community dynamics. This, in turn, necessitates a finely grained understanding of family and community in Indonesia, including the various constellations to which Indonesian trafficking victims return and live after their exploitation has ended and as they move on with their lives. It is also helpful to situate where and why fault lines in family and community relations may emerge as part of life after trafficking and over the course of a victim's reintegration. The following section provides a preliminary sketch of contemporary Javanese and Sundanese family and community life in West Java and how these dynamics may facilitate or mitigate recovery and reintegration after trafficking. This discussion does not presume to exhaust the depth or breadth of social and cultural dynamics at play in West Java in the lives of trafficked persons after trafficking. Rather, it is intended as a starting point in exploring the wider social context to which trafficking victims return and live after exploitation has ended and they move on with their lives.



Village life in rural West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

Roles and relationships within the family

The majority of trafficked persons involved in this research project were from West Java – of either Sundanese (n=58) or Javanese (n=44) ethnicity.³³ A handful of respondents were Bugis (n=3) and Betawi (n=3).

Family is the central organizing structure of both Sundanese and Javanese societies and the nuclear family is the most important kin group in both cultures. Family members owe each other attention, care and various other mandatory obligations. Neglecting familial

³³ Javanese and Sundanese, the two largest ethnic groups in the country, have strong cultural similarities and overlaps Hefner, R. (1997) 'Java's Five Regional Cultures' in Oey, E. (Ed.) *Java*. Indonesia: Periplus Editions.

obligations is a serious social infraction.³⁴ For Javanese, the family offers *tentrem* (peace), *hangat* (emotional warmth) and *kasih sayang* (unconditional love and giving).³⁵ The centrality of family relations is illustrated in the Javanese proverb: *mangan ora mangan waton kumpul* (even if there is no food to eat, being together is the most important thing).³⁶

Parents are at the center of the nuclear family and filial responsibility is critical to both Javanese and Sundanese. Children owe deference, obedience and respect to their parents, as illustrated by the Javanese dictum – “Whoever honors his parents, his elder siblings, his teacher and his ruler, already honors God”.³⁷ At the *Lebaran* festival, at the end of the holy season of Ramadan (*Puasa*), Javanese children gather at their parents’ homes to receive forgiveness and blessings, even when children are grown and financially independent.³⁸ Similarly, to achieve a well-balanced and mutually respectful society, Sundanese believe that people of “higher” social status – like parents – should be honored and obeyed by people of “lower” status – like children – who will be protected, supported and guided in return.³⁹ Age is a critical social signifier and kinship terminology stresses age, with relatives addressed in generation-specific terms.⁴⁰

In daily life, not only are children expected to pay deference and respect to their parents, but also to provide support and assistance, as needed. Within and outside of the household, children assume responsibility for a variety of tasks as necessity dictates, including completing household chores and caring for younger siblings or grandparents while mothers and fathers work.⁴¹ This obligation is life-long and older children, especially daughters, are expected to care for their parents in old age.⁴² A number of trafficking victims interviewed for this study, when asked why they had migrated, highlighted feelings of filial responsibility. One (unmarried) man, trafficked on a fishing vessel, explained that he was most concerned with helping his parents through migration: “...I wanted to make my parents happy, so I decided to go [work] there”. Another man broke down in tears when asked this question, saying: “...I was migrating because I wanted to seek money for my parents’ medication, for my parents...” Similarly, one woman, trafficked for prostitution, explained: “I wanted to make my mother happy and I wanted to take her to see the doctor”.

³⁴ Geertz, H. (1961) *The Javanese family. A study of kinship and socialization*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press; Koentjaraningrat (1967) *Villages in Indonesia*. United Kingdom: Equinox Publishing. See also Robson, S.O. (1987) ‘The Terminology of Javanese Kinship’ in *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde*. Netherlands: KITLV, Royal Netherlands Institute of Southeast Asian and Caribbean Studies, p. 510; and Sairin, S. (1982) *Javanese trah: kin-based social organization*. Indonesia: Gadjah Mada University Press.

³⁵ Geertz, H. (1961) *The Javanese family. A study of kinship and socialization*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.

³⁶ Subandi, M. (2011) ‘Family Expressed Emotion in a Javanese Cultural Context’, *Culture, Medicine and Psychiatry*, 35(3).

³⁷ Mulder, N. (1996) *Inside Indonesian Society: Cultural Change in Java*. Netherlands: Pepin Press, p. 112.

³⁸ Mulder, N. (1996) *Inside Indonesian Society: Cultural Change in Java*. Netherlands: Pepin Press, p. 111.

³⁹ Wilcox-Palmer, A. (1967) ‘Situradja: A village in Highland Priangan’ in Koentjaraningrat (Ed.) *Villages in Indonesia*. New York: Cornell University Press, pp. 299-325.

⁴⁰ Grijns, M. (1992) ‘Tea-pickers in West Java as mothers and workers: Female work and women’s jobs’ in Locher-Scholten E. and A. Niehof (Eds.) *Indonesian Women in Focus*. Netherlands: KITLV Press, p. 110.

⁴¹ Berninghausen, J. and B. Kerstan (1991) *Forging New Paths: Feminist Social Methodology and Rural Women in Java*. United Kingdom: Zed Books Ltd., pp. 147, 152; Magnis-Suseno, F. (1997) *Javanese Ethics and World-View: The Javanese Idea of the Good Life*. Indonesia: Penerbit PT Gramedia Pustaka utama, pp. 167-168; and Jay, R.R. (1969) *Javanese Villagers: Social Relations in Rural Modjokuto*. Cambridge: MIT Press, p. 118.

⁴² Darroch, R.K., P.A. Meyer and M. Singarimbun (1981) ‘Two are not enough: the value of children to Javanese and Sundanese parents’, *East-West Population Institute*, pp. 30-31.



An Indonesian woman and her child in a village in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

Mothers and fathers also have obligations *vis-à-vis* their children, “whom they have to rear and protect, to teach and worry about”.⁴³ In Sundanese and Javanese cultures, the wife/mother is the center of the household and family. She controls the family finances, makes major decisions about household and family, is tasked with all aspects of child-rearing and deals with problems ranging from economic difficulties to more general family crises.⁴⁴ A child’s relationship with the mother is typically closer from birth and, over the course of life, mothers remain the primary caregivers and are primarily responsible for child-rearing and family life.

Mothers, therefore, hold a particularly privileged position for children among both the Sundanese and Javanese. In Sundanese culture, a mother’s role is also central and there are ceremonies that celebrate her centrality in a child’s life.⁴⁵ Similarly, among Javanese it is often the mother’s grave that is the site of annual pilgrimage due to her special relationship to her children.⁴⁶

A child’s relationship with his/her father becomes more formal as the child ages. A Javanese and Sundanese father should receive “respect” from his children, which also implies a certain distance.⁴⁷ This also implies the obligation on the part of the father to provide economically for his children.

A mother and father’s responsibility to support and raise their child(ren) is central to much decision-making around migration, with children being a central contributor, if not catalyst, in the decision to migrate for a large number of migrants who, in turn, end up as trafficking victims. Said one woman, trafficked for domestic work: “Since my husband did not have a proper job... I decided to leave (migrate) and my purpose was to fulfill my children’s daily needs”. Another trafficked mother explained her decision making around migration: “I decided to migrate [abroad] because my husband did not work and the children needed

⁴³ Mulder, N. (1996) *Inside Indonesian Society: Cultural Change in Java*. Netherlands: Pepin Press, p. 110.

⁴⁴ Brenner, S.A. (1995) ‘Why Women Rule the Roost: Rethinking Javanese Ideologies of Gender and Self-Control’ in Ong, A. and M.G. Peletz (Eds.) *Bewitching Women, Pious Men: Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 23; Magnis-Suseno, F. (1997) *Javanese Ethics and World-View: The Javanese Idea of the Good Life*. Indonesia: Penerbit PT Gramedia Pustaka utama, p. 167; Hatley, B. (1990) ‘Theatrical imagery and gender ideology in Java’ in Atkinson, J.M. and S. Errington (Eds.) *Power and Difference: Gender in Island Southeast Asia*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, p. 180; and Keeler, W. (1990) ‘Speaking of gender in Java’ in Atkinson, J.M. and S. Errington (Eds.), *Power and Difference: Gender in Island Southeast Asia*. Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, p. 129.

⁴⁵ Grijns, M. (1992) ‘Tea-pickers in West Java as mothers and workers: Female work and women’s jobs’ in Locher-Scholten E. and A. Niehof (Eds.) *Indonesian Women in Focus*. Netherlands: KITLV Press, pp. 111-112.

⁴⁶ Mulder, N. (1996) *Inside Indonesian Society: Cultural Change in Java*. Netherlands: Pepin Press, p. 96.

⁴⁷ Geertz, H. (1988) *The Javanese Family; A Study of Kinship and Socialization*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press. See also Frederick, W.H. and R.L. Worden (1993) *Indonesia: A Country Study*. Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress; Magnis-Suseno, F. (1988) *Etika Jawa: Sebuah Analisa Falsafi Tentang Kebijakan Hidup Jawa*. Indonesia: PT Gramedia.

financial support for their school”. Similarly, one man, trafficked for fishing, explained, “When my children wanted to enroll in school, this made me have to go fishing. [...] My plan was that after returning home from abroad, I was dreaming that I would be able to buy land. That was my dream. And also I would also like to send my kids to school”.

Among Javanese and Sundanese, mutual assistance among siblings is obligatory, especially in times of difficulty.⁴⁸ A number of respondents spoke about being able to rely on their siblings in times of need, to care for and support their children while they migrated and/or providing various forms of assistance over the course of the victim’s reintegration. One woman explained how her sister had gone into debt to help her, mortgaging her motorcycle to the bank: “[My sister] said, ‘Don’t think about the debt to the bank. Just pray that I have money to pay it’. Each time I talked about it, each time I asked [for money], she gives it. Maybe she felt sorry for me. She said, ‘I could not ask you to pay, you are just divorced and are tired’. So my sister gave the milk for my baby...” One man, trafficked for fishing, explained that his siblings gave him and his family food when he returned home: “[We received] staples often from my older and younger siblings. Food and also money. They gave (not lent) me because they felt sorry for me”. One man spoke about his dismay about being unable to help his twice trafficked sister (and her two small children), because he was not able to find work himself, and yet felt it was his responsibility to do so. In one instance, a woman, trafficked for domestic work, spoke about how her adopted brother helped her, demonstrating the fairly flexible obligations between different kin: “[My siblings] gave me money so I could eat. I didn’t buy anything so they give [money] when they come here... and my adopted younger brother gave me money because he knew my condition. He knew everything because I told him”.

Gender roles and marital dynamics

Among both Sundanese and Javanese, the marital relationship is generally one of relative equality.⁴⁹ Conjugal relations are not based on the wife’s inferior status.⁵⁰ Nonetheless, men do occupy a relatively “higher” position in the marriage dyad and Javanese and Sundanese women are supposed to show respect and deference to their husbands.

The husband/father is ultimately the head of the family and household head and the breadwinner. The woman, as noted above, is first and foremost responsible for the care of her family. This position, while culturally grounded in both Sundanese and Javanese cultures, has been further entrenched by state policies and principles. For example, in 1978

⁴⁸ Koentjaraningrat (1967) *Villages in Indonesia*. United Kingdom: Equinox Publishing.

⁴⁹ Among Sundanese, gender relations are informed by complementarity: “Male and female are seldom treated as separate, self-sustaining entities. They are usually placed in relation to a larger whole. In the case of the house, male and female seem to be two components depending for their existence on being a part of the larger whole (the house) which they simultaneously constitute”. Hellman, J. (1995) *Sundanese identity in the making. An Ethnographic Inventory of West Java*. Göteborg: University of Gothenburg, Department of Social Anthropology. Moreover, for Sundanese and Javanese, gender is only one aspect of social position and status. Among Sundanese, social hierarchies are as much informed by other social signifiers like class and education as by gender. Thus, “people who possess the highest positions in the social hierarchies are considered more *halus* (refined in language and etiquette) than people in lower positions. Efforts to be *halus* and not *kasar* (coarse) may dominate behavior more apparently than efforts to comply with ideas of manliness/womanliness”. Hellman, J. (1995) *Sundanese identity in the making. An Ethnographic Inventory of West Java*. Göteborg: University of Gothenburg, Department of Social Anthropology. Among Javanese, status is determined by an “intricate set of considerations which include but are not limited to age and seniority; whether one is of noble descent; education; wealth; occupation; ethnicity; place of origin (rural/urban) and sex. Status may also be measured according to less tangible qualities such as cultural refinement, social skills, mastery of linguistics etiquette and reputed spiritual strength”. Brenner, S.A. (1995) ‘Why Women Rule the Roost: Rethinking Javanese Ideologies of Gender and Self-Control’ in Ong, A. and M.G. Peletz (Eds.) *Bewitching Women, Pious Men: Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

⁵⁰ Brenner, S.A. (1995) ‘Why Women Rule the Roost: Rethinking Javanese Ideologies of Gender and Self-Control’ in Ong, A. and M.G. Peletz (Eds.) *Bewitching Women, Pious Men: Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 23. See also Dube, L. (1994) *Kinship and Gender in South and Southeast Asia: Patterns and Contrasts*. 9th J.P. Naik Memorial Lecture.

the *Pembinaan Kesejahteraan Keluarga* (Family Welfare Movement) articulated the *Panca Dharma Wanita* (The Five Tasks of Women) which are: as wife, standing by her husband; as household manager; as mother, responsible for reproduction and education of children; as supplementary wage earner; and as citizen of Indonesia.⁵¹

Marriage is desirable in both Sundanese and Javanese cultures, due to the primacy of the nuclear family. Nonetheless, separation and divorce are not uncommon in West Java. While divorce rates have been declining since the enactment of the 1974 Marriage Act, divorce is still relatively common.⁵² Neither Javanese nor Sundanese necessarily believe in continuing a marriage in the face of constant conflict. Women exercise some choice in terms of their entry into and exit from marriages.⁵³ While divorce is not necessarily desirable, it does not carry the heavy stigma in West Java that it does in some contexts.⁵⁴ In the case of divorce, a woman can take with her any property she inherited or otherwise brought into the marriage.⁵⁵ Women can count on the support of their kin at times of divorce and can assert rights over children after separating from their husbands.⁵⁶ The way that divorce plays out in West Java means that children often live with their mothers and, as such, may be closer to one side of the family than the other.⁵⁷ Of the trafficked women in this study who were divorced, the vast majority received no money from their children's fathers to assist them in raising and supporting their children. Remarriage is relatively commonplace, especially among Sundanese and both men and women will commonly remarry after a divorce.⁵⁸ Among 61 respondents who were married when trafficked, six (all women trafficked for

⁵¹ Aripurnami, S. (2000) 'Whiny, Finicky, Bitchy, Stupid and "Revealing": The Image of Women in Indonesian Film' in Bianpoen, C. and M. Oey-Gardiner (Eds.) *Indonesian Women: The Journey Continues*. Canberra, Australia: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU, p. 58; Bianpoen, C. (2000) 'The Family Welfare Movement: A Blessing or a Burden' in Bianpoen, C. and M. Oey-Gardiner (Eds.) *Indonesian Women: The Journey Continues*. Canberra, Australia: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU, p. 159.

⁵² Republic of Indonesia (1974) *Law on Marriage*, Law of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 1, Year 1974. Among respondents in this study, fourteen (of 108) were divorced or separated when trafficked – 13 women and one man. Some respondents divorced during trafficking or over the course of reintegration. Two women separated from their husbands while trafficked, one because her husband had taken a second wife while she was exploited. Four of the 26 women trafficked for domestic work who were married at the time of trafficking separated or divorced their husbands over the course of reintegration (between one and three years after returning). Seven women trafficked for sexual exploitation divorced over the course of reintegration. And two of the 29 men who were married at the time of trafficking divorced or separated from their wives after returning home.

⁵³ Marriages may be ended formally (through divorce) or through the more informal *talak* (or *talaq*), which is a conditional divorce, distinguished in law from an official divorce. *Talak* is the ending of a marriage with the husband saying specific words to the wife, such as "I divorce you", or by the husband's actions being considered an end to the marriage ("activating the *talak*" such as through neglect or abuse). However, the 1974 Law on Marriage requires divorce to be executed in court. See Bowen, J.R. (2003) *Islam, Law, and Equality in Indonesia: An Anthropology of Public Reasoning*. United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, pp. 205-206; and Azra, A. (2003) 'The Indonesian Marriage Law of 1974' in Salim, A. and A. Azra (Eds.) *Shari'a and Politics in Modern Indonesia*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, p. 76.

⁵⁴ Jones, G.W., Y. Asari, and T. Djuartika (1994) 'Divorce in West Java', *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 25(3), p. 402.

⁵⁵ Descent and inheritance are bilateral and Javanese custom prescribes that men and women should inherit equal shares of property from their parents, whether land, jewelry, money or other valuables. While some Javanese follow Islamic inheritance patterns (i.e. males to receive two parts and females receive one part), many continue to follow Javanese inheritance *adat* (custom). Brenner, S.A. (1995) 'Why Women Rule the Roost: Rethinking Javanese Ideologies of Gender and Self-Control' in Ong, A. and M.G. Peletz (Eds.) *Bewitching Women, Pious Men: Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 24; Geertz, H. (1961) *The Javanese family. A study of kinship and socialization*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.

⁵⁶ Brenner, S.A. (1995) 'Why Women Rule the Roost: Rethinking Javanese Ideologies of Gender and Self-Control' in Ong, A. and M.G. Peletz (Eds.) *Bewitching Women, Pious Men: Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 23

⁵⁷ Landis (2004) in Ibromi, T.O. (Ed.) *Sosiologi Keluarga: Sebuah Bunga Rampai (Sociology of the Family: an Anthology)*. Jakarta: Yayasan Obor Indonesia.

⁵⁸ Zuidberg, L.C.L. (Ed.) (1978) *Family Planning in Rural West Java: The Serpong Project*. Jakarta: Institute of Cultural and Social Studies, p. 87.

domestic work) were remarried, having been divorced from their first husbands. Moreover, over the course of reintegration, 14 respondents (men and women) remarried.

Both women and men play important roles in the economic sphere – in both formal and informal income-earning activities or employment – and contribute to the household/family economy. Men are considered the primary breadwinner and head of the household and they are expected to support their family members. This position was entrenched in the 1974 Marriage Law, which explicitly outlines in paragraph 31 men’s role as household heads and family providers and women’s role as wives and mothers.⁵⁹ That being said, in both Javanese and Sundanese society women’s economic role is also accepted and encouraged, even expected. And the “five tasks of women” noted above are noteworthy in that they stress women’s place within the home, while simultaneously acknowledging circumstances where she is only able to fulfill her socialized responsibilities by stepping outside of the domestic sphere. Women often had multiple tasks; while taking care of the household, they also engaged in economic activities, like making cookies to sell at food stalls (*warungs*). Only 20% of women in one survey (of 147 women) did only household chores and had no income.⁶⁰ This is consistent with the experiences of our female respondents who worked both inside and outside the home. And while women’s income is considered supplementary to that of the husband, this often belies reality. In the same survey, 80% of women regarded their work as supplementary income and yet, upon closer examination, “helping my husband” meant running small businesses, working as laundry women or in other home-based industries. Moreover, other research has found that many women earned more than their husbands and some even had significantly larger incomes”.⁶¹

Women’s working role was further entrenched in the 1970s by state policies that encouraged women to join the wage-earning formal labor market, although not at the expense of their domestic duties.⁶² In the 1980s, the state began to promote transnational formal female labor migration, largely among rural, low-income, uneducated women.⁶³ By the 1990s, the state had begun promoting female labor migration, particularly to the Middle East, idealizing income-earning migrant women for their contribution to the country’s larger goal of economic development.⁶⁴

⁵⁹ Oey-Gardiner, M. (1999) *Women and men at work in Indonesia*. Jakarta: PT Insan Hitawasana Sejahtera, p. 2. See also Republic of Indonesia (1974) *Law on Marriage*, Law of the Republic of Indonesia, Number 1, Year 1974.

⁶⁰ Djamal, C. (2000) ‘Women in the Informal Sector: A Forgotten Workforce’ in Bianpoen, C. and M. Oey-Gardiner (Eds.) *Indonesian Women: The Journey Continues*. Canberra, Australia: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU, pp. 172-173; and Hartiningsih, M.M. (2000) ‘Women Workers in the Putting-Out System: An Undemanding and Unrecognised Labour Force’ in Bianpoen, C. and M. Oey-Gardiner (Eds.) *Indonesian Women: The Journey Continues*. Canberra, Australia: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU, pp. 203-223.

⁶¹ Brenner, S.A. (1995) ‘Why Women Rule the Roost: Rethinking Javanese Ideologies of Gender and Self-Control’ in Ong, A. and M.G. Peletz (Eds.) *Bewitching Women, Pious Men: Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 24; Djamal, C. (2000) ‘Women in the Informal Sector: A Forgotten Workforce’ in Bianpoen, C. and M. Oey-Gardiner (Eds.) *Indonesian Women: The Journey Continues*. Canberra, Australia: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU, pp. 172-173; and Hartiningsih, M.M. (2000) ‘Women Workers in the Putting-Out System: An Undemanding and Unrecognised Labour Force’ in Bianpoen, C. and M. Oey-Gardiner (Eds.) *Indonesian Women: The Journey Continues*. Canberra, Australia: Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, ANU, pp. 203-223.

⁶² Chan, C. (2014) ‘Gendered Morality and Development Narratives: The Case of Female Labor Migration from Indonesia’, *Sustainability*; and Martyn, E. (2005) *The Women’s Movement in Post-Colonial Indonesia. Gender and Nation in a New Democracy*. New York: Routledge, p. 206.

⁶³ As noted by Chan (2014), “the encouraged separation of low-income, rural women from their families contrasted starkly with its nationalist ‘family’ metaphors based on the ideal middle-class nuclear family”, of which women, as wives and mothers, were at the center. Chan, C. (2014) ‘Gendered Morality and Development Narratives: The Case of Female Labor Migration from Indonesia’, *Sustainability*.

⁶⁴ Chan, C. (2014) ‘Gendered Morality and Development Narratives: The Case of Female Labor Migration from Indonesia’, *Sustainability*, p. 6955. See also Silvey, R. (2004) ‘Transnational domestication: state power and Indonesian migrant women in Saudi Arabia’, *Political Geography*, 23, p. 253.

Male migration has also been an important aspect of income earning over the past decades, with men migrating for work within the country as well as for work in neighboring countries in Asia and further afield (e.g. for plantation work, construction, factory work, commercial fishing). Much male migration has been informal – e.g. for work in nearby Malaysia – although some sectors like fishing and factory work, and more distant destination countries like Taiwan, involve formal migration channels.⁶⁵



A woman sits outside her home in a village in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

Residence patterns and household composition

Residence patterns among Sundanese and Javanese are largely governed by choice. A couple may live with or near either the wife's or the husband's parents and they often choose according to where income and housing are available.⁶⁶ That being said, “choice” is also very much linked with necessity. Given the difficulties in acquiring a new house in West Java, many couples live with the wife's parents for a few years before becoming economically and residentially independent.⁶⁷ Of 61 respondents who were married at the time of their migration / trafficking, 24 were living in an extended family setting. This was primarily with parents-in-law (n=18), as well as with parents (n=5) and the extended family (n=1). Regardless of living patterns, married children who live separately from their parents generally maintain close contact with their own parents.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Hugo, G. (1995) 'International Labor Migration and the Family: Some Observations from Indonesia', *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 4(2-3), pp. 273-301.

⁶⁶ Dube, L. (1994) 'Kinship and Gender in South and Southeast Asia: Patterns and Contrasts', 9th *J.P. Naik Memorial Lecture*; Geertz, H. (1961) *The Javanese family. A study of kinship and socialization*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.

⁶⁷ Koentjaraningrat (1985) *Javanese Culture*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press; Geertz, H. (1988) *The Javanese Family; A Study of Kinship and Socialization*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press; and Williams, L.B. (1990) *Development, Demography, and Family Decision Making: The Status of Women in Rural Java*. Boulder: Westview Press.

⁶⁸ Jay, R.R. (1969) *Javanese Villagers: Social Relations in Rural Modjokuto*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Javanese and Sundanese household composition is flexible and may include older members of the family (parents or parents-in-law), unmarried siblings or recently divorced relatives. There may also be fostering of another family member's children.⁶⁹ Respondents for this study living in extended family settings described living with grandparents, aunts and uncles, nieces and nephews, parents-in-law, sisters/brothers-in-law and adopted kin (adopted siblings, children, nieces/nephews). This wider family framework offers potential for support as it extends the number of people one might rely for emotional (and financial support). But it may equally increase a victim's burden when he/she is responsible for caring for these extended kin. One woman, trafficked for domestic work, for instance, had been home for six years and initially lived with her husband and two daughters. However, she explained that since her mother-in-law died a few years ago she has also been responsible for caring for her adult orphaned and disabled sister-in-law: "She became my burden, maybe that is the cause of my high blood pressure. In the past I never had hypertension... [She moved in] maybe two years, since my mother-in-law died".

The household involves economic cooperation among its members; it is the primary economic unit for Sundanese and Javanese.⁷⁰

Expectations within the extended family

Both Javanese and Sundanese people follow a system of bilateral kinship, which values both male and female descent.⁷¹ Social identity is derived from both parents and the ancestors of both parents are recognized as kin. There is a certain amount of choice in relating to different (extended) kin.⁷² This bilateralism has the potential to positively influence reintegration outcomes as trafficked persons can potentially draw on both maternal and paternal family members as sources of support and assistance.

There are two defined kin groups in Javanese culture – close relatives (first cousins) and distant relatives (second and third cousins).⁷³ However, mandatory obligations towards relatives outside the nuclear family in Javanese culture are limited and the intensity and nature of relationships with close and distant relatives is fluid and generally practical and contextual. Close relatives living far apart may have little contact; distant relatives living close by may have intense relationships because of this physical proximity.⁷⁴

The flexibility of family relations means that some kin (close or distant) may provide significant support in times of crisis. Some trafficked persons spoke about this wider family setting as important in their recovery and reintegration, in particular grandparents, aunts and uncles. Some victims turned to extended relatives for emotional and/or financial support in times of difficulty.

⁶⁹ Dube, L. (1994) 'Kinship and Gender in South and Southeast Asia: Patterns and Contrasts', 9th J.P. Naik Memorial Lecture; Geertz, H. (1961) *The Javanese family. A study of kinship and socialization*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.

⁷⁰ Wahyuni, E.S. (2005) *The impact of migration on family structure and functioning. Case study in Java*. Paper presented at International Population conference, France, July 18-23.

⁷¹ Brenner, S.A. (1995) 'Why Women Rule the Roost: Rethinking Javanese Ideologies of Gender and Self-Control' in Ong, A. and M.G. Peletz (Eds.) *Bewitching Women, Pious Men: Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 24; Hellman, J. (1995) *Sundanese identity in the making. An Ethnographic Inventory of West Java*. Göteborg: University of Gothenburg, Department of Social Anthropology; and Mulder, N. (1996) *Inside Indonesian Society: Cultural Change in Java*. Netherlands: Pepin Press, p. 91.

⁷² Dube, L. (1994) *Kinship and Gender in South and Southeast Asia: Patterns and Contrasts*. 9th J.P. Naik Memorial Lecture; and Minahan, J.B. (2012) *Ethnic Groups of South Asia and the Pacific*. Santa Barbara: ABC-CLIO, p. 304.

⁷³ Koentjaraningrat (1985) *Javanese Culture*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

⁷⁴ Geertz, H. (1988) *The Javanese Family; A Study of Kinship and Socialization*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press. The fluidity of obligations among relatives is also generally true of Sundanese.

Social roles, obligations and expectations

Within Javanese society, the individual serves as a harmonious part of the family or group. The essence of being Javanese is to be civilized, to know one's manners and place in the world.⁷⁵ Social interactions should be characterized by *rukun* (harmonious unity) – that is, “smoothing over of differences, cooperation, mutual acceptance, quietness of heart, and harmonious existence”.⁷⁶ Conflict should be avoided. In Javanese culture there are correct social relations within communities, including obligations to assist neighbors when called upon, to bring neighbors gifts when returning from a journey, to acknowledge the social existence and position of neighbors by inviting them to *slametan*⁷⁷ and, in extending such invitations, to treat all neighbors alike and not play favorites.⁷⁸ *Rukun* is “a central ideological concept through and by means of which Javanese contextualize and apprehend their lives, their aspirations, motivations and social relations”.⁷⁹ This is the case also today in both rural and urban settings where trafficking victims return and reintegrate (or integrate).⁸⁰ Mutual assistance and sharing of burdens (*gotong royong*), within both the family and the community, should reflect the concept of *rukun*.⁸¹ Among Javanese, harmony and unity are complemented by social hierarchy. Everyone should know his or her place and duty, honoring and respecting those in higher positions, while remaining benevolent towards, and responsible for, those in lower positions.⁸²

⁷⁵ Geertz, H. (1988) *The Javanese Family; A Study of Kinship and Socialization*. Prospect Heights, Illinois: Waveland Press; Mulder, M. (1978) *Mysticism and Everyday Life in Contemporary Java: Cultural Persistence and Change*. Singapore: Singapore University Press; and Koentjaraningrat (1985) *Javanese Culture*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

⁷⁶ Mulder, M. (1978) *Mysticism and Everyday Life in Contemporary Java: Cultural Persistence and Change*. Singapore: Singapore University Press, p. 39.

⁷⁷ The *slametan* is the communal feast from Java, symbolizing the social unity of those participating in it. It has been considered a core ritual of Javanese culture and religion. A *slametan* can be given to celebrate almost any occurrence, including birth, marriage, death, or moving to a new home. Geertz (1960) categorizes four main types of *slametan* as follows: 1) stages of life (birth, circumcision, marriage and death), 2) events in the Islamic calendar, 3) *bersih desa* or “cleaning to the village”, which relates to social integration of the village and 4) irregular events/occurrences like departing for a long trip, moving residence, changing personal names, illness, sorcery and so on. The ceremony is derived from the Javanese word *slamet* which in turn derives from the Arabic word *salam*, which refers to a peaceful state of equanimity, in which nothing will happen. This is what the host intends for both himself and his guests, by experiencing the egalitarian structure of the *slametan* and the petitions of supernatural protection from spirits. Geertz, C. (1960) *The Religion of Java*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.

⁷⁸ Koentjaraningrat (1985) *Javanese Culture*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, p. 147; Jay, R.R. (1969) *Javanese Villagers: Social Relations in Rural Modjokuto*. Cambridge: MIT Press, pp. 237-239; Hawkins, M. (1996) ‘Is Rukun Dead? Ethnographic interpretations of social change and Javanese culture’, *Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 7(3), p. 220

⁷⁹ Hawkins, M. (1996) ‘Is Rukun Dead? Ethnographic interpretations of social change and Javanese culture’, *Australian Journal of Anthropology*, 7(3), p. 226.

⁸⁰ There has been some discussion of their erosion in urban areas where *rukun*, for example, as manifested in *slametan*, may be less relevant in modern urban interaction. Peacock, J. (1968) *Rites of Modernization: Symbolic and Social Aspects of Indonesia Proletarian Drama*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press; Geertz, C. (1973) ‘Ritual and social change: a Javanese example’ in *The Interpretation of Cultures*. New York: New York Basic Books, p. 164. However, others argue that not only are such values still at play in villages and rural communities, but also in urban settings where the neighborhood is a community to which members feel they belong and not merely an administrative unit. Guinness, P. (1986) *Harmony and Hierarchy in a Javanese Kampung*. Singapore: Oxford UP, p. 131. See also Hatley, B. (1982) ‘National Ritual. Neighborhoods Performance: Celebrating Tjujuhbelasan in Indonesia’, *Indonesia*, 34, pp. 55-67.

⁸¹ Mulder, N. (1996) *Inside Indonesian Society: Cultural Change in Java*. Netherlands: Pepin Press; and Koentjaraningrat (1985) *Javanese Culture*. United Kingdom: Oxford University Press.

⁸² This hierarchy is captured in the Javanese language, which has three pronoun and verb forms for addressing the second person (the “you” who is above, equal, or inferior in rank) that express the respect to which the other person is entitled. Such respect is counterbalanced by a reciprocal claim of patronage and protection. Mulder, N. (1996) *Inside Indonesian Society: Cultural Change in Java*. Netherlands: Pepin Press.



A group of women stand outside their houses in a village in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

There are strong similarities between Sundanese and Javanese cultures. However, Sundanese culture is typically more overtly Islamic and the language, which possesses elaborate speech levels, is infused with Islamic values, such as the traditional notion of *hormat* (respect - knowing and fulfilling one's proper position in society). Children are taught that the task of behaving with proper *hormat* is also a religious struggle – the triumph of *akal* (reason) over *nafsu* (desire).⁸³ Sundanese culture tends to be less rigid in terms of its system of social hierarchy than Javanese, including being more egalitarian, independent and somewhat individualistic in social outlook.⁸⁴ While less hierarchical, Sundanese culture is nonetheless similar in the desire for social harmony. Social behavior is almost entirely based on the philosophy of “*silih asih, silih asah, silih asuh*”, which literally means “love, teach and care for each other”. The preference for a harmonious life is expressed in the phrase “*herang caina beunang laukna*”, which means “solving a problem without creating a new problem”. Mutual cooperation (or *gotong royong*) is also a prominent characteristic in Sundanese community life.⁸⁵

Trafficked persons reintegrated in different community settings. Many went home to their home communities – often a rural village, but also sometimes an urban setting. Others opted to integrate in new settings – the capital or other towns or in the home communities of their spouses. In all cases the primary community in which they functioned during reintegration was the neighborhood (or *kampung*).

⁸³ Frederick, W.H. and R.L. Worden (1993) *Indonesia: A Country Study*. Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress.

⁸⁴ Hefner, R. (1997) ‘Java’s Five Regional Cultures’ in Oey, E. (Ed.) *Java*. Indonesia: Periplus Editions.

⁸⁵ Amar, S.C.D. (2010) *Gunem Catur in the Sunda Region of West Java: Indigenous Communication on the MACT Plant Knowledge and Practice within the Arisan in Lembang, Indonesia*. PhD Thesis. Netherlands: Leiden University, pp. 83-84. Examples include village/community activities like *arisan* (a rotating credit fund), *pengajian* (Quranic group) and *pencak silat* (a kind of martial arts). See also Zevalkink, J.J., M. Riksen-Walraven and R.H. Bradley (2008) ‘The Quality of Children’s Home Environment and Attachment Security in Indonesia’, *The Journal of Genetic Psychology*, 169(1).

The “neighborhood” (*kampung*) is an important social grouping in both urban and rural settings in West Java. While *kampung* translates directly as “village”, in practice, it applies to both urban and rural settings. And the urban *kampung* “... is in fact something of a reinterpretation of the village pattern in terms of denser, more heterogeneous, less organically integrated urban environment”.⁸⁶ *Kampung* life involves an exchange of money, aid and services between *kampung* households, dictated by kinship, proximity, need, and exchange networks.⁸⁷ Neighborhood members gather for rituals (e.g. *slametan*), join in sports teams and organizations, conduct *arisan* (rotating credit association or neighborhood lottery), organize security arrangements like night watches (*ronda malam*), jointly own communal property (e.g. funeral equipment) and collect a social fund for the ill and poor. In rural areas, residents of the *kampung* may also collaborate to harvest rice.⁸⁸

The social and cultural environment of the *kampung* – whether rural or urban – allows residents to achieve *tentrem* (peace), the goal of every Javanese.⁸⁹ The values of *rukun* and *gotong royong* help residents to manage interpersonal interactions as well as general social pressures and stresses, including, for example, to cope with the pressure of life in urban settings and as a consequence being part of the urban poor.⁹⁰ One recent study of life in the (urban) *kampung* noted that the boundaries of *kampung* culture are repeatedly remarked upon by *kampung* dwellers, who describe the *kampung* as close and neighborly, based on harmony and mutual support and frequently compare it to the broken (*dipecah*) social life of new suburban developments. *Kampung* residents refer to the ethics of helping one another, of cooperation, and an equality of purpose and life style. There is the sense that *kampung* is a site of traditional forms of cooperation, consensus and neighborliness.⁹¹

Membership of the *kampung* involves more than living there; it involves participation in the *kampung*'s mutual aid networks, self-identification with the local community and being identified by neighbors as being *of* rather than *in* the *kampung*.⁹² To be *of* the *kampung* is to enact obligations to one's neighbors and failure to do so invites reproof, ranging from gossip to refusal to recognize the “offender” as a community member.⁹³ A number of trafficking victims spoke about tension and negative reactions within the community when they returned home and were not in a position to bring gifts for or financially assist neighbors and friends after their return. In some cases, trafficked persons described living in communities where they did not belong, either because of having recently migrated there or because they (and their family) were not integrated in the community, which was also a factor in their reintegration.

⁸⁶ Geertz, H. (1961) *The Javanese family. A study of kinship and socialization*. Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press. The use of a word associated with rural life to discuss urban neighborhoods signals the overlapping character of administration in these areas. Newberry, J. (2006) *Double Spaced: Abstract Labour in Urban Kampung*. Lethbridge, Alberta: University of Lethbridge.

⁸⁷ Brenner, S.A. (1995) ‘Why Women Rule the Roost: Rethinking Javanese Ideologies of Gender and Self-Control’ in Ong, A. and M.G. Peletz (Eds.) *Bewitching Women, Pious Men: Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press; Newberry, J. (2006) *Double Spaced: Abstract Labour in Urban Kampung*. Lethbridge, Alberta: University of Lethbridge.

⁸⁸ Frederick, W.H. and R.L. Worden (1993) *Indonesia: A Country Study*. Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress; Guinness, P. (1999) ‘Local Community and the State’, *Canberra Anthropology*, 22(1), pp. 88-110; Guinness, P. (1986) *Harmony and Hierarchy in a Javanese Kampung*. Singapore: Oxford UP; and Newberry, J. (2006) *Double Spaced: Abstract Labour in Urban Kampung*. Lethbridge, Alberta: University of Lethbridge.

⁸⁹ Rahmi, D.H., B.H. Wibisono and B. Setiawan (2001) ‘*Rukun and Gotong Royong: Managing Public Places in an Indonesian Kampung*’ in Miao, P. (Ed.) *Public Places in Asia Pacific Cities: Current Issues and Strategies*. Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

⁹⁰ Guinness, P. (1986) *Harmony and Hierarchy in a Javanese Kampung*. Singapore: Oxford UP.

⁹¹ Newberry, J. (2006) *Double Spaced: Abstract Labour in Urban Kampung*. Lethbridge, Alberta: University of Lethbridge.

⁹² See Hatley, B. (1982) ‘National Ritual. Neighborhoods Performance: Celebrating Tjujuhbelasan in Indonesia’, *Indonesia*, 34, p. 57.

⁹³ Guinness, P. (1986) *Harmony and Hierarchy in a Javanese Kampung*. Singapore: Oxford UP, p. 165.

The *kampung* is also an administrative structure from Suharto's time (1966-1998). The New Order regime mobilized nostalgia for rural community to administer urban localities through its neighborhood section system, deliver social welfare and to organize residents to follow the principles of *gotong royong* (mutual self-help) in running their affairs.⁹⁴ Groups of households were numbered and their populations managed and accounted for through a popularly selected unpaid leader. Harmonious Neighbor sections (*Rukun Tetangga* or RT) make up the larger Harmonious Citizen section (*Rukun Warga* or RW), also run by an unpaid, locally chosen head.⁹⁵ RT and RW are the means by which individuals in the *kampung* share and work together and the values of *rukun* and *gotong royong* are promoted and maintained through RT and RW.

The *kampung*, then, represents a culture of administration as well as a community environment and social fabric.⁹⁶ This is relevant for reintegration in that it is at this grassroots level where there are opportunities for the formal administrative structure to provide support and services to victims and their families.

The above points notwithstanding, social relationships within the community are not always homogeneous and harmonious. Most *kampung* consist of a disparate collection of families and neighbors who are not always in harmony and, moreover, may have competing interests.⁹⁷ Social relations and support are also influenced by class dynamics and other social hierarchies. In villages where social class is relatively evenly distributed, mutual support is likely to be more common. By contrast, patron-client relationships are likely to be more prominent in villages with more social stratification like the division between landowners and those without land.⁹⁸ Social class also plays out in urban settings and influences patterns of community help and mutual support.

Moreover, while community (whether rural or urban) is still of great importance in daily life, the nature of community has changed and evolved over the past decades – triggered first by the economic and political transition following the end of the Suharto regime in 1998 and, since then, by social and economic changes more broadly including decentralization, political reform, urbanization and globalization and global and local patterns of consumerism.⁹⁹ For example, one study of *kampung* life in Jakarta describes how growing prosperity brought about increased jealousy and individualism with those who had acquired more wanting to keep their wealth, which was difficult and at odds with the traditional cultural norms of sharing (*bagi bagi rejeki*) and togetherness (*rukun*).¹⁰⁰ Another recent study noted that while these values (*rukun* and *gotong royong*) continue as part of *kampung* life, they function alongside the increasing emergence of more individualistic values.¹⁰¹

⁹⁴ Bowen, J.R. (1986) 'On the Political Construction of Tradition: Gotong Royong in Indonesia', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 45(3), pp. 545-561.

⁹⁵ All of urban Indonesia until the recent era of democratic reform in the late 1990s, was divided into a neighborhood section system. These units remain in urban Java, despite the changes in governance due to regional autonomy measures in the era of *Reformasi* (reform) following the end of Suharto's rule. Newberry, J. (2006) *Double Spaced: Abstract Labour in Urban Kampung*. Lethbridge, Alberta: University of Lethbridge.

⁹⁶ Newberry, J. (2006) *Double Spaced: Abstract Labour in Urban Kampung*. Lethbridge, Alberta: University of Lethbridge.

⁹⁷ Guinness, P. (2009) *Kampung, Islam and State in Urban Java*. Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press.

⁹⁸ Frederick, W.H. and R.L. Worden (1993) *Indonesia: A Country Study*. Washington: GPO for the Library of Congress.

⁹⁹ Guinness, P. (2009) *Kampung, Islam and State in Urban Java*. Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press; Rahmi, D.H., Wibisono, B.H. and B. Setiawan (2001) 'Rukun and Gotong Royong: Managing Public Places in an Indonesian Kampung' in Miao, P. (Ed.) *Public Places in Asia Pacific Cities: Current Issues and Strategies*. Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, p. 133.

¹⁰⁰ Jellinek, L. (2012) 'Ways of Knowing Indonesia. The Personal Journey of an Academic and Activist' in Purdey, J. (Ed.) *Knowing Indonesia: Intersections of Self, Discipline and Nation*. Melbourne: Monash University UP.

¹⁰¹ One recent study of an urban *kampung* in Java documented various examples of these principles including communal work on a water dyke, night watch within the community, fortnightly cleaning of common pathways



Village life in rural west Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

Alternative worldviews in Indonesia are currently nurtured and facilitated by expanding communications, education and mobility, which have simultaneously disrupted traditions of social order and behavior. Recent years have also seen a privileging of money and material wealth over more traditional avenues to power¹⁰² and “identities are made not exclusively according to local knowledges, but in ever widening geographies of production, trade, and communications”.¹⁰³ Moreover, how a younger generation experiences social norms and community is salient given that 27.7% of the population is under the age of 14.¹⁰⁴ Javanese and Sundanese youth have grown up in a different environment and, in some cases, have acquired a distaste for hierarchical relationships and circumspect behavior, which some experience as anti-democratic and out-of-date.¹⁰⁵

The trafficked persons interviewed for this study reintegrated in different community settings. Many went home to their home communities after trafficking, while others opted to integrate in new settings – in Jakarta or other towns or in the home communities of their spouses. In all cases the primary community in which they functioned during reintegration was the neighborhood (*kampung*) and the social relationships and dynamics of the community impacted not only the immediate family environment, but also the individual trafficking victim’s overall experience of reintegration.

and so on. Rahmi, D.H., B.H. Wibisono and B. Setiawan (2001) ‘*Rukun and Gotong Royong: Managing Public Places in an Indonesian Kampung*’ in Miao, P. (Ed.) *Public Places in Asia Pacific Cities: Current Issues and Strategies*. Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers, p. 131.

¹⁰² Mulder, N. (1996) *Inside Southeast Asia: Religion, Every Day Life, Cultural Change*. Bangkok, Thailand: Silkwoon Books, p. 146 and pp. 156-157.

¹⁰³ Ong, A. and M.G. Peletz (1995) ‘Introduction’ in Ong, A. and M.G. Peletz (Eds.) *Bewitching Women, Pious Men: Gender and Body Politics in Southeast Asia*. Berkeley: University of California Press, p. 8.

¹⁰⁴ World Bank (2015) ‘Population ages 0-14’, *Indonesia*. Available at World Bank (2015) ‘Population ages 0-14’, Indonesia. Available at <http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/SP.POP.0014.TO.ZS?locations=ID>

¹⁰⁵ Mulder, N. (1996) *Inside Indonesian Society: Cultural Change in Java*. Netherlands: Pepin Press, p. 155.

Some respondents lived in communities that were close, cohesive and supportive. One man, trafficked for fishing, described how the community he came from was a “good” and “harmonious” neighborhood where he felt comfortable and could count on the support of neighbors prior to his migration:

We used to [be] actively involved in our neighborhood. It was a sizeable neighborhood. Before I went abroad, I was in the youth organization for five or so years. We raised funds by helping collect payment for electricity bills. We got a small fee out of each payment. It was a very good neighborhood. [It was harmonious]. Each year during the fasting month, we got together two or three times. So when I went abroad, they all missed me. They came to my house.

However, this was not the case for all communities where victims were reintegrating. One man described returning to his community which he described as generally unsupportive, contrasting it with other communities where there was more support and “togetherness”: “My neighbors have their own lives. Our community type is unlike living in the downtown where everyone cares for one another with a higher sense of togetherness”.

Similarly, one woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, contrasted the nature of the community where she had lived previously with the community in which she had now integrated:

In [my previous community] the people were individualistic. So they don’t gossip. But the neighbors where I live now are the ones who gossip. I now live in a very crowded neighborhood. Women would gather and gossip. They talked about my marriage. They looked down on me and labeled me as a bad person. If only they knew what happened in my first marriage (being trafficked), they would feel sorry for me.

Another woman made a similar distinction between life in her previous community compared with where she was currently living:

In [my old community] the neighbors are unlike with the neighbors in [my current community] ...There it was like a residence compound, individual. So if anything happened in my household, they don’t care because they were all working, husbands and wives. We would just meet during the nighttime, just to say hello, that’s it... In [our current community] we are so close. It appears, they are gossiping about each other. It was not like that in [the old area] as all people are working.

And one woman, trafficked for domestic work, spoke about how her home community, where many of her extended relatives lived, was a difficult place to live because of so much gossip and negative reactions:

No [I didn’t return to my old house], I wanted to start a new life. My relatives’ mouths are not good. When we gave them something, they will treat us well, [but] that’s the thing that makes me uncomfortable. If we did not give them anything, their mouths will be so bad (they will spread lies). [...] Actually I did not like the situation for a long time. [It was] only because my parents stayed there that I stayed there also. It’s better if we stay away from people like that. It’s like a tradition there. My mother also often got heartache from them. Because they will be nice to us if we give them something. Otherwise they will gossip us from behind [speak about us behind our backs].

Another factor in reintegration was whether someone was new to the community, with some recent migrants to an area not being able to rely on neighbors for support, as one man trafficked for labor explained: “There was our neighbor next door. We helped each other out

in times of need. If I had rice, we shared and the other way around. I am not a local. I am a migrant from another village so I wasn't so close with the other neighbors”.

Supporting the reintegration of trafficking victims – in their families and communities – requires an understanding and appreciation of the local cultural world(s) – hegemonic and emerging – to which they return and in which they live. Considering how family and community offer opportunities to support or undermine a victim's reintegration allows us to locate points of intervention and opportunities for change.



A group of children in a village in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.



5. Coming home. Experiences of family reintegration

The process of recovery and reintegration after trafficking encompasses not only individual trafficking victims, but also their family members and the family environment to which they return. Trafficked persons must recover and come to terms not only with the exploitation they have suffered, commonly involving multiple layers of violence, violation and hardship, but also the reactions and responses of their family members. Equally, trafficking victims' family members, who themselves have been directly and negatively affected by the victim's trafficking exploitation, must come to terms with all that their loved one has suffered, and also navigate, manage and, ideally, support the victim's return and reintegration, which is often fraught on many levels.



Travelers at Jakarta's main bus station. Photo: Peter Biro.

Family often provides important forms of support after trafficking – emotional, social, physical and economic – which contribute to an individual's reintegration success. At the same time, the family environment also commonly involves vulnerabilities (and even destructiveness) that may work against trafficking victims' recovery and reintegration.¹⁰⁶ A trafficking victim's marital and family status has important implications for the viability and likelihood of reintegration after trafficking and, in many cases, can account for at least some (if not many) of the “ups” and “downs” that he/she experiences as part of his/her post-trafficking life.

¹⁰⁶ In discussing “family” we are referring to those whom individual respondents identify as their family members, which may include their immediate family (parents, spouses, children, siblings), the immediate family of their spouses, the extended family (grandparents, aunts/uncles, cousins). That being said, the family setting was very different for our respondents and the primary caregiver in some cases was a grandparent or aunt/uncle.

About family life

Among respondents for this study the family environment was enormously diverse and highly complex, even, at times, contradictory. Indonesian trafficking victims returned and reintegrated into many different family and household constellations. In addition, some trafficked persons returned to a family setting in which they faced different reactions and responses from different people within the family.¹⁰⁷ Reactions of family members – both supportive and unsupportive – were also often quite fluid, sometimes changing over time and in response to different events and situations.

The majority of respondents (61 of 108) were married and had a family of their own at some stage of their life prior to trafficking or at the time of their exploitation. Most married respondents had one or two children, although some had more (one woman had six children). Most returned to their nuclear family after their trafficking exploitation – to live with their spouse, children and also, at times, extended family, most commonly parents and parents-in-law.

Women trafficked for domestic work were more likely to be married at the time of trafficking than women trafficked for sexual exploitation, aligning with the younger age of women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation (some were girls of 13 or 14 years of age when trafficked).¹⁰⁸ The majority of those trafficked for domestic work (26 of 39) were married and had children at the time of trafficking as compared with about a third of the women trafficked for sexual exploitation (6 of 20). This meant that more women trafficked for domestic work were able to return to and rely on their nuclear family for support than woman trafficked for sexual exploitation.

The majority of trafficked men (29 of 49) were married when trafficked. However, men trafficked for fishing were less likely to be married when compared with men trafficked for other forms of labor (on plantations, in factories, for cleaning services) – that is, 15 of 32 men trafficked for fishing were married compared with 14 of 17 men trafficked for other forms of labor.

Remarriage is relatively commonplace especially in Sundanese culture.¹⁰⁹ A number of respondents were married on multiple occasions, including remarriage after divorce and remarriage after widowhood. Of the 61 individuals who were married at the time of trafficking, six (all women trafficked for domestic work) were remarried, having been divorced from their first husbands. Moreover, over the course of reintegration, 14 respondents remarried.¹¹⁰

Being married in many ways offered a supportive framework for reintegration, not least because it theoretically afforded victims support (financial and emotional) after trafficking,

¹⁰⁷ Please see Brunovskis, A. and R. Surtees (2012) 'Coming home: Challenges in family reintegration for trafficked women', *Qualitative Social Work*; Brunovskis, A. and R. Surtees (2012) *No place like home? Challenges in family reintegration after trafficking*. Oslo: Fafo and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute; Surtees, R. (2016) 'What's home? (Re)integrating Children Born of Trafficking', *Women and Therapy, Special Issue: Human Trafficking*; Surtees, R. (2016) 'Being home. Challenges in family reintegration for trafficked Indonesian domestic workers' in Piotrowicz et al. (Eds.) *Routledge Handbook of Human Trafficking*. London: Routledge.

¹⁰⁸ An estimated 14% of girls in Indonesia are married under the age of 18. Child marriage in Indonesia occurs more frequently in rural areas. See UNICEF (2016) *State of the World's Children*. New York: United Nations Children's Fund; and Yarrow et al. (2015) *Getting the Evidence: Asia Child Marriage Initiative*. United Kingdom: Coram Children's Legal Centre. Yarrow et al. (2015) found that in Indonesia, 38% of married females were married under the age of 18 and 7.8% of married females were married under the age of 15.

¹⁰⁹ Zuidberg, L.C.L. (Ed.) (1978) *Family Planning in Rural West Java: The Serpong Project*. Jakarta: Institute of Cultural and Social Studies, p. 87.

¹¹⁰ This included seven women trafficked for domestic work who remarried after divorce and five women trafficked for sexual exploitation who remarried after divorce (with one woman divorcing and remarrying a third husband). One man, trafficked for other forms of labor, remarried after divorce and one man, trafficked for other forms of labor, remarried after being widowed.

which, in turn, permitted them some time and space to recover and move on from exploitation. That being said, this assumes a safe and supportive family setting (with one's nuclear and/or extended family), which was not always the case. And married victims also had to consider and manage the needs and reactions of their family members, which added pressure.

Thirty-one (of 108) respondents were unmarried when trafficked and had no children (19 males and twelve females). The majority of unmarried females were trafficked for sexual exploitation; the majority of unmarried males were trafficked for fishing. Most of these individuals returned to live with their parents during reintegration.

Fourteen respondents (of 108) were divorced or separated when trafficked – 13 women (trafficked for domestic work and sexual exploitation) and one man. Being separated or divorced is generally felt to be without significant social stigma,¹¹¹ although a number of (primarily female) respondents did speak about being looked down upon within their families and communities as a consequence of their divorced status. One woman, a mother of two young boys, was separated from her husband because of his infidelity and described how she was looked down upon by neighbors as a result: “I am tired of hearing people always speak bad thing about me because I am separated”.

Another issue in such cases was the financial and emotional burden that separation/divorce (and single parenthood) entailed in daily life. The vast majority of separated/divorced mothers were solely responsible for themselves and their children, unable to rely on their former spouses to assist and support them after return and over reintegration. Most divorced or separated women could not rely on their ex-husbands to help them support their children. More than one separated/divorced woman came home to an ex-husband who had not supported the children in her absence nor did so upon her return. And one divorced woman, who had been trafficked for domestic work, was subsequently saddled with her ex-husband's heavy debt when he died after her return. Trafficking burdens were thus compounded by the economic pressures of being divorced/separated. Being separated/divorced also often meant lack of emotional support, especially when the trafficked person did not have a wider family to rely on. One divorced domestic worker described how being divorced left her without any support or person(s) to lean on: “Because I don't have parents, it seems there is no place for me to share and to seek some help. Everything has to be done by me, myself. It's hard to live alone, without a husband. What should I do, what should I do to face my life and to survive? Then my first daughter got married and after that I lived alone”.

Two women were widows when trafficked for domestic work. Widowhood involved many of the same vulnerabilities and pressures as divorce or separation, as widowed trafficking victims largely bore their burdens alone and such burdens were compounded by grief for the loss of their spouses. One woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, was widowed several years after her exit from trafficking and spoke of how she continued to mourn her husband, even many years after he passed away: “I tried to forget it but I cannot because he was a very nice person... So, step by step, I hope I can forget him. He was my husband, of course, I cannot forget him now. Now I have [my son]. If I see him, I think I see his father. Their faces are very similar. Sometimes I hug him if he is sleeping and I cry”.

In some cases, marital status was more intricate and respondents lived in families with multiple marriages and complex family settings. In Indonesia, not all second marriages involve the dissolution of the first. Polygyny (a husband marrying more than one wife), while not common or socially normative, is nonetheless legal in Indonesia and was a feature in a

¹¹¹ Jones, G.W., Y. Asari and T. Djuartika (1994) ‘Divorce in West Java’, *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 25(3).

number of victims' lives.¹¹² Some women who described themselves as married were rather informal wives, not having been legally married. Two married women were second wives; one woman said that she was her ex-husband's seventh wife. Three women were abandoned first wives.



A woman cooks in her home in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

Polygyny may introduce additional layers of complexities to the process of family reintegration – for example, when a trafficked Indonesian woman returns home to a husband who has taken another wife, when a trafficked man has the responsibility to support more than one wife, when a trafficked woman does not receive adequate economic support because her husband is supporting another family and so on. One woman, for example, did not know that her husband was married when she married him. She found out many months after their marriage and described her great anger and sadness at his betrayal. Being a second wife was also something she was embarrassed about and so had not told her parents or siblings even many years after their marriage. She also spoke about the economic problems she faced in her daily life because her husband continued to send a large portion of his salary to his first wife. Another woman described how she did not want her neighbors to know that she was a second wife as this would bring shame on her and her family. One

¹¹² Approximately 4% of marriages in West Java are polygynous. Jones, G.W., Y. Asari and T. Djuartika (1994) 'Divorce in West Java', *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, 25(3), p. 404. Many Javanese people of both sexes tend to view polygyny negatively and the threat of polygyny – "such as when a wife knew of her husband's intention to take another wife" – can become a reason for divorce. Nurmila, N. (2009) *Women, Islam and Everyday Life: Renegotiating Polygamy in Indonesia*. London: Routledge, pp. 21-22. Polygyny may be more acceptable among Sundanese; it is not uncommon for religious leaders or wealthy men in West Java to have more than one wife. The 1974 Marriage Law made polygyny more difficult, but did not prohibit it. The law states that the foundation of marriage is monogamy, but acknowledges the possibility of practicing polygyny, limiting the maximum number of wives to four and, in accordance with Islamic values, the husband must treat the wives in an equal manner and be able to support them economically. In order to engage in polygyny under the law, the husband must obtain permission in advance from the Islamic court. Polygyny without permission of the court is not legally recognized. Nasution, K. (2008) 'Polygamy in Indonesian Islamic Family Law', *Shariah Journal*, 16(2).

woman, who was subsequently trafficked for domestic work, was a second wife when she widowed and her status as a second wife meant that she did not have access to her husband's pension after his death. Without any money to support her three children, she was forced to migrate abroad for work.

In addition, infidelity in marriages was not uncommon, with eight women explaining that their husbands had been unfaithful while they were trafficked or after their return and one man explaining that he planned to leave his wife because she had been unfaithful after his return from trafficking. It is likely that there were more instances of infidelity that did not come up in interviews due to the sensitive nature of this topic.

Changes in family life over time

Respondents' marital status and family composition were quite fluid and changed over the course of their lives – before migration, while trafficked and during reintegration. This was particularly the case for women.

While 26 of the 39 women trafficked for domestic work were married when trafficked, this changed at later stages of their lives. Two women separated from their husbands while trafficked – one because her husband had taken a second wife while she was exploited and one who decided to separate from her husband while she was trafficked. Four of the 26 women trafficked for domestic work who were married at the time of trafficking separated or divorced their husbands over the course of reintegration – between one and three years after returning. One woman was married with children when trafficked, divorced her abusive husband three years after her return, remarried a year later and then separated from her second husband shortly after marrying him. Another woman was married with children when trafficked, but was widowed while she was exploited in the destination country. She fled her trafficking situation to return to her three small children and then remarried one year after her return. She lived with her second husband for three years before separating from him.

Of five women who were divorced with children when trafficked for domestic work, four subsequently remarried within a year of returning to Indonesia.

Two (of three) women who were unmarried when trafficked for domestic work married between one and three years after returning to Indonesia.

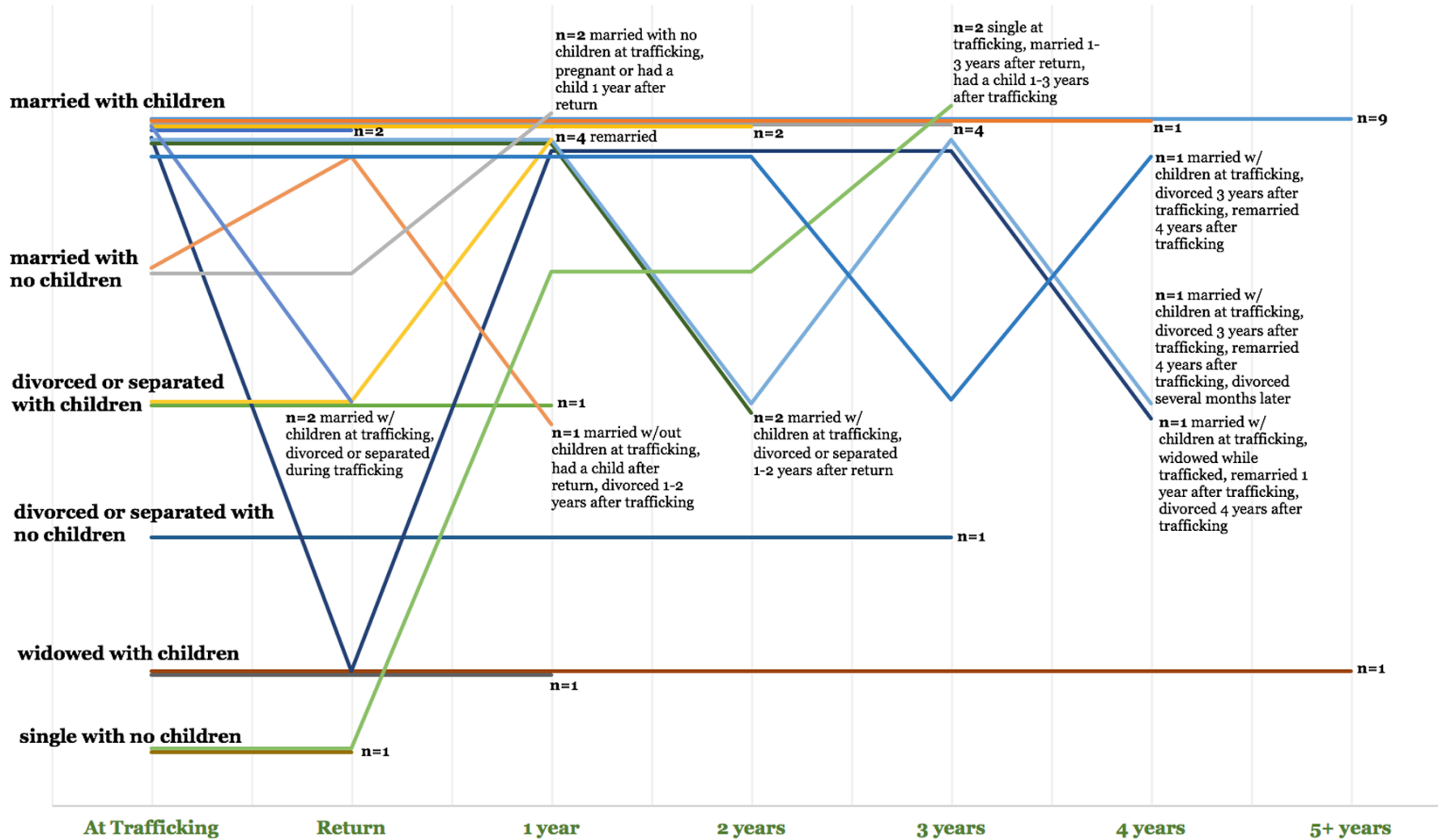
By contrast, the two women trafficked for domestic work who were widowed (with children) when trafficked had not remarried at the time of our interviews. One woman, mentioned above, who was widowed while she was trafficked for domestic work later remarried because she was worried about her widow status, as she explained:

As a widow, I don't want the neighbors to gossip [about] me because of my status. At that time, I thought that if there was a man who approached me and liked me, it would be better to get married. It would be better for the kids also. After one year, there was a man who approached me and asked me to marry him. He is a relative of my husband. Then I agreed to marry with him.

She eventually separated from her second husband, between our first and second interview with her.

Changes and fluctuations in marital status over time for the 39 women trafficked for domestic work are detailed in Diagram #4, below.

Diagram #4. Marital status of women trafficked for domestic work at trafficking, return and over the course of reintegration



Women trafficked for sexual exploitation also experienced fluidity in marital status over time. They were generally quite young when trafficked - eleven (of 20) were still girls (between 13 and 17 years) and nine were adults (between 18 and 32 years).

Of 20 women trafficked for sexual exploitation, six were married when trafficked. Three who were married were still girls when trafficked, as one (now a young woman) explained: "I felt like I was not a wife but a daughter because I was 14 years old and he was 32 years old". Two women trafficked for sexual exploitation were trafficked by their husbands, one when she was still a girl and pregnant with their first child.

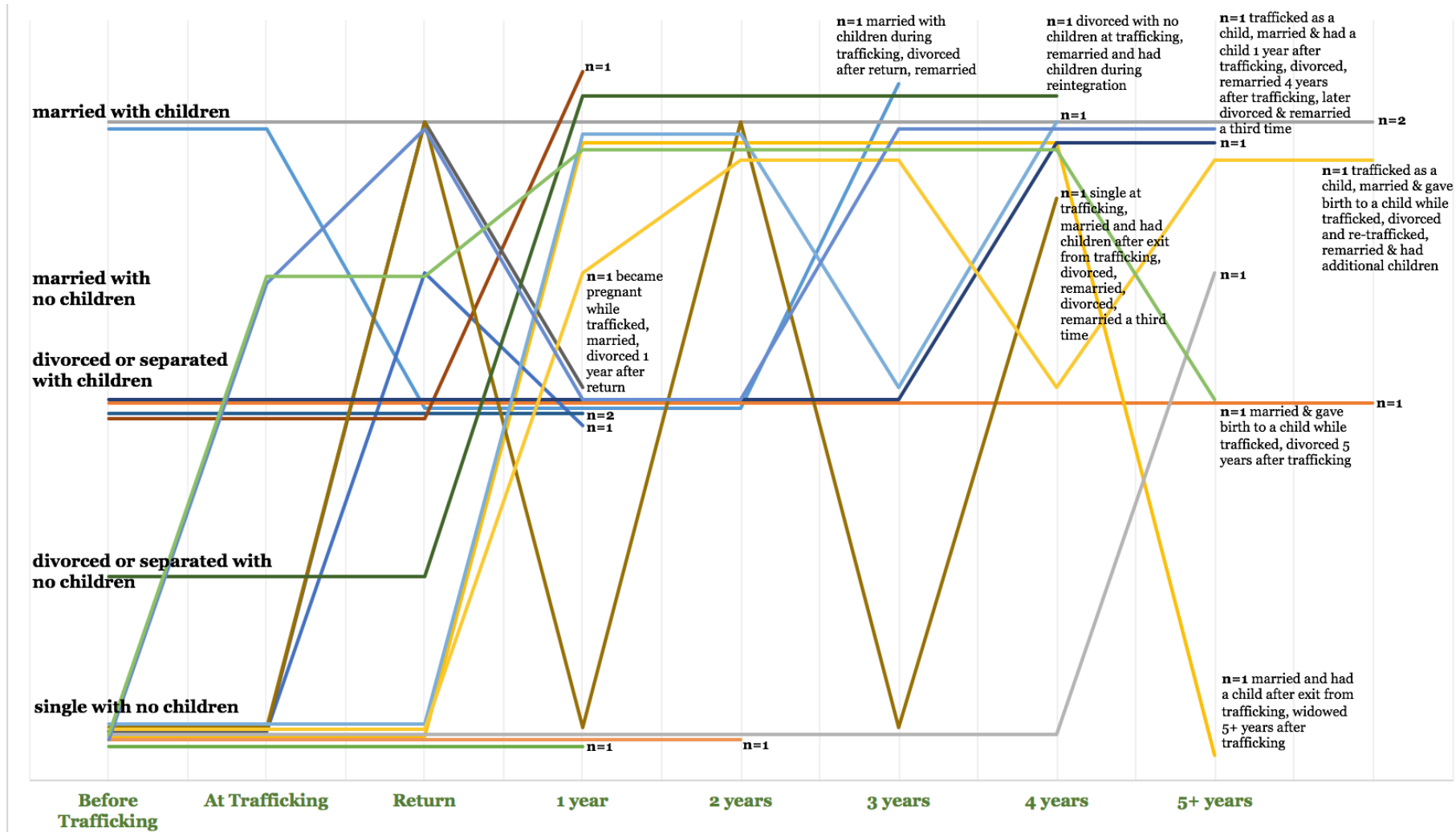
Two (of nine) women who were unmarried when trafficked then married, either while they were trafficked or after leaving their trafficking situation. Pregnancy led to marriage for at least three women trafficked for sexual exploitation, as one woman described: "I was married by accident. I got pregnant. I got married when I was seven months pregnant". Another woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation at age 17, eventually married one of her clients after becoming pregnant, albeit only very briefly as she explained: "[He] finally said, 'Okay, I will marry her'. Then he married me. After [I had] a daughter, he left me after three months... In fact, I was his seventh wife". She was re-trafficked after giving birth to her daughter and met her second husband who was also a client. He helped her to leave her trafficking situation, she lived with him and they eventually formally married, as she explained: "We rented a house together. We just lived together without being married...until one day...we got caught by the local government because we were living together without getting married and we were brought to the village office [to be married]". Her second husband died during the research project, shortly after she gave birth to his child and just before our second interview with her.

Two (of five) women who were divorced with children when trafficked remarried over the course of reintegration. One woman who was divorced with no children when trafficked later remarried. One woman, who married the man who assisted her to escape from her trafficking situation, was eventually widowed and had not remarried at the time of her interviews.

That being said, some women's situations remained the same over the course of their life after trafficking. Two (of six) women trafficked for sexual exploitation who were married with children when trafficked stayed married over the course of their post-trafficking lives. Three (of five) women who were divorced with children when exploited were still divorced when interviewed. Two (of nine) women who were unmarried when trafficked were still unmarried with no children when interviewed.

Changes in marital status over time for the 20 women trafficked for sexual exploitation are detailed in Diagram #5, below.

Diagram #5. Marital status of women trafficked for sexual exploitation at trafficking, return and over the course of reintegration



Trafficked men involved in this study also experienced changes in marital status over time, although with less variation than women.

Of the 29 men trafficked for labor (for fishing, construction, factory work and on plantations) who were married when trafficked, 26 remained married after trafficking. However, two (of 29) divorced or separated from their wives after returning home. And, in handful of other cases, men reported marital discord and problems that had the potential to lead to divorce. In some cases, it seemed possible that these marriages would not survive the pressure of trafficking and post-trafficking reintegration.



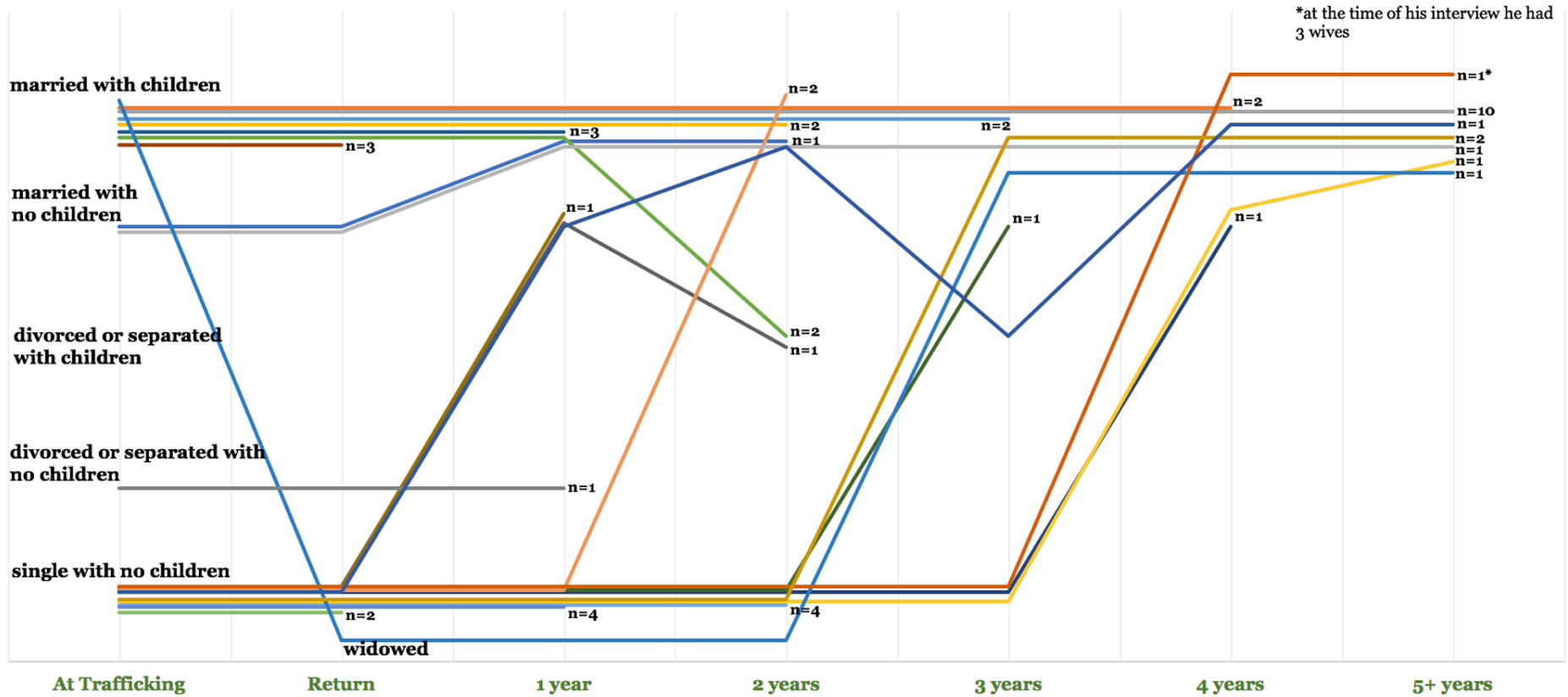
Men working as fishers in the Jakarta port. Photo: Peter Biro.

Of the 19 men who were unmarried when trafficked, ten were still unmarried at the time of being interviewed. Eight men who were single when trafficked subsequently married over the course of their reintegration. However, not all marriages lasted. One man divorced his wife within two years of being married; another man married and divorced three times in the years since his return. And one man, who was unmarried when trafficked, married upon his return from abroad, divorced his wife within a matter of months and later remarried another woman.

One man was divorced at trafficking and still divorced at the time of his interview. One man was widowed a few months after returning from trafficking, but he had since remarried and remains married after a number of years.

Changes in marital status over time for the 49 men trafficked for labor (fishing and other forms of labor) are detailed in Diagram #6, below.

Diagram #6. Marital status of men trafficked for labor at trafficking, return and over the course of reintegration



Family environment and living arrangements after trafficking

In the majority of situations (65 of 108), trafficking victims returned to live in the same family environment where they had been living when they migrated/were trafficked and this was typically the same setting in which they eventually reintegrated.¹¹³ Table #8 (below) details the living situation of these 65 respondents after return and over the course of reintegration.

Table #8. Living situation of respondents at time of trafficking and during reintegration, disaggregated by sex and form of trafficking¹¹⁴

Returned to and remained in the same living situation as before trafficking	Men trafficked for different forms of labor (n=30)		Women trafficked for sexual exploitation (n=10)		Women trafficked for domestic work (n=25)	
	Nuclear family setting	8	Nuclear family setting	1	Nuclear family setting	13
	With parent(s)	10	With parent(s)	7	With parent(s)	4
	With parent(s)-in-law	10	With parent(s)-in-law	1	With parent(s)-in-law	4
	Other (with siblings; with grandparents)	2	Other (with grandparents)	1	Other (alone with children; with grandparents; with aunt)	4

Respondents who were married often returned to live in a nuclear family setting – with a spouse and children. Many married respondents, though, lived in more extended family settings, with parents or parents-in-law also in the same household. In some cases, this involved victims’ parents or parents-in-law living with them. However more commonly this involved living in the homes of their parents or parents-in-law, which typically involved different (and often more complicated) living arrangements, as siblings and siblings-in-law (and their children) often shared the same home.

Those who were unmarried commonly lived with their parents after return or, less commonly, on their own. Some unmarried victims lived with their extended family members, including siblings, aunts and uncles and grandparents.

Some trafficked persons were single parents, due to divorce or widowhood, and lived with their children and with extended family or in-laws (usually parents or parents-in-law). Some trafficked persons were widowed or divorced and lived alone after trafficking. Some lived with small children whom they were raising alone. Others had adult children who either lived with them (sometimes along with their spouses and children) or lived elsewhere and the respondent lived alone. Some respondents did not return to live with their families at all.

That being said, even in situations where respondents returned to the same family environments where they had been living before trafficking, some experienced changes in the makeup of the family environment, such as an elderly parent moving in, getting married

¹¹³ Some victims returned to the same communities they had been living in before being trafficked, but not to the same family environment. Community environment is discussed in the next section. While 79 respondents were reintegrating in their home communities, only 65 of these 79 returned to live in the same family environment in which they had been living when they migrated.

¹¹⁴ This information reflects victims’ living situations from return to five years after trafficking. It reflects the individual’s most permanent and consistent living situation in his/her life after trafficking. For example, if an individual spent a few weeks in a shelter upon return, but then returned to live with his/her parents, this is categorized as “living with parents”. More permanent changes in living situations are accounted for in Table #9 – for example, if someone was living with parents before trafficking and then married after trafficking, but returned to live with parents as well as with the spouse, this would not be counted as “living with parents”. Rather, this respondent (and the changes in familial makeup/the individual’s living situation) would be included and detailed in Table #9.

and having a spouse move in, having additional children, a spouse leaving/migrating for work, caring for extended family and so on. These different arrangements directly informed and influenced life after trafficking and reintegration patterns and outcomes. As Table #9 (below) details, 43 respondents had a changed living situation after return and over the course of reintegration.

Table #9. Changes in victims' living situation over the course of their post-trafficking lives¹¹⁵

Men trafficked for different forms of labor (n=19)		Women trafficked for domestic work (n=14)		Women trafficked for sexual exploitation (n=10)	
Nuclear family before TIP, temporary accommodation after TIP while pursuing legal case	5	Nuclear family before TIP, divorced and living with parents after TIP	1	With parents before TIP, married and reintegrating in nuclear family	4
With parents before TIP, temporary accommodation after TIP while pursuing legal case	1	Nuclear family before trafficking, divorced and lived alone with children during reintegration	1	With parents before TIP, back and forth between shelter, parents and husband after TIP	1
With grandmother before TIP, temporary accommodation while pursuing legal case	1	With parents before TIP, temporary shelter after TIP, pursuing legal case	1	Nuclear family setting before TIP, divorced and living with parents after TIP	1
With parents-in-law before TIP, nuclear family during reintegration	1	With parents before TIP, with sibling after TIP, remarried and living in nuclear family	1	With parents before trafficking, with a sibling during reintegration	1
With parents before TIP, married and living with parents-in-law during reintegration	1	Nuclear family setting before TIP, working in another community after TIP, away from family	1	With parents before TIP, with husband and child after trafficking, widowed and now living with her son and parents	1
With parents before trafficking, married/remarried and in nuclear family after TIP	2	With parents or parents-in-law before TIP, in nuclear family during reintegration	2	With parents before TIP, with parents after TIP, married and living with husband and children	1
With parents before TIP, widowed for some time, later remarried and in nuclear family during reintegration	1	Nuclear family before TIP, initially in nuclear family after TIP, then a relative living in her nuclear family during reintegration	1	With parents before TIP, with parents after trafficking, then married and lived with husband, divorced, remarried and lived with husband and children	1
With parents before TIP, divorced and remarried (three marriages) and in nuclear family during reintegration	1	Alone with children before TIP, with sister after trafficking, lived alone, then living with one daughter	1		
With parents-in-law before TIP, nuclear family during reintegration	1	Divorced and living with parent(s) before TIP, remarried after TIP and living with parent(s) and husband	3		

¹¹⁵ This information details changes in victims' living situations from return to five years after trafficking.

With parents before TIP, with brother after TIP, then married and lived with wife in temporary accommodation while pursuing legal case	1	Single and living with parents before TIP, married and lived with parents and husband, then moved in with parents-in-law and husband	1	
Working away from family before TIP, living with parents afterward while wife migrated for work and then with parents-in-law	1	With parents-in-law and husband before TIP, after TIP husband migrated for work so living with her mother and children	1	
With parents before TIP, with parents after TIP, moved in with aunt and uncle	1			
With extended family before TIP, with extended family after trafficking, married living with wife in extended family	1			
Single and living with parents before TIP, married and living with parents and wife during reintegration	1			

Nonetheless, family composition and residential patterns were also fluid and often changed at various stages of reintegration, not least in response to changes in victims’ marital status. This necessarily influenced how reintegration played out at various stages of their post-trafficking lives.

In many cases, the family and household composition changed many times over the course of reintegration. One woman who was widowed while trafficked returned to live with her children and mother-in-law. After about one year she remarried and moved to live with her new husband while her children remained living with her mother-in-law, albeit in the same neighborhood. After a few years, she separated from her second husband and returned to live with her mother-in-law and three sons. Similarly, one woman who returned initially to live with her husband and in-laws later divorced (for the second time) and was living independently with her children and nephew at the time of her interview.

As such, there is a wide range of family members who may be involved to varying degrees in the reintegration process, including at different stages, and, as a result, a number of variables and factors come into play. Moreover, the family environment is often a complex terrain with different layers of support and tensions. Even within any one family setting, different family members manifested various (and often contradictory) actions and reactions, attitudes and behaviors, especially over time and in response to external factors. Some family members were supportive and helpful; others were critical and unsupportive. All of these factors and variations differentially influenced reintegration outcomes for victims and their wider families – sometimes positively, sometimes negatively.

5.1 Supportive family environment

Family was, for almost all victims, the primary source of support and assistance after trafficking and in the longer-term. This was a function of victims’ desire to be with their loved ones; returning to family was in most cases the preferred choice. But it was also a function of necessity, the general lack of services and support and the limited reach of services and support at a local, community level. While there are services and assistance in

Indonesia, these have limited reach to remote villages and individuals engaged in informal employment. Moreover, the benefit levels for the chronic poor are inadequate to provide effective social protection.¹¹⁶

Many respondents found that family generally was a safe, supportive and protective environment. They came from happy and healthy family settings before being trafficked and returned also to a generally positive family environment. Coming home was, in these cases, an emotional but happy time. Victims received a positive reception from their family members at return. Both trafficked persons and their family members described feelings of relief, joy and gratitude. Box #1 (below)

Box #1. Family actions and reactions when trafficking victims returned home

[My daughter] said she was so grateful when she saw me arrive home. [She cried] a lot. *(Woman trafficked for domestic work)*

They are good to me. They knew that I got home without bringing any money. They gave me cigarette and coffee, even though I did not ask for them. My parents are the same. They would give me money. *(Man trafficked for fishing)*

[My husband] said, “Maybe our destiny does not change, we work together, here. Even if it is not much, we could be together”. *(Woman trafficked for domestic work)*

My husband is the type of person who let things go. He thinks that since it is in the past, the most important thing is that I was safe. He did not want to prolong the problem, he thought it wastes time...After what happened he asked me to just stay home. I did not have to work. He told me he is the one who will work. *(Woman trafficked for sexual exploitation)*

My mother just felt grateful because there are others who didn't come back. There are many of them who can't go back home and suffer violence there (while abroad). Even though I didn't get paid she just thought that I can come home and that's what's important. *(Woman trafficked for domestic work)*

I think my mother really missed me after nine months working abroad. She hugged me and asked me how this happened...So, thank God, my mother seemed grateful that I came home safe and sound even though I was unsuccessful. *(Man trafficked for fishing)*

Thank God, there's no problem [with my wife] ... She worries more about what to eat the next day when we're short on cash. Sometimes she borrows money if I hadn't gotten any job. [My wife and parents-in-law], we stick together whether there was something to eat or there wasn't. No, they never [get angry]. [...] Yes, my children cared about me, never gave me any trouble. *(Man trafficked for labor)*

My husband is kind because he felt sorry for me, so sorry, so he guides me everywhere. When he went to work, he says, “Be careful, don't touch anything. Just sit still.” He prepares rice and side dish if we have any money. *(Woman trafficked for domestic work)*

My aunty also said, “*Alhamdulillah* [thank God] you can return home. Even though you did not bring any money, it's okay. The most important thing is that you are safe. Money will not be useful if you are not able to return home safety” she said. *(Woman trafficked for domestic work)*

¹¹⁶ Ramesh, M. (2014) ‘Social Protection in Indonesia and the Philippines: Work in Progress’, *Journal of Southeast Asian Economies*, 31(1).

The neighbors were badmouthing me but [my wife] was on my side. *Alhamdulillah* [thank God], she accepts me for who I am. (*Man trafficked for construction*)

My family gave me counseling. Only them. Since I was so stressed. It was not about the material thing, but I was so stressed because of my marriage relation with my husband. [...] When I was stressed so much, all of my family and relatives were supporting me. (*Woman trafficked for domestic work*)

[When I just returned home, my mother treated me] very well, she prioritized my health. She said, “Don’t go out of home if your leg has not been recovered”. She said, “Before your leg [is better], don’t go out of house, don’t leave out of [the town], don’t go out of town, heal first your leg, after that it up to you if you want to go anywhere”. (*Man trafficked for fishing*)

Family members interviewed for this study also spoke about their positive feelings when trafficking victims returned home and their willingness to support them.

Box #2. Family members’ feelings and reactions

Even if she has no job at all, but I am happy with her being home. [No matter] how difficult our situation is, it is enough that I have her here. [...] As her parent, it is my responsibility when she is home. (*Mother of woman trafficked for sexual exploitation*)

As a mother, as long as she has returned I am happy already. (*Mother of woman trafficked for domestic work*)

Basically, my daughter is a good girl. She was just a victim. (*Mother of young woman trafficked for sexual exploitation*)

In addition to emotional support, victims were also often able to rely on family for more tangible support and assistance, including a place to live, food and money and help in caring for their children and dependents. One man, trafficked for fishing, explained how his siblings assisted his family a great deal: “[We received] staples often from my older and younger siblings. Food and also money. They gave (not lent) me because they felt sorry for me”. Similarly, one woman, trafficked for domestic work, was also able to rely on support from her siblings: “[My siblings] gave me money so I could eat. I didn’t buy anything so they give me [money] when they come here... and my adopted younger brother gave me money because he knew my condition. He knew everything because I told him”. Said another woman, who returned from being trafficked for domestic work: “My little brother who is in Jakarta helped us a lot. He lent us money to come back here”. One man, trafficked for fishing, described how his older sister supported him both financially and emotionally: “My sister used to give me an allowance. Maybe because she is working, sometimes she brings some food to [my work] for us... at least twice in a month... after she gets her monthly salary, she will take me to have meals outside. [...] Sometimes she gives me an allowance as well... She understands my position”.

One young woman, trafficked for prostitution, returned home to a supportive environment and, although her parents knew of her involvement in prostitution (which is socially stigmatized), this did not destroy their relationship. Her mother and step-father supported her throughout her reintegration, now 18 months since she was first identified: “Even if she has no job at all, but I am happy with her being home. [No matter] how difficult our situation is, it is enough that I have her here”. Both parents spoke about their concern for their daughter’s well-being generally and desire not to upset her after what she had endured. Her mother explained it as follows: “I now treat her more carefully... I do not want her to feel unwelcome and leave. That is why when I am upset I keep it to myself. [...] I worry that she

will not feel free at home and start to go out to her friends”. Her step-father also expressed his gratitude that she was home and his acceptance of the family situation: “...we must always be grateful with everything we have. Sometimes we have everything and the next day we have nothing. We still have to be grateful because that is just how we are supposed to live. We cannot always get everything that we want in this world”. As this young woman said herself: “Yes [family relationships are] good, we never have a problem. [...] [My mother] said, ‘Okay, the past is past’. She is happy because her daughter now stays at home”.



Villagers in a community in rural West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

Even relationships that were (or might have been) damaged over the course of trafficking and reintegration could, in some situations, be restored and repaired. One woman, who returned home with a child born from a rape she suffered while trafficked, explained that both her husband and mother accepted her and her child in spite of tremendous stigma and community discrimination in the deeply religious and conservative district in West Java in which they lived: “[My husband] did not say much. My husband did not ask much about it. Other husbands may ask, ‘What happened? How was it?’... but not my husband. He did not question things... He did not say anything [...] My mother was also the same”. And her daughter, six months old when they returned, was accepted by her husband: “He brought her in his arm. She is just like his own child. Even now, it does not matter how upset he is, he never says anything about it. My husband is a quiet man”. This was the case although some extended family members (including her husband’s closest sibling) encouraged him to reject her and neighbors and the local religious leader labeled her “an adulteress” and treated her as such.

Similarly, one woman whose husband had been unfaithful while she was exploited described the devastating impact this had on her. But now, two years since her return, she described an improved situation in their marriage: “Our relationship is good. Even though we are poor. He is not flirting with another girl anymore”. Another woman, trafficked for domestic work, described a tense return home and issues in her relationship with her husband and eldest

child. But the situation had improved over the years since her return: “Compared with the time when I just arrived home my relationships with the children and husband [are] better now. They understood about my situation and experiences after getting my explanation”.

One young man spoke about the slow but eventual repair to his family relationships after the return of his mother who was trafficked for domestic work. At her return, family relations were broken and there was much hurt and pain: “The challenge was to rebuild this family again because it has been a long time [since we were happy]”. He described grief at the loss of their father which led directly to their mother needing to work abroad; resentment on the part of his siblings who were jealous that they, as small children, had not enjoyed the happy times in the family; and anger at his mother for what he and his siblings experienced as abandonment. But now, more than two years since her return, relations in the family had improved: “I think, this current time, it is much better than before. About my mother... she is little bit healthy, calmer, it is not like before. Even I pity my younger brother and sister... they are still young but they get the impact as well”.

5.2 Tensions, strains and challenges in the family setting

Nonetheless, even in positive family settings, reintegration was not uncomplicated and initial feelings of relief and happiness at return often gave way in the face of a range of different stresses and pressures that emerged in families over time. Trafficked persons and their families experienced strain and tensions on different levels and in relation to various factors, as will be explored in more detail below.

In more complex family settings, trafficking victims often returned home to profoundly unsupportive settings. In some families, tensions and problems preceded trafficking and may also have contributed to the decision to migrate. Trafficking exploitation and the associated problems introduced an additional layer of pressure and tension to be managed and navigated by the victim and his/her family members over the course of reintegration. One young woman had serious problems with her step-mother against whom she rebelled as a teenager. Her return after trafficking was fraught with conflict with her step-mother. She found living at home stressful and described being criticized by her step-mother, which made her feel unloved and unappreciated within her family: “[My step-mother] told me I was not a good child. I couldn’t do anything right and I became like this (a trafficking victim) because I was sick and my father preferred [her]”.

Similarly, another woman described how she had divorced her husband because he did not support their family (“My husband was irresponsible, he did not want to work. I dared to end it”) and how she had migrated to support her two children. However, having been trafficked, she returned home without money and could not find work to support her children. Moreover, her husband was angry about the divorce and took revenge by taking the oldest child to live with him and not supporting the younger child. She described the very difficult emotional and economic situation she faced over the year after her return:

He said I cannot see my boy. Maybe he is afraid that my boy would go with me and he cannot do anything. He said he wants to take my daughter when she is big... People asked why he only took the big one. If he took the little one, he would know the price of the milk... It seems like she is not his child. He never touched or kissed her, never gave even 5,000IDR [0.45USD]¹¹⁷, even though others give this to her.

Notwithstanding different personal narratives and family contexts and dynamics, there were nonetheless some common issues and tensions faced in the family setting when Indonesian

¹¹⁷ The exchange rate from Indonesian Rupiah (IDR) to United States Dollar (USD) is calculated at a rate of 1USD = 11,000IDR. As exchange rates have varied significantly in the past year, calculations have been made using the average exchange rate from 2010-2016.

trafficking victims returned home and sought to reintegrate into their families. These tensions – often multi-layered and coterminous – are discussed below. These include financial problems in the family (no remittances and the burden of debt); being stressed and distressed following trafficking; feelings of shame, facing stigma and blame; and damaged or destroyed personal relationships. At the same time, and as discussed above, even when these features came into play, they were not irrevocable and many trafficked persons were able to navigate, manage and overcome tensions and problems faced within the family over time.

5.2.1 Financial problems in the family. The cost of migration to victims and their families

No remittances and the burden of debt

Both men and women in Indonesia contribute to the household economy and both male and female trafficking victims poignantly felt the need to earn money to support their families. All Indonesian trafficking victims interviewed had migrated, in large part, to earn money to support their families – e.g. to build a house or buy land, put children through school, start a small business, support parents and siblings and/or to care for a sick family member.¹¹⁸ As such, the most outwardly visible source of tension within families after trafficking victims returned home was related to financial and economic problems because they had not remitted money while trafficked nor come home with money.

A small number of trafficking victims were able to remit or return home with some money, which eased at least the immediacy of financial issues. But any amount was far less than was promised to and expected by their families, either because victims had been paid a different amount than agreed in the contract or because they had their salaries largely withheld. And, in some cases, “payment” only covered the victim’s transportation costs, as explained by one woman, trafficked for domestic work for almost two years: “I was given three months payment which I used to purchase [my plane] ticket back home”. In one instance the very small amount of money that one woman brought home was spent on funeral rites for her recently deceased husband: “It was so difficult and full of sadness. I have three children without a husband. I only brought home 500,000 IDR [45USD] ... I used all of that money for seven days of mourning [*tahlilan*]”.

Some trafficking victims also migrated in an effort to have more control over their lives – e.g. to live independently from their parents or in-laws, and “failing” at migration meant failing to realize this economic independence. As one woman, trafficked for domestic work, explained: “I saw my friends around there were successful. They could build their own house and buy a farm. I wanted to try. Maybe I would be like them. I really wanted to have my own house and be separated from my father-in-law so that I could be free”. Similarly, one man, trafficked for labor, described the constraints and limitations of not owning and living in his own home, including being looked down upon by others. He broke down in tears when describing how desperately he wanted a home for his family: “[I migrated] because I wanted to have my own house. People always looked down on me. [...] Sorry, I am in tears now [...] I went [abroad] to change my life. I was always insulted by my mother-in-law... Then my older sibling insulted me constantly so that is why I made up my mind to [migrate for work]”.

¹¹⁸ This is consistent with migrants generally, for whom the overwhelming motivation for migration is to improve their economic situations. In Indonesia, predominant items for remittance use include acquisition of land and housing and housing improvements. For example, one survey of 100 overseas contract workers from Java identified the following uses for remittances: 45.8% – housing; 27.1% – land purchase; 24.2% – daily family needs; and 2.7% – business enterprises. Hugo, G. (1995) ‘International Labor Migration and the Family: Some Observations from Indonesia’, *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 4(2-3), pp. 290-292. Another study found remittances were used for schooling costs and day-to-day necessities for family. Mantra, I.B., T.M. Kasnawi and Sukamardi (1986) *Movement of Indonesian Workers to the Middle East*. Indonesia: Population Studies Center, Gadjah Mada University, p. 128.



A former migrant worker in her home in a district of West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

Debt also caused or contributed to tension within families. Some victims (or their family members) were in debt prior to migration and they migrated to repay this debt. Further, most trafficking victims incurred debt as part of their migration – to a moneylender, an agent, the recruitment agency, family or neighbors.¹¹⁹ One woman, when asked about her most urgent issue, spoke about debt to her neighbor: “I need assistance to pay my debt [to my neighbors] ... I borrowed money to go abroad and I thought I would succeed but I failed”. One young woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation as a girl, explained that she was forced to remain in prostitution to repay her father’s debt to her pimp/exploiter.

Some migration debt was owed to family members, which sometimes eased the pressure to immediately repay the debt and/or meant not needing to pay interest on the debt. But this was not always the case and some family debt caused additional problems. One man, trafficked for fishing, could not go home to his village because he felt pressured by his relatives to repay his debt. Moreover, even when families did not exert such pressure, victims still felt the burden of debt, as one man, trafficked for fishing, explained of debt to his parents:

¹¹⁹ In Indonesia, most trafficking victims start out as migrant workers and migrate through both formal and informal agencies and brokers. In both instances, the migrant worker will commonly incur debt to cover various recruitment fees and the cost of training, medical examinations, the visa and passport needed to migrate for work and the cost of travel to the destination country. Prospective migrant domestic workers typically pay a fee to both the agent and the recruitment agency and these fees are relatively high, considering that the official poverty line in Indonesia is a monthly per capita income of 312,328 IDR [28USD] and minimum wage (which varies by province) is between 1.2 and 2.7 million IDR [approximately 110-245USD] per month. The women interviewed for this study reported paying fees from 2-3 million IDR [approximately 180-273 USD] to migrate for work. Men interviewed reported paying fees from 800,000 IDR to 10 million IDR [73USD to 909USD] to migrate for work. In many cases, the fees to the individual agent were paid up front, while debts to the recruitment agency were deducted directly from the (trafficked) migrant worker’s earnings in the destination country.

...we already spent a lot of mother's jewelry. It was sold when I was leaving to buy medicine and pay for transportation expenses. Until now I still have a strong will to take it all back. In this regard, I owe my parents. That's why I would prioritize them first if I have money or anything, even though I have a wife already. I have even told her that. I have financial obligation to my parent.

Some victims incurred debt to pay for transportation home when they were unidentified as trafficking victims. Some respondents owed money to family members who looked after children left behind during the individual victim's migration/trafficking. This was particularly common among female trafficking victims who were not always able to rely on their children's fathers to care for children while they worked abroad. One divorced mother of two, trafficked for domestic work, described how her elderly mother and father struggled to support her children while her ex-husband provided no financial support in her absence. She explained how her mother had to borrow money from her ex-husband's sister to cover the children's needs: "[My sister-in-law] said, 'You have a debt of three million IDR [273USD]. It was for your children when they went to see the doctor and to buy some milk'... I realized that my ex-husband never gave any money".

Some trafficking victims went into debt after trafficking, borrowing money when they were unable to work, due to injuries or illness induced by trafficking or lack of work in the community. Even those who were able to find work after trafficking often did odd jobs or the working hours were unpredictable, with an equally unpredictable salary. This further strained family finances and, by implication, relationships.

Trafficking victims' feelings and reactions to financial pressures

Trafficked persons expressed their dismay, frustration and disappointment at returning home without any money, often having worsened the family's financial situation. Many described their arrival home as bittersweet; their joy at being home was diluted by their inability to realize family's expectations. One woman, trafficked for domestic work, said of arriving home without any money: "It was difficult. The family was here and the child was still small. They asked, 'What do you bring home? I want this and that. I want a bicycle'. I just cried because I did not bring anything". Similarly, one man, trafficked for fishing, described similarly contradictory feelings when he returned home: "It was a happy, yet sad moment. On one hand, I was happy that I finally got out of jail [irregular migrant detention center]. On the other hand, I was sad I didn't bring home any money".

Some trafficking victims were divorced, separated or widowed, which meant that they had even less of a support system after their failed migration. For many divorced female respondents, ex-husbands had not supported their children during their absence or after return. One woman described how she suffered emotionally as a result of having been an unsuccessful migrant and what this meant for her family: "I suffered, [I was] in pain. I was divorced from my husband. When I returned home, I was also sick. I did not bring any money since my salary was not paid... There was also a big expectation from my family since my family was so poor and thought that I could fulfill their needs". Another woman, twice divorced and struggling to support her child, described her deep sadness over having returned without money: "I am sad. I am sad because I want to send my daughter to school but I do not have any money. Now I work in the rice field. I do not have anything. I am poor".

Many victims described frustration and disappointment at how failed migration undermined their relationship with their children. Both men and women in Indonesia play important roles in supporting their families. Being able to remit money allows them to realize their family expectations and obligation – as husband/father or wife/mother. Not being able to earn and remit money to one's family because of having been trafficked meant "failing" in that parental/spousal role. As one domestic worker explained: "My son was upset and disappointed in me since I could not buy him anything... When I had just arrived at the

village, I felt ashamed”. Remittances from a migrant mother (evidence that that she is fulfilling her maternal role to care for and support her children) may be particularly important given the woman’s role as central in child-rearing and in the private sphere and because her absence may be felt more pronouncedly within the family.¹²⁰

Actions and reactions of family members

Failure to remit or return with money was a source of considerable stress for family members who were left behind. Although grateful and happy about the return of their loved ones, there was often an overlay of concern and tension related to victims having come home with no money.¹²¹ One woman, exploited as a domestic worker abroad described such a scenario when she returned home:

After arriving home, I was well received by my family. My mother was so happy to see me. My son was happy. I was also happy to see him. He is a good son. My husband was grateful to see me at first. He was also crying at that time. He was worried for my safety... However, after some days, my husband was sometimes angry with me. He said, “You did not bring any money, after a long time [abroad]”. He said that continuously especially when we needed money and fought with each other. There was a kind of fear and shame in me when my husband said that.

In many cases, the initially warm reception gave way to more negative reactions related to debt and lack of remittances. One man, trafficked for fishing, explained that his wife initially welcomed him home but the situation deteriorated over subsequent months and he faced consistent recriminations from his wife over his failure to send money to support his family:

[Our relationship when I returned] was pretty good. My wife once said that it was okay to just stay in the village, we could get by with whatever work we could find, live modestly. But eventually things changed. After seven months, her attitude started to change and she brought up the problem also when I was away sailing. [...] That I worked for three years but never sent money home for covering our children’s education, daily expenses. It always came down to that. So I thought that was because I went away sailing. It never became a problem previously when I was still working at [at home] even though the salary was not much.

He went on to say that he hoped to be able to work things out with his wife. He was currently working in the city and pursuing a compensation claim against his exploiters, money that he

¹²⁰ Brunovskis, A. and R. Surtees (2012) *No place like home? Challenges in family reintegration after trafficking*. Oslo: Fafo and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute, p. 31 and Brunovskis, A. and R. Surtees (2012) ‘Coming home: Challenges in family reintegration for trafficked women’, *Qualitative Social Work*. See also Bakker, C., M. Elings-Pels and M. Reis (2009) *The Impact of Migration on Children in the Caribbean*. New York: United Nations Children’s Fund, p. 9, noting that “migrant parents, in many cases, try to compensate for their absence by sending a significant amount of material resources”. Another study notes that a common strategy for upholding the mother role is to stay in contact by phone on a regular basis or send packages with presents and necessities (Hondagneu-Sotila, P. and E. Avila (1997) “I’m Here, but I’m There”: The Meanings of Latina Transnational Motherhood”, *Gender and Society*, 11(5), pp. 548-571.

¹²¹ The tension that trafficked persons and their families experienced as a result of victims returning home without earning money is consistent with research on the mental health of the family members of migrants, which found that the predictability and regularity of remittances influenced stress levels and mental well-being. In one study in Asia, including Indonesia, common mental disorders (CMD) for “carers” (family members left behind) who received remittances from migrant parent/partners within the last six months were 30% lower than for those who had not. Moreover, stay-behind Indonesian fathers had significantly higher odds of common mental disorders than other men, likely to do with the employment circumstances of their migrant wives and the need to redefine their gender role within the household. Graham, E., Jordan, L.P. and Yeoh, B.S.A. (2015) ‘Parental migration and the mental health of those who stay behind to care for children in South-East Asia’, *Social Science & Medicine*, 132.

hoped would go some way in addressing the problems with his wife: “It is my hope that I can work things out with my ex-wife, for the sake of our children since we’re not divorced officially yet.... There’s still hope. We just need to work on our economy”.

Other trafficked persons were less well-received and described a great deal of pressure from family members due to having returned home without money. This negatively influenced family relations over time. Where debt was involved, this added an additional layer of stress as one man, trafficked for labor, explained of his return to live with his parents after trafficking:

On Sundays, the talk about the debt to my parents always came up. I had to pay this and that. Meanwhile I only made this much money. How could I pay it off quickly? Saving up to 100,000IDR [9USD] already took ten days so it was a slow process. I told them to be patient. We argued constantly and that gave me headache. Also my parents always ask for this and that while I still need to pay my debt to them. They could see how much money I made, it was not much... Like for gas or electricity bill. [...] So it slowed me down in paying off debt because of these expenses. The condition with my parents was a bit hard.

In this instance, the situation deteriorated rather than improved over time, with the pressure to repay his debt increasing to a fevered pitch. He spoke of worsening relations with his mother and the pressure that this created for him:

[Family relations] are worse now. [...] At first my mother could realize this unfortunate event. But now she always demands that the debt to be paid. And she always tries to kick us out of the house. So it’s always in my thoughts. I couldn’t help but think how a parent could do that to her son, daughter-in-law and grandson. I seem calm but I’m under pressure.

Not all family members behaved in the same way. Trafficked persons often faced both supportive and unsupportive family members in the face of these economic problems. The man mentioned above, who was trafficked for fishing and faced problems with his wife after return, was fortunately able to find support from his mother: “My mother was worried that I was stressed out coming home with nothing (no money). She told me not to think about it too much. She encouraged me more when comparing to my wife. I owe her so much”. Similarly, the man mentioned above (who faced problems with his mother) explained how his wife was supportive and encouraging over the two and half years that he had been home: “She often comforts me by saying not to think too much about the debt, take care of my own health. Debt will be settled eventually, she said”. His father was also kind and supportive in spite of his mother’s recriminations. He explained that his father had been and continues to be kind and supportive and conscious of his difficult financial/economic situation, often interfering with and off-setting the behavior of his mother:

My father never gets angry. [...] He has been always good like that. He cares when I am in a pinch or when I have some fortune. He would tell my mother to leave me alone, not to ask for stuff. He is considerate of my financial condition. He doesn’t want to bother me because I just started working or doing some business again. But because he is a quiet person, my mother becomes more dominant. She is in charge in the house and nobody says anything because she is our mother. So those are the ones putting pressure. Sometimes I envy other families where parents are nice to their children. Am I not their child? But there’s no way I would say this to her. I don’t feel that I belong there.

Family reactions were not only about the trafficking victim failing in terms of the economic situation as a result of trafficking, but also about the family member’s own inability to assist

when a trafficked family member returned home. One woman's brother spoke about his deep sadness about his sister's situation – being a divorced mother of two with no job and serious health problems: "I am very sad seeing her life. She was married but her husband left her without reason and without financial support for her kids". He also spoke about his sadness and regret that he could not help her as he himself did not have a job and was struggling to make ends meet. As they had lost their mother as children and they had no other siblings, there were few options for her to receive support: "I am very sad to see her kids' life but I can't do anything because I don't [have] any job now. She is also jobless, she doesn't have any income. She is sick after return from [abroad]. She [went] abroad to work two times but she was unsuccessful again. She is now sick".



Man running a small food business in his community. Photo: Peter Biro.

That being said, financial concerns were not always a primary source of tension for all family members, even in dire economic situations. And it was, in some cases, possible for trafficked persons to find some level of support and encouragement in the family setting, from different family members – parents, siblings, spouses, children or aunts and uncles. One divorced mother of two went abroad, leaving her children with her parents while she was away. The grandparents struggled to support the children as the grandfather had just had a stroke and the grandmother did not work (and the children's father did not help at all). Nonetheless, she faced no recriminations from her parents: "...I was ashamed because I did not bring back any money. They said, 'Let it go. *Alhamdulillah* [thank God], you are back safely". Another woman described how her parents pitied her and sought to motivate her and support her reintegration: "[My parents] felt pity for my condition. They gave us support. My parents also told me that I should not look up but look down. There were a lot of people who suffer more than me. Also that I had to take care my children, that was the important thing since my husband neglected my children. So they said that to motivate me".

Some trafficking victims received financial help from different family members, which was of critical importance in their ability to move on from trafficking. For example, the woman

mentioned above, whose parents were so grateful for her return, also received financial support from her sister who mortgaged her motorcycle to be able to help her. Similarly, one man, trafficked for fishing, also described receiving financial support from his family after returning home: “I often received [financial] help from my parents. [...] Not a loan, it was given to me since I am the only child. I have no siblings. [...] My parents know that I have two children so there are expenses. *Alhamdulillah* [thank God] that they are capable of supporting us financially”.

5.2.2 Stressed and distressed. Tensions and conflict between victims and family

Sources of stress and distress borne of trafficking exploitation

Indonesian trafficking victims, trafficked for all forms of exploitation, returned home in very difficult circumstances. They were often mentally and physically unwell as a consequence of what they endured, including poor living conditions, inadequate food and water, dangerous and hazardous working conditions, prolific violence and abuse and/or lack of medical care.¹²²

Living conditions while exploited were, for most trafficked persons, inadequate and substandard. Trafficking victims lived in unhygienic and sometimes deplorable conditions for months and even years. Living quarters, regardless of the type of exploitation, were attached to the workplace, limiting options for free movement and contact with others. Victims generally received poor quality and insufficient food and, in some cases, limited access to drinking water. Some victims were permitted to eat only once or twice a day

Sources of stress and distress from trafficking exploitation

- poor living conditions
- inadequate food and water
- dangerous and hazardous working conditions
- violence and abuse
- lack of medical care

Without exception, trafficking victims (both male and female) were overworked, often inhumanely so. Trafficked domestic workers worked between 14 to 23 hours per day and women and girls trafficked for prostitution typically worked from evening (6pm or 7pm) until very early morning (2am to 4am). As one woman, trafficked for domestic work, explained: “I worked from 4am until 1am. I had to serve my employer and seven of their children alone”. Men trafficked on fishing boats worked hours ranging from ten to 24 hours each day, with about one third forced to work more than 20 hours each day. Men trafficked for other forms of labor – e.g. on plantations, factory work, construction – reported working shifts of twelve-hours, with one man working up to 20 hours a day in a factory. Rest was limited and often in brief intervals with regular interruptions, meaning that many trafficked persons never properly slept while trafficked. Most trafficking victims did not have any holidays or days off. As one trafficked domestic worker explained:

I slept at dawn and woke up at 7:30am. Quickly I had to make the kitchen neat and if I was late and it was not neat when my boss woke up, I would get hit. If the bathroom was not finished, I would get hit again. The house was so big and they had five children so there were seven people. I was exhausted. Moreover, they did not give me food. So, I was weak. I ate less and slept less so I got sick all the time. When I said I was sick, they did not believe me and I got beaten all the time.

¹²² Please see *Our Lives* for more detail about living and working conditions for trafficked persons, occupational health and safety while trafficked and violence and abuse suffered by respondents. Surtees, R. (2016) *Our Lives. Vulnerability and Resilience Among Indonesian Trafficking Victims*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute.

Indonesian trafficking victims were not provided with materials or equipment needed for their protection while exploited, including appropriate work clothes and protective equipment. Domestic workers commonly suffered injuries from exposure to detergents and cleaning agents. Some domestic workers were injured from domestic accidents like cooking fires and falling down stairs. Women trafficked into prostitution did not generally have access to condoms or other means of contraception or protection from sexually transmitted infections during sexual intercourse. Men trafficked on fishing boats seldom had protective equipment or suitable clothing in spite of hazardous working conditions and extreme climates. Men working on plantations and in factories also lacked protective equipment and were commonly exposed to workplace injury.



A man working in a rice mill in rural West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

Violence and abuse were commonplace for the vast majority of trafficking victims. This included physical, psychological and sexual violence, inflicted on male and female victims. Many trafficking victims suffered multiple forms of violence over the course of their exploitation, sometimes at the hands of more than one person. It was not uncommon for domestic workers to be abused by various family members in the houses where they were employed and sometimes, in addition, by recruitment agency staff. Women trafficked into prostitution often suffered violence at the hands of pimps/exploiters, security guards, police and clients. Physical violence was used prolifically against male and female trafficking victims, for all forms of exploitation, as a means of control, intimidation and a form of punishment. It was often very severe and cruel in nature. One man, trafficked on a fishing vessel in Latin America, described being beaten regularly and brutally: “I was beaten up using stick. It could be [bloody]. That’s why no one can stand it any longer”. One woman described multiple rapes while working in the Middle East as a domestic work: “I was raped by the male boss and [by] the agent too...I was alone with the security staff in the agency and it happened again... I did not know where to ask for help. I was tired... *Alhamdulillah* [thank God], I was not pregnant [...] If I got pregnant, I would be ashamed in my village”.

Violence and abuse often resulted in injuries or illness, as evidenced by the experience of one woman:

[My employer] often tortured me. Beat my head with a beer bottle, until the bottle was broken. My blood was flowing everywhere. She often beat me while her husband was not home. I wanted to report this to her husband, however, she threatened me and made me scared. She said, “If you report to my husband, then I will kill you!” She often beat me while asking me to work. One time I made a mistake because I was so tired and I fell asleep at 8pm on the stairs with a broom in my hand. She was so angry and tortured me, undressed me and beat me with a white cable. They told me to crawl on the floor and my back was beaten so hard with a big white cable... My tooth [was] also broken after [being] beaten with a big glass.

Many victims were psychologically impacted, even traumatized, by trafficking – becoming stressed, anxious and depressed. One woman, trafficked for domestic work, described her residual fear and stress many months after her escape, a fear which continues today, nearly a year since her return to her family: “I used to be frightened when I woke up late...as if I was still there [abroad]... Until now it is still [like this] ... I am frightened as if I am still there if I wake up late”. Said one man, trafficked for fishing: “[When I returned from trafficking] there was something on my mind. My salary, why was it not paid? It gave me a headache... I was down, lacking in energy. I didn’t know what to do. I was so down”.

Many victims were both physically and mentally unwell after trafficking, which was a source of stress and distress in their lives with their families. One man, trafficked into the fishing industry, explained what his life was like and what challenges he faced when he came home: “The main thing is that my mind was disorganized. I do not know its direction. [...]”. Another man, trafficked for labor, described similar physical and mental challenges when he returned home:

[My mental condition] was in a bad shape. I was sick for a long time. That was why I didn’t do any work. That was my lowest point. [...] I was unstable and shaken. I thought a lot about the costs and the unfortunate event when I was there. I had never experienced something like that before... I didn’t know what to feel actually. I didn’t know where to look for help.

Trafficking severely and negatively impacted the well-being of returned trafficking victims, both immediately and also in the longer-term. As one woman, trafficked for domestic work, explained, she was still very ill even years after her return home: “It has already been four years at home, I am still sick, I cannot sleep. I go to the hospital, the health center, the clinic. I just really want to be cured. I pray to be healthy”. Another woman described how she was still traumatized some years after returning home: “Until now, I don’t want to go [migrate for work]. I am afraid it will happen again. When I sleep, I wake up, then remembering what happened [when I was trafficked]. Until now, maybe it was five or six years ago, but it’s still happening, not removed from my life. I am traumatized”. Men trafficked for labor also spoke about being traumatized by their exploitation: “I was in trauma. I did not directly work at that time. I went here and there without certainty. I did not work immediately. [...] I was ashamed to take a walk. I only stayed at home”.

Actions, reactions and behaviors of trafficking victims

Being mentally and physically unwell informed victims’ behaviors and reactions, which, in turn, impacted relations with family members. A number of trafficked persons reported feeling anxious and irritable after return and over a period of time during reintegration. One man described being emotional and easily angered, which took a toll on his children: “[I was] emotional. The kids were in shock. I easily got angry”. Another man, trafficked on a fishing boat, explained how he was deeply embarrassed by his migration failure and struggled

mentally and emotionally once home: “It was very embarrassing. I didn’t go out of the house. I just stayed at home. I felt really down. In the end, I couldn’t meet my friends because I was so ashamed of my condition. Harmony in my family was not going well”. He explained how his feelings of stress led him to behave badly toward his family in spite of their on-going support: “It’s just that after that negative experience I feel that I get irritated easily. Whenever somebody says something, I’d get upset and emotional. Everything people did was wrong”. He went on to say:

I was quite hard [after I came home]. That’s why my parents didn’t want to communicate with me at times... [They were] not scared but they didn’t want to be blamed [by me]. Before, when they voiced their opinions, I would just brush it off as something that’s wrong. [I would say]: “Come on, you don’t know what I’m going through.” So they had to be very cautious and try to find the right time to deliver the message. That’s how I was. I was very selfish. In my opinion my selfishness was needed in severe situations.

Similarly, one woman, trafficked as a domestic worker, described being stressed, anxious and angry with her family when she first returned home. She was easily angered and often fought with her husband: “...my mind was everywhere. Sometimes I got angry with my husband... What did he do wrong that I was angry at him? But he never said a word”. However, her family relations had substantially improved over the three years since her return; she contrasted this tense period with the present: “My mind thinks normally again, unlike the first time when I returned. [...] *Alhamdulillah* [thank God] it’s more harmonious now compared to how we were before. [...] When the children were little, I got so irritated. Now they are bigger, the older one has grown up and understands”.

Other trafficking victims described being stressed or depressed at various stages of reintegration. One woman, who managed a dramatic and traumatic escape from exploitation, was still in shock when she arrived home and displayed erratic and socially unacceptable behavior for some period after her return, leading to reactions and criticism in her community: “When I just arrived at the village I was in shock. People in my village thought that I was a crazy person. They heard the news that I was stressed, escaped and hid in the jungle... Actually, I was not crazy. I just felt depressed and wanted to go home because I did not receive my salary”.

Such behaviors were often difficult for family members to understand, accept and tolerate, particularly over the longer-term. One woman described often talking to herself after returning home to live with her family. Her father was stressed and confused by her behavior: “[He was] always asking why I acted like that. But I did not know”.

Sources of stress and distress among victims’ family members

Family of trafficking victims were stressed and distressed by the trafficking of their loved one. There were multiple sources of stress – including knowledge of what the trafficking victim suffered while exploited, the victim exhibiting unstable or stressed behaviors and the effects of the victim’s (often long) absence while trafficked – and family members often described being afflicted by more than one of these.

Many family members struggled to come to terms with the knowledge of all that their family members had suffered while exploited. The mother of one young woman trafficked for prostitution was deeply affected when she learned about her daughter having been trafficked into sexual exploitation: “I was shocked. I fainted. I did

Sources of stress for the family

- knowing what the trafficking victim suffered
- victim’s unstable or stressed behaviors
- the victim’s absence while trafficked

not know anything”. The son of one woman trafficked for domestic work described his distress at seeing his mother so ill as a consequence of her exploitation: “[When my mother came home sick] I was sad. I felt fed up. I was feeling sad. Who would not feel sad to find his mother in a condition like that?” And one man trafficked for fishing described how his father struggled with sadness about his son’s weak physical and mental state after trafficking: “...Sometimes my father looks so sad looking at me as I went home skinny. Somehow my parents felt uncertain. They felt despair and sometimes they cry”.



A family having their evening meal in a small village in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

Another source of stress was victims’ sometimes unstable or stressed behaviors during reintegration. Trafficking victims often kept secret some (or even many) aspects of their exploitation, to protect loved ones from what they had suffered and endured. Because family members did not know the full story of what had happened while trafficked, it was often difficult for them to make sense of victims’ behaviors. Many victims told their family members that they had not been paid their salary or had had a “bad employer”. One woman explained that she had told her father and husband about her experience but not in full: “Yes, I told him. But not all... I told him also that I did not get paid and about my employer, this and that. But I did not tell them [some parts], even to my father and husband. I did not want anybody to feel sad”. Said another man, trafficked for labor: “[My family] finally asked to hear my story. But I did not tell them the whole story at once. I did not want them to be shocked. They would get sick hearing such a story. I only tell parts of my story, one bit at a time”. One man, trafficked for fishing, explained how he told his mother only bits and pieces of what had happened to him, disclosing other things only to his brother. But he even withheld the critical aspects of what had happened from his brother:

...Sometimes I share the stories on and off to my mother but I don’t know if she really gets it. [It was] bit by bit. [...] I didn’t tell her very directly because she has a weak heart. So if there’s something [hard] I will run to my little brother... But I didn’t dare [to tell the whole story]. I just gave him some highlights, about how I happened to be

in jail on the way back home. [...] I didn't share it [with my other siblings]. I'm a closed person when it comes to misery.

Another man, trafficked onto a fishing boat, said that he had not told his wife about what had happened to him abroad for fear of causing her further pain: "I didn't tell [my wife]. I don't want to make my wife sad. I just told her the nice part, not the terrible part... [I did not tell her] when I was at sea, the terrible things I experienced in the deep sea. I usually didn't tell her what had happened at my work. I just didn't want her at home to worry too much about me". Some victims shared their experiences with only one member of the family, as one woman trafficked for domestic work explained:

I never told my story to anyone. I only share this story today here. Even to my family, my children, I never told this story. People only want to find the bad things. It's better for me to keep silent. There is no one who can be my good listener, except my mother. I always shared my experiences with my mother. Everything. My mother already knew. And she was never told my story to anyone else. If my mother was still alive, perhaps I could share everything with her. I shared everything with my mother and she was the kind of person that was not talking too much. She never told (my story) to anyone.

Not knowing about the true nature of exploitation made it difficult for family to understand or appreciate the reason for victims' difficult or erratic behaviors and actions especially when these reactions and behaviors continued for long periods after return. Because family members were not equipped with information that would allow them to support their loved ones, they often instead experienced frustration, disappointment, anger and a range of other negative emotions. When asked about his wife's reaction upon his return, the same fisher mentioned above described it as: "Unhappy... [She was unhappy] knowing what I ended up with. I didn't bring money home and she'd been always waiting for [money] and it ended it up nothing".

Some trafficking victims did not intend to tell family members what had happened but ended up doing so in the end. One man described how his disclosure was important in receiving empathy and getting support from family members as well as in the community at large:

Initially I didn't want to tell them about my problems when I went abroad. After several days, I did tell them and they started crying and pitying me. They said I was fortunate that I was still able to get back when I didn't have any means of communication there... I told everyone. They all were located in proximity, so we gathered round and. In the evenings stories was told. Hence, I told about my working experience. Once they knew about it they started crying.... Initially I intended to cover it up, to avoid burdening my family.

That being said, some family members expressed irritation and frustration with victims' behaviors even when they were fully informed about their exploitation. This was especially the case when these reactions and behaviors continued over time. One woman was literally starved by her employer, forced to eat garbage to survive and completely isolated, coming home thin, physically ill and traumatized. She described her erratic behavior once home as a consequence of her maltreatment, telling everyone all of the time about what had happened to her. She continued in this way for many months, unable to come to terms with what had happened, and it ended up as a source of tension between herself and her husband:

I told my husband, the neighborhood, all of them. I kept telling them like a crazy person. Until my husband was getting bored with my story. My husband said, "Don't keep telling them about your stories, just keep silent...keep silent, because it's your experience, your fate is like that. In the past you are so happy, but now your fate isn't

good enough. So it's your fate, don't talk about it anymore...". I was starving. I had inner torment. My employer was really stingy. I took some food from the trash because I was really hungry.... [While abroad] I couldn't talk, I couldn't meet anybody.... I was just thinking about my employer, like a crazy person. I couldn't stop talking about it.

In addition to being affected and even traumatized by what victims had suffered, family members were also affected by what the victim's absence meant in their lives. Recent migration research finds a range of negative impacts for family members left behind, especially when regular communication is not.¹²³ One study of the impact of parental migration in Indonesia and the Philippines found a deficit in children's subjective well-being when communication with the migrant parent was not maintained.¹²⁴ There were also impacts for the stay behind "carer" – e.g. the spouse or parent/grandparent. One study in Indonesia noted adults who stayed behind had a number of health issues, including increased likelihood of psychosocial distress.¹²⁵ A recent study of four countries in Asia, including Indonesia, found that absence without contact, especially when prolonged and seemingly without reason, creates a major breach in transnational family relations and negatively impacts the psychological well-being of the stay-behind carer.¹²⁶ One Indonesian woman in a study of carers left behind by migrant workers described both physical and mental issues as a consequence of being the sole income earner with her husband not having remitted any money: "Since their father left, I often felt a headache [...] I feel dizzy, [as though] the world is turning around [...] maybe I'm too tired and I do not sleep enough [...] I work every day for my children's pocket money, for us to eat [...] I have a lot of things to think about [...] and nobody helps me".¹²⁷ This is akin to the experiences of many family members interviewed for this study.

Trafficking victims' absence can have a detrimental effect on family members remaining behind, particularly those who are dependent on economic and emotional support, namely children and aged parents.¹²⁸ Children were particularly affected by the parent's (and most commonly the mother's) absence. One woman returned home to her son whom she described as skinny, in large part because his father did not give money to her parents who were carrying for him while she was away. Another woman described problematic behavior from her son while she was away, including skipping school and smoking. After her return, her son told her that he wanted to go to a private school, but they couldn't afford it: "He had a hard time accepting that we were struggling to provide for him". She noted: "[My husband] said that it was tough at home if I wasn't around taking care of the children. He had a hard time parenting alone. [Some of his work] had to stop for a while because he was struggling

¹²³ Haagsman, K. and V. Mazzucato (2014) 'The quality of parent-child relationships in transnational families: Angolan and Nigerian migrant parents in The Netherlands', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 40(11); Fresnoza-Flot, A. (2009) 'Migration status and transnational mothering: the case of Filipino migrants in France', *Global Networks*, 9(2); Parrenas, R.S. (2005) 'Long distance intimacy: class, gender and intergenerational relations between mothers and children in Filipino transnational families', *Global Networks*, 5(4); and Madianou, M. and D. Miller (2011) 'Mobile phone parenting: reconfiguring relationships between Filipina migrant mothers and their left-behind children', *New Media & Society*, 13(3).

¹²⁴ Graham, et al. (2012) 'Transnational Families and the Family nexus: Perspectives of Indonesian and Filipino Children Left Behind by Migrant Parent(s)', *Environment and Planning*, 44(4).

¹²⁵ Lu, Y. (2012) 'Household migration, social support, and psychosocial health: the perspective from migrant-sending areas', *Social Science & Medicine*, 74.

¹²⁶ Carers with infrequent contact with the migrant parent were almost twice as likely to experience common mental disorders as those who had weekly contact Graham, et al. (2012) 'Transnational Families and the Family nexus: Perspectives of Indonesian and Filipino Children Left Behind by Migrant Parent(s)', *Environment and Planning*, 44(4), p. 229.

¹²⁷ Graham, et al. (2012) 'Transnational Families and the Family nexus: Perspectives of Indonesian and Filipino Children Left Behind by Migrant Parent(s)', *Environment and Planning*, 44(4), p. 231.

¹²⁸ This is consistent with the family members of migrant workers who have been left behind who may also suffer deleterious impacts of emotional and economic separation. Hugo, G. (2002) 'Effects of International Migration on the Family in Indonesia', *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 11(1).

with parenting the children”. Another woman also described problematic behavior from her children in her absence, including skipping school, which she and her husband attributed to her absence: “Yes, they like to skip school and I said that my child is dumb because of me. [...] Yes, [it’s because they thought of me while abroad], they asked me to come home fast”.



A man working in a factory in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

When grandparents are the carers of children left behind, they may find this role physically and financially taxing and, as a consequence, suffer from the anxiety and stress. One woman whose children were cared for by her aged parents while she was away described the pressure this had put on her parents. That her father had suffered a stroke made it especially difficult for her mother who bore the brunt of the care responsibility for everyone (young and old).

That being said, stress and distress were not inevitable. One man, trafficked for labor, described a warm and largely uncomplicated homecoming: “[My family] was very welcoming. After all, I am their child. Being able to come home safely made them happy. [...] I have a poor family but they all live in harmony. That is enough for us. Everybody wants to have many things, but we are grateful for our lives and family”. Similarly, one man, trafficked for fishing, described coming home to his family and being accepted without question or criticism. When asked about his relationship with his family after return, he replied:

It was impressive. [...] My mother kept crying... I had left the family for two years. It’s still good that I only have my arm injured. My mother kept crying. She is an old woman, left alone. Crying was the only thing she did. When I got home, I rested the whole month at home. I did not go anywhere. Just tried to rest my mind. [...] They [my family] just accepted it and could only cry. They were just crying all the time.

In some cases, victims whose initial relations were fraught with stress and distress reported improvements over time. One man, trafficked for fishing, explained that his relations with his family had improved over the 18 months that he had been home: “It’s better now, more intimate. We are much closer. Yes, it’s better now in terms of communication with my father and mother. With my younger brother it is as usual. [With my elder brother] it’s just as usual”.

5.2.3 Feeling ashamed and being blamed. Responsibility and culpability between victims and families

Victims’ feelings of shame, guilt and responsibility

Trafficked persons commonly expressed feelings of shame and guilt at return and over the course of reintegration. Reasons for such feelings were often multi-layered and coterminous. Some victims were ashamed at having failed at migration, coming home empty-handed or even in further debt.¹²⁹ Said one woman trafficked for domestic work: “I was embarrassed because the intention was to make money. All I got was pain...there was this regret. I was there to earn money, but instead I spent money and made it a burden on my husband and others”.

Sources of shame among victims

- failed migration; returning home without money
- being unable to support and care for family members
- having debt
- failing in filial responsibility
- what victims suffered while trafficked
- what family suffered while the victim was trafficked
- breaches of trust or violations by family members

One man, trafficked for fishing, was ashamed about his migration debt and had not returned to his home village since coming back to Indonesia:

Tragically since I came back to Indonesia, I have not seen my home until now. I do not have courage to go home because I have debt. I have debt to my relative for about 30 million IDR [2,727USD]. Until now, I do not have the courage to go home. I do not know what my home looks like now. [...] My family cries each time I call. They want to see me but I do not want to go home because I cannot face my relative. I am ashamed. They do not even know that I got married.

Victims – both men and women – were ashamed for being unable to support and care for family members, especially children. Men, who are seen as the primary breadwinner in the Indonesian family, suffered for having failed to live up to this role. One man, trafficked for labor, when asked about his biggest challenge in life after trafficking described feeling guilty for returning home empty handed: “[The hardest thing] were the thoughts about not being able to bring happiness to my family. I went away to change our luck but it turned out that it was in vain”. Said another man trafficked for labor:

After those times [of exploitation], when I came home, I worried much, especially about all the debts... I came home in failure twice and the second time I brought so much burden. [...] Our children are growing up. We need more and more money for our family’s lives. People must have a house and that is a heavy burden. [...] Where

¹²⁹ Shame was somewhat mitigated in family or community settings where other migrants had also failed. And returning home with some money – although far less than agreed and planned – also served to soften some of the shame and embarrassment.

do I get that money from? I do pray to God, asking for a way out of our situation. I pray to God every night. Sometimes thinking about that makes me feel unwell. The family needs many things, but I cannot provide it all... Things like that trouble me... I worry so much about my family, my children, my house.

Men also felt ashamed in the wider family setting. One man who borrowed money from his wife's family explained that he was ashamed because he could not, even after some years, repay that loan:

I do not feel comfortable because the loan has been for years. Yes, I [feel inferior]. They do not even actually ask for me to repay, for years. The close one, my wife's aunt, she is a wealthy person, maybe she is even already forget about it, but we remember. [...] I feel embarrassed, even though they treated me well, like nothing happened. I feel embarrassed because after all these years I still could not repay the loan.

Women's presence in the formal labor market, including international migration, has increased over the past decade and today in West Java large numbers of women migrate abroad as domestic workers to support their families. In many cases, these migrant mothers are the primary or sole income earners for their immediate and sometimes extended families.¹³⁰ Migrant mothers who "failed" (due to trafficking) also felt ashamed for not earning money to support their children, feeling that they had failed as mothers. With the rise of female international migration, women are experiencing new models of motherhood through which providing financially for children makes up, to a large extent, for their inability to be physically present in their children's lives.¹³¹ Failure to earn and remit money for their children as a consequence of being trafficked may undermine their status as a "good mother", leading to shame and guilt.

Victims were also ashamed at having failed in their filial responsibility – to help parents and to care for them as they age. A handful of victims migrated to be able to care for their aged or ill parents or contribute to their parents' household economy. One woman described migrating against her father's wishes out of a feeling of obligation to help him: "My father cried. He did not want me to go abroad... My father was sick. When I was abroad, I thought much about him. My dream was to have him operated. I also wanted to be successful like my friends". One woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, described how she initially sought work to be able to care for her grandmother and, once trafficked, remained in prostitution to realize this obligation: "I worked for my grandmother. My family is an unaffordable family. I wished to take my grandmother to doctor. I wished to make her happy.... The one that I love most and remember most is grandmother...." Another woman felt shame that she, the only daughter, was abroad (albeit trafficked) when her mother died.

One man described his shame and guilt at having to rely on his parents upon his return home: "In the first months, my family helped me. Frankly, I felt sorry because we became a burden to my parents". Another man was worried that his mother would misunderstand what had happened and think that he had been frivolous with his earnings abroad and spent it all instead of coming home with money: "I mostly worried when I met my mother because

¹³⁰ Chan, C. (2014) 'Gendered Morality and Development Narratives: The Case of Female Labor Migration from Indonesia', *Sustainability*, 6, p. 6955; and Silvey, R. (2004) 'Transnational domestication: state power and Indonesian migrant women in Saudi Arabia', *Political Geography*, 23.

¹³¹ Brunovskis, A. and R. Surtees (2012) *No place like home? Challenges in family reintegration after trafficking*. Oslo: Fafo and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute; Brunovskis, A. and R. Surtees (2012) 'Coming home: Challenges in family reintegration for trafficked women', *Qualitative Social Work*; and Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. and E. Avila (1997) "I'm Here, But I'm There", The Meanings of Latina Transnational Motherhood', *Gender & Society*, 11(5).

I did not bring anything home... I did not know what I should say. I was afraid that she wouldn't believe me and think that I spent my money for something not useful".

For other trafficking victims, shame was associated with events that happened while trafficked. Many Indonesian trafficking victims – women and men exploited for different forms of labor – went unidentified as victims and instead were arrested, detained and deported as irregular migrants. One man, trafficked for fishing, described how he and his family faced insults and blame from neighbors because of his time in “prison” (i.e. an irregular migrant detention center) and how this weighed heavily upon him and made him feel ashamed in the eyes of his wife and also his community: “[After trafficking] the hardest challenge was the insults of people, neighbors. [...] My wife cried after going to the store... They said, ‘Why did you go away? You did not get any money and you were in prison’. I was ashamed. So everyone knew... it was a burden to me, to my family, what I did there that I got into prison”.

Many women trafficked for sexual exploitation were ashamed of their involvement (albeit forced) in prostitution and spoke about the negative impact this had on their self-confidence and sense of mental well-being:

To be honest, in the past when I felt wrecked and broken, I didn't have pride anymore.

Indeed I was ashamed in front of my father... thank God now I have changed.

I never shared it. I kept the pain to myself... Sometimes I was desperate. Sometimes I wanted to commit suicide ... I wanted to commit suicide because I felt it's useless if I am still alive. It [my life] has [been] ruined like this. [...] In fact I cried because my heart hurt. Why must it be me who became like this? I'm ruined like this.

[I was] beyond devastation. Our dignity, our future was totally ruined. I once prayed in that place (the brothel). My friends said, “Hey, this is not a place for praying. This is a place of sin”. “Let it be, God knows”, I said because I was so hurt. I felt pain when I lost my virginity, the hurt because I was duped. They said God won't accept a prayer made in this place (the brothel).

Shame and guilt were issues even when victims were not blamed by family members, tying intimately with victims' feelings of family obligation and responsibilities, particularly in terms of their roles as mothers or fathers, as illustrated by the comments of one woman:

I said to my husband that I could not help. I was not successful working abroad. My husband said, “It's okay. The most important thing is that you're okay”. My parents-in-law also said that I should not put much thought into it. I can get back to work once I am healthy. [...] But I felt a little ashamed and a bit sad. I was ashamed because I was not successful and I was sad because I had been working so hard but I did not get my salary.

Feelings of shame and guilt were also, at times, a function of what their families – especially spouses and children – had suffered while victims were away and commonly out of communication. This was the case in spite of having endured harrowing exploitation. One woman, trafficked for domestic work, was forced to work 20 hours a day and suffered physical abuse. Nevertheless, she described feeling badly for her husband who had stayed behind: “I felt sorry for my husband. He must bring the baby to work”.

Shame played a role in victims' decisions not to reveal the full nature or extent of their trafficking experiences to family members. Some felt ashamed of their migration “failure”,

which they worried would lower them in the eyes of those they loved. Some trafficking victims also feared that they would be looked down upon and blamed for things that happened while trafficked – having been raped, beaten, humiliated – and for seemingly being unable to look after and protect themselves.

Blame sometimes played out in the reverse, including trafficking victims being upset with family members – for example, when family was involved in the victim’s trafficking. One woman, who was trafficked into prostitution as a girl by her parents, described how they forced her into this exploitative situation and it was difficult for her to refuse:

My father came [to get money from me while I was trafficked] with my mother. They even saw me work with my client but they didn’t care. Yes [I was 13] and sometimes I thought that it was my parents’ wish that I was born, grew up and lived here (in the brothel). I thought that this is my chance to return gratitude to my parents. I tried to think positively so I don’t feel that heartache. [...] The trafficking process is quite difficult. When it involves family bonding, it’s hard.

One woman, who was trafficked by her husband, described being upset and angry about this breach of trust and violation: “Of course I was upset. I said, ‘Why did you do it? What am I in your eyes? Am I your slave or your employee? Don’t you have a heart? There’s no hurt-feeling at all that your own wife is offered to your friend’. I don’t understand. How could he do such a thing?”

Some trafficked persons expressed frustration with family who did not hold up their end of the migration agreement – to care for the children left behind or to spend remittances in a responsible way. One woman, who was initially successful in her migration and able to remit money before being trafficked, was upset when she returned home to find her remittances had been largely squandered: “It’s just land. I bought it cheap, 7 million IDR [636USD] ... It was after two years of successful work. I sent the money home and it was used up and I only managed to keep the remainder to buy the land”. This misspending was a direct contributor in her decision to migrate again, which led to her being trafficked. Similarly, one man who had successfully remitted money home during a previously successful migration experience returned home to find his wife had spent all of the money he has earned and she could not explain where or how:

My wife spent it all. It gave me a headache. I worked 24 hours a day there, full time. [...] I got concerned only because there was no money left when I returned. I did not know what my wife did with the money so I could only get mad. My parents got confused and wondered to my wife where the money could have gone. It did not make sense because when I, the husband, got home I could only buy a motorcycle. [...] How was that possible to spend all that money? I had no idea where the money went at the time.

He was subsequently trafficked for work, having migrated again to support his family. Moreover, this misspending continued to be a source of tension in his marriage and the family.

One woman, who was initially trafficked, managed to escape and find work in the destination country and eventually remit money to support her mother and her children. She also sent money to her father and step-mother but was angry at what she described as her step-mother’s greed, in always demanding more money from her: “[My step-mother] said that I was stingy, I came back from foreign country but did not gave anything. [...] In fact I had already sent money to my father, much money. I sent millions, not only one or two million IDR [91USD or 182USD]”.

Being blamed. Accusations and recrimination from family members

Many trafficked persons were blamed by their family members, in part or to degrees, for different reasons.

One source of blame was for not having succeeded at migration, leading to reproach and accusations from different family members, including parents, spouses, children and sibling. One woman managed to leave her trafficking situation and returned home with over half of her salary still unpaid by her employer to face recriminations from her husband:

My husband was disappointed in me because I did not bring back anything. But he did not say it verbally. It was unsaid but his attitude to me was different, full of sadness and upset. Maybe he expected my salary to pay our debt... However, after one or two months, he treated me better. He finally understood that it was not my fault and intention. My elder daughter was a bit angry at me. Maybe she was disappointed because I could not fulfill her needs.

Sources of blame from family members

- failed migration; returning home without money
- being unable to support the family
- having debt
- failing in filial responsibility
- what happened while trafficked (e.g. arrest, sexual exploitation)
- what family suffered while the victim was trafficked (e.g. illness, death)
- rumors and gossip

Similarly, one man, trafficked for labor, described a tense relationship with his wife whom he described as unaccepting of him since his return:

It's my wife... It seems that she does not accept me. It seems she wants to separate... When I was successful... we went through it together. But when I am down, why is she like that?... Why when I am down I am alone? The burden is too hard like this. Well, she accepted me. She opened the door. But from her attitude, she is silent, silent and passive. She is not as cheerful as before....

Some blame was because of the burden that failed migration (i.e. trafficking) placed on family members. One woman returned home very ill and went initially to stay with her sister. She was only able to stay for one week and then sent away because her sister's family felt she was an unfair burden on them: "[My sister] cried a lot [when I first arrived home]. She was so concerned of my condition, but I just stayed there for a week. I was forced to leave. [...] She asked me to leave, 'You better not stay long here. You will give me many trouble [with my family]'" Her relationship with her sister's family was tense even some time after her return and she described how she did not want to ask her sister for any further help because sister often refuses to help her. And when she does help, she feels that the sister's family is looking down on her and speaking badly about her. This woman feels blamed for her ill fortune and doesn't want to be a burden to her relatives.

Similarly, one man, trafficked for labor, explained that his wife has been angry with him since his return several years before, blaming him for his failure to bring money home. This blame was also at play in his interactions with his children, with his wife laying the responsibility for their economic problems with him when their children asked for money:

It is just a matter of economy. Household problems usually wrapped around the economy. We were lacking financial stability and there were times when my wife got mad at me. I could just accept that. [...] Harmony is possible only if there is enough to cover for one's family needs. [...] Her facial expression showed that she was angry. When my children asked for money, she yelled and asked them to go to me for the money. It was understandable considering I didn't provide for my family at the time.

Other sources of blame included spouses and children who felt abandoned or neglected during the trafficking victim's absence. Both men and women described this as an issue in their relationships over the course of reintegration. In some cases, these were temporary challenges, which could be resolved over time. However, for other victims, initial relief at their safe return gave way to blame and resentment for their perceived abandonment. One man explained how his wife was supportive when he first came home but this gave way to blame and recrimination over several months and they were on the verge of divorce:

[Our relationship when I returned] was pretty good. My wife once said that it was okay to just stay in the village, we could get by with whatever work we could find, live modestly. But eventually things changed. After seven months, her attitude started to change and she brought up the problem also when I was away sailing. [...] That I worked for three years but never sent money home for covering our children's education, daily expenses. It always came down to that.

Parents, particularly mothers, also spoke about being blamed and rejected by their children who experienced their absence as abandonment and neglect, as one woman explained: "About my children, they do not obey me. They obey their father. If they are with me, they are against me. They fight with me... With his father [my son] is afraid. But with me, he dares. He fights me".

In some cases, family members were upset with the trafficking victim for being gone during challenging times for the family, such as during illness or death. One woman whose husband died while she was abroad spoke of her mother-in-law's anger and resentment toward her, holding her responsible for her son's death in spite of her being the one who tried to support the family through migration: "The reaction from my mother-in-law was terrible. She lost her beloved son and she blamed it on me. When I first came back, her reaction was fine. But in the following days, she often treated me badly. Maybe she was very sad because her son died. She often got mad at me. She said, 'Because you went...my son got sick and died'".

Some women faced rumors and gossip within their families (and communities) that they had been trafficked not as domestic workers but were working voluntarily in prostitution. One woman described how her mother suffered a stroke when her relative told her mother that she was working in prostitution abroad: "[My relative said], 'She has three mobile phones! And she has so much money in her wallet. She has so much gold as well. What her job exactly?' [...] And then when she came home, she said to everyone, to the relatives and to my family at home that I worked as a prostitute... My mother then [was] shocked until she had a stroke".

Women trafficked for sexual exploitation faced blame for their involvement (albeit forced) in prostitution leading, in some cases, to very bad family situations. One young woman described how she managed to return home but was rejected not only by her father and step-mother, but also by all of her relatives. In spite of being pregnant (as a consequence of trafficking), she was thrown out of her home, blamed for what she had suffered:

[After trafficking] everything was heavy but the most hurtful was that I was cast out by my father. I did not know where to stay. I was sent from one place to another by my own parents. They did not seem to care at all. With my difficult condition, my step-mother, my father, nobody wanted to take care of me. I did not know if I would be harmed. [...] I was thrown out in a big rainstorm with a suitcase, with just 500,000 IDR [45USD]. I just went to the [bus] terminal. I did not know where to go and no relatives wanted to take care of me.



Social workers distribute condoms in a brothel area. Photo: Peter Biro.

Another woman, who was trafficked for prostitution, subsequently married one of her clients. She described initially facing tremendous challenges in the relationship with her step-daughter and her sister-in-law, both of whom blamed her for her prostitution:

After we married, when I was introduced to his first daughter, she did not want to see me. She hated me... She said, “My father has a girlfriend, a *jablay* (prostitute)”. I did not get angry at that time. I tried to accept what she was saying. [...] At first, his sister did not accept me. However...after [his daughter] followed us to Jakarta for schooling here, she then accepted me and our relation is good now.

One woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, described how her past (forced) involvement in prostitution was initially an issue with her daughter’s husband and his parents. When asked about her relationship with her daughter’s family, she explained that things had, over time, improved but that it has been a painful time and she had faced much criticism and hostility:

It is normal now. Back then [our relationship] was not good because of my background [in prostitution]. They could not understand why their child wanted to marry my daughter. They could not accept that their son would want a woman that was born from a mother like me, an ex-prostitute. [...] It is better now. Some people intervened. They told them that they should not be like that. After all, we are in-laws. Yes [there was a negative perception] because I was a prostitute. Although I already said that it was in the past, my past, and my child has nothing to do with that.

While the situation improved over the years, it took its toll on this woman and her daughter at various stages of their lives after her exit from trafficking. For instance, not only did her daughter’s parents-in-law not help with the wedding (leaving her to pay the full cost) but they also refused to attend the wedding and tried to interfere with and prevent it:

I had to borrow money here and there. My in-laws did not help a bit.... I actually had planned to have a big party, but because my in-laws were like that, what can I do? ... There was not even a witness from their side [because] they did not approve. My in-laws even took the groom at the wedding, so there was only the bride... His mother took him away on the wedding day. I was strong. My daughter almost fainted... Her husband who loves her very much kept coming. Even though his mother keeps trying to take him away from [my daughter]. One time when his mother had pain in her leg, one of the *ulama* [religious scholar] told her that it was because she was a sinner. The *ulama* told her to ask forgiveness from her daughter-in-law. That was how at the end she came to say sorry and everything was fine after that.

Some men trafficked for labor were accused of having frivolously spent their money abroad. One man described a tense and quarrelsome relationship with his wife over many months because of this misperception: “There were many quarrels with my wife... I returned home without any money. She thought... that I was having fun abroad... Since I returned, until now [we quarrel]”. Although he explained to her what had happened abroad, she vacillated between acceptance and recrimination:

I told her everything, but that is just my wife. At times she would understand. But, at other times, she would remember the neighbors saying things about me. It is difficult. It is difficult for her to trust me 100%. My wife’s reaction, her thoughts were definitely very negative because I didn’t send her any news while I was in jail, the government didn’t send any news as well. That was what made her so negative.

However, blame was not inevitable and a number of returning trafficking victims described their families’ fatalistic acceptance of their bad experiences and the general lack of blame, as illustrated in the case of one woman trafficked for domestic work:

When I came home, my husband was in a bit of shock because I went home without informing him before. Then I told my experience to my husband, my mother and the children and told them that I did not bring money. And, after that, all of us cried. Then my husband said, “It’s okay, fortunately, *Alhamdulillah* [thank God], you are back home safely. The most important thing is that you are home now”.

When asked if her family was upset she explained: “No [they were not]. We believe that it’s part of our destiny”. Similarly, one man, trafficked for fishing, described how his family did not blame him for what had happened: “My mother said, ‘Luckily you came home safely. The most important thing was that you are healthy, that’s all’. [...] My brother was nice to me... [My sister said], ‘Thank God you are fine. It was not a big deal if you did not get your payment. The important thing is your health. If you are healthy you can work again’”. One woman who had migrated to be pay for medical treatment for her ill father described his reaction as such: “When I arrived, I cried as I held him. I told him I could not get him treatment. He said, ‘It’s okay, maybe it’s not the time yet’”. And one woman who returned home with a child born of rape while she was trafficked described how her husband accepted her and the child in a similar way: “Well, you just live with us. I accept you as you are. Maybe it is our destiny, my destiny too’, he said. So he accepted me”.

Even for the more stigmatized and socially problematic situations, blame from family was not inevitable or irreversible. One woman, trafficked for prostitution, explained that her husband knew about her “past” and it had not, to date, posed a problem in their relationship.

I wrote and told him all [that is in] my diary, first page, second page, third page, fourth page until the last page. I told him everything, even my trafficking experience. I told him everything and he was a bit struck. I did back off seeing him like that but

he didn't. He wanted to move forward and he eventually wanted to take me just as I am... [At home] it's good, *Alhamdulillah* [thank God]. I never stop being grateful to God, He gives me this amazing blessing, that I have a husband now.

In some cases, family members not only did not blame the returning victim, but also acted to prevent blame being rested on them by others in the family and community. One man, trafficked for fishing, explained how his wife covered for him when he was pursuing the criminal case against his trafficker to off-set community censure that might arise if he was known to not be working and if neighbors knew he was being assisted: “My wife covered it up. She said it was income from work. If I went often to Jakarta, she said it was work. [...] If they knew [that I was assisted], instead of being happy, they would insult me, [saying], ‘So you live because you got help’.”

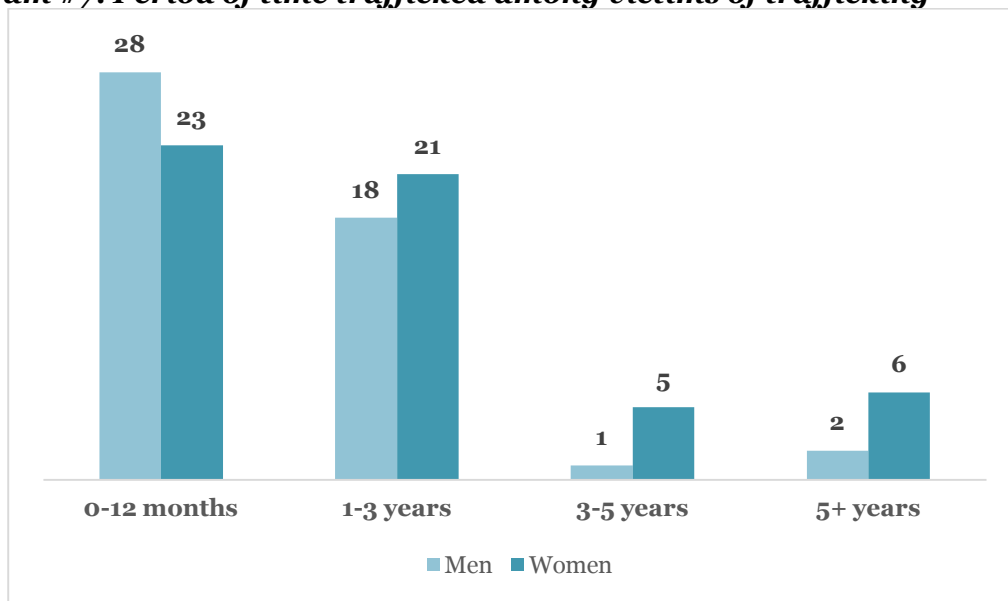
Even when victims suffered blame in their families at the outset, these situations were not irreparable. Negative reactions from family members often changed over time. Initial recriminations often gave way to some level of acceptance, at least within different segments of the family and to degrees.

5.2.4 Relationships were damaged or destroyed. Managing fissures and fractures

Causes of fissures and fractures

Indonesian trafficking victims were often away from home and family for very long periods of time. This ranged from a few months up to ten years in the case of one woman trafficked for sexual exploitation.

Diagram #7. Period of time trafficked among victims of trafficking



*The duration of trafficking was unclear in the case of two women trafficked for domestic work and two women trafficked for sexual exploitation

Not only were victims’ absences from family very lengthy, but these periods of time often passed with no or very limited contact with their family members. Some victims were not allowed to have any contact with their families while away, for periods of literally years. As one man trafficked for labor explained: “[My family] was worried. There was no news and suddenly I arrived at the front door. I didn’t have any communication with them during [my exploitation]. Suddenly I was home again so they wondered how that could happen”. Similarly, one woman, trafficked for domestic work, described being isolated and out of

contact with her husband, something that was typical of many victims' experiences: "I was there for two years and seven months. I never sent news to my husband. I never sent a letter. I did not send money but I worked there and I was tortured all the time, everyday". Said another woman trafficked for domestic work: "I couldn't go anywhere while I worked there. I could not use the phone. I was never given a mobile phone number". Some victims were able to send and receive letters while trafficked, although in some cases the victims' family did not receive the letters that were sent.

In addition, even when able to communicate with family, many trafficking victims were not able to disclose their exploitation and abuse as communication was monitored. Some victims were also not willing to share the full nature of their exploitation while abroad. One man, trafficked for labor, explained how he did not want to distress his family with his situation abroad and so did not share this in his letters home, which also meant that they were not aware of all that he was suffering: "I didn't tell [my family] about my real condition in the letters that I sent them. I just reminded them through the letter to prevent others, family, neighbors or relatives to follow in my footsteps".

Some victims were able to contact their families by telephone, although this was also quite limited and typically quite controlled. Women trafficked for domestic work who were allowed to telephone their families explained that calls were brief and infrequent, usually every one to three months. Lack of contact was also very pronounced among men trafficked for labor, especially on fishing boats. Some women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation had contact with family while exploited. One young woman explained that she was able to call her father by phone while exploited but she was prevented from physically leaving the brothel compound: "We were not allowed to get out from the [brothel]. We were not allowed to get out at all I was in the dormitory only, keeping silent. Sometimes I called my father while crying. It was allowed to keep a mobile phone". However, the very specific dynamics at play in this form of trafficking – that is, family knowledge of and, in some cases, complicity in the woman/girl's exploitation – meant that contact had a different significance and did not necessarily translate into seeking out means of escape.

In some cases, victims continued to suffer separation from their family members even after they had escaped from or exited trafficking – e.g. during detention abroad. Opportunities for contact in these situations were also very limited (often only a call prior to their return home and sometimes not even that). This led to or exacerbated confusion around the reason for the victim's detention, with victims more commonly seen as having been arrested and being in prison for some criminal act rather than being irregular migrants as a consequence of having been trafficked.

Some victims also had limited contact and communication with family members after they had returned home either because they needed to work away from their families (in another city, province or country) or because they were pursuing a legal case against their traffickers and staying in the place where the legal case was being handled.

Trafficking separations, compounded by lack of communication and contact, led to fissures and fractures in family relationships. Much happened in the lives of both victims and their families during the trafficking-induced separation. Many family relationships were disrupted and even destroyed as a result of trafficking separation and distances.

Problems in the family environment before trafficking also meant that some "reunions" were especially difficult and more prone toward family fractures.

Disrupted parent/child relations

One of the main “casualties” of trafficking in many victims’ lives was in terms of their relationships with their children. One woman tearfully described the bittersweet return to her family, with her four tearful young children: “They cried and they asked why I left them”.



A mother and her child in a village in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

In some cases, trafficking interfered with trafficking victims being a part of the early lives of their young children. Some victims migrated when their children were very small and so they returned home to children who barely knew them. One woman, trafficked to the Middle East for domestic work, was away for years at a time, leaving home when her child was very young. She explained how, upon her return, her child who was then seven years old would not come near her and would only stay with his grandmother: “He wouldn’t talk to me. Wouldn’t sleep with me. Wouldn’t take a bath with me. Only with his grandmother. Because he doesn’t know me. ‘Go away, go away’, he said like that”. This situation has continued over time and now, three years after her return, her children still do not listen to her or respect her parental authority: “...they do not obey me. They obey their father. If they are with me, they are against me. They fight with me...”. Another woman explained of her now teenage son: “I left him when he was so little so he has his own mind...”. One divorced woman left her two small children with her parents while she migrated for work, to be able to support them as her ex-husband gave nothing in terms of child support. She came home after trafficking to children who resisted her: “The little one still does not know who I am... [My older son] did not want to be with me. He said I would kidnap him. The little one did not remember me. I left when she was six or seven months [old]. Now she is one and a half years old”.

Other women returned home to children who were upset with them for having left or resented their absence while trafficked. One woman (mentioned above) worked abroad on three occasions, the last of which was trafficking. She had done so to be able to raise and support her three children after the death of her husband. But the children were upset by her absence; this had damaged her relationship with her children, as she explained:

... [the youngest boy] said like this to me, “Why you do not take care of me, mother?” How can [he say] I did not take care of him? He knew that I left him for working abroad. I left him so that he can eat and continue go to school. Until one day my eldest son came to me to discuss about that. [...] My son told me, “We did not need your money, we needed your attention”.

The youngest son has, since her return, increasingly rebelled – getting in fights at school and even being picked up by police for making trouble in the community. She reflected that this was likely, in large part, due to his anger toward her and her absence in his early years. The eldest son also harbored hurt and disappointment about his mother’s migration, which, in the last instance, led to her becoming very ill while away. He shared his own sadness and frustration about the situation with his mother:

[When my mother came home sick] I was sad. I felt fed up. I was feeling sad. Who would not feel sad to find his mother in a condition like that? I felt fed up because why did she not discuss migrating first with me? I felt fed up because of that...Why did she not come since the beginning. If she felt down the family could only assist her, to give her support. I’m her son. I would not let it happen like that.



Children in a village in West Java, Indonesia. Photo: Peter Biro.

Some children had also developed negative feelings towards a trafficked parent as a consequence of what they were told by others during his or her absence. One man, trafficked for labor, described how his absence while trafficked had broken his relationship with his children because of rumors in the community that he was irresponsible and had not sent money home to raise them:

There was a time when my relationship with my children was broken. [...] They only heard one side of the story from their family or from the community surrounding them... that I am the kind of person who does not take responsibility or I am a bad person. I just let it go. I did not try to clarify it to them. But, to my children, I did clarify it. I explained to them, this is the problem. That was why you were stranded at that time. I was not there. When my son was circumcised I also did not know. It must be difficult for him to forget that.

Parental absence affects children's well-being and, in many cases, disrupts their support network. This is especially the case for trafficked mothers as mothers are typically the main sources of emotional support for Indonesian children. A study of children's well-being in Indonesia found that children with migrant mothers were more likely to refrain from seeking social support.¹³² Further, research shows that children left behind by migrant parents may suffer from a wide range of psychosocial problems, the most common of which are feelings of abandonment, sadness, despondence, despair, anger, lack of trust, low self-esteem and inability to concentrate at school.¹³³ One woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, described the serious problems in her relationship with her first daughter who was raised by her mother while she was in forced prostitution in the capital: "I left her at my village when I had to go to Jakarta. My mother was taking care of her. She did not want to live with me again. Since my mother is the person who raised her, she wants to be filial to my mother".

As discussed above, remittances from a migrant parent can serve as evidence that he/she is fulfilling his or her parental role to care for and support children. This may aid in soothing the parent/child relationship while the parent is away and be particularly important for migrant women, as a mother's absence may be felt within the family more pronouncedly given her more prominent role in child-rearing and the private sphere.¹³⁴ Not being able to earn and remit money to one's family because of having been trafficked meant "failing" in that parental/spousal role and further disruption to the parent/child relationship.

Additionally, one means by which migrant parents maintain and preserve their parental role is to stay in regular contact with family at home, to preserve their relationships with their children and decrease feelings of abandonment.¹³⁵ This long-distance contact can help preserve the parent/child relationship and also frame a parent's absence as a sacrifice rather than as abandonment. However, most trafficking victims struggled to maintain contact with their children, with no or limited access to means of communication. This further undermined their role as parent in their own eyes and in the eyes of the children and family they had left behind.

¹³² Graham, et al. (2012) 'Transnational Families and the Family nexus: Perspectives of Indonesian and Filipino Children Left Behind by Migrant Parent(s)', *Environment and Planning*, 44(4), pp. 13-14.

¹³³ Bakker, C., M. Elings-Pels and M. Reis (2009) *The Impact of Migration on Children in the Caribbean*. New York: United Nations Children's Fund, p. 8.

¹³⁴ Brunovskis, A. and R. Surtees (2012) 'Coming home: Challenges in family reintegration for trafficked women', *Qualitative Social Work*; Brunovskis, A. and R. Surtees (2012) *No place like home? Challenges in family reintegration after trafficking*. Oslo: Fafo and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute; Bakker, C., M. Elings-Pels and M. Reis (2009) *The Impact of Migration on Children in the Caribbean*. New York: United Nations Children's Fund, p. 9, nothing that "migrant parents, in many cases, try to compensate for their absence by sending a significant amount of material resources"; and Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. and E. Avila (1997) "I'm Here, But I'm There", *The Meanings of Latina Transnational Motherhood*, *Gender & Society*, 11(5).

¹³⁵ Hondagneu-Sotelo, P. and E. Avila (1997) "I'm Here, But I'm There", *The Meanings of Latina Transnational Motherhood*, *Gender & Society*, 11(5); Brunovskis, A. and R. Surtees (2012) 'Coming home: Challenges in family reintegration for trafficked women', *Qualitative Social Work*; and Brunovskis, A. and R. Surtees (2012) *No place like home? Challenges in family reintegration after trafficking*. Oslo: Fafo and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute.

Men spoke less often about damage in their relationships with the children they had left behind. This was perhaps due, in large part, to the fact that these children had been left in the care of their mothers, commonly the primary caregiver in the Indonesian family. By contrast, when women migrated, care of children often fell to grandmothers, aunts or other female relatives and the nuclear family was, thus, disrupted in a more significant way.

Nonetheless, some men suffered severe damage to their relationships with their children. The man mentioned above, whose relationship with his children was damaged by rumors about his neglect and frivolity, was able to repair the relationship with one son but his oldest son continued to blame him for what he perceived as neglect and abandonment. An additional complication in this instance was that the man's wife (and children's mother) became ill while he was trafficked and died shortly after his return:

I explained to them [my children], this is the problem. That was why you were stranded at that time, why I was not there... My children at this moment already understand... When there is someone talking about it, my second child even would defend me. [...] the second one even though people would say something, it would not affect him. "He is my father, anyway. And whatever it is, he is my parent". He could say, "Do you think you are the one who feeds me? Even though in the past my father did not feed me but if my father was around, he was responsible for me. It's only due to the circumstances". That is my second child. But my first child could not say anything. He would be listening only and finally it would be negative. Sometimes when he met me he would be angry.

One woman, who returned home with two additional children (born while she was trafficked), described a negative relationship with her eldest daughter whom she had left behind when she migrated. Her daughter blamed her for what she experienced as abandonment and, even today, several years since her return, her daughter is angry with her:

My first-born child did not even recognize me [when I returned]. I was gone for so long. She is still mad at me. [...] She rarely speaks to me... She told her sister that she was mad at me. She told her that she hates me. [...] She was afraid that my love for her would be different than my love for her siblings [born while trafficked]. But I told her that my love for all my kids would be equal. I apologized to her. I was sorry that I was not here to raise her.

Some tension was prevented or assuaged because the parent was able to send money home or stay in touch with children while trafficked. One woman, who was originally trafficked for domestic work, managed to escape that situation and stayed on in the Middle East to work for several years, during which time she was able to send money home to her family and support her children. This was central in maintaining a positive relationship with her children:

The kids already knew that I left them to [work in the Middle East] because of them too. I worked for them, to support their lives. They understood and were not angry. When I was still in [the Middle East], they only asked me, "Mom, why don't you come home?" Then I advised them, "I did not mean to leave you. If I was home but had no job, what can you eat? And who can pay for your school fees?" Then they understood.

Marriages were damaged and destroyed

Tensions and problems emerged in many marriages over the course of victims' absence/exploitation or as a consequence of victims having been trafficked. In some instances, these were "minor" and predictable tensions related to financial issues, being ashamed and blamed and being stressed and distressed, as discussed in the previous sections.

However, in some cases relationships with spouses were disrupted and even destroyed during trafficking absences.¹³⁶ Infidelity was a not uncommon problem faced by trafficked women. One woman explained how she returned home unwell from her trafficking situation, having been tortured and abused while abroad, to find her husband was having an affair with another woman in the village:

...I have to work hard there. Meanwhile my husband here was cheating and had an affair with another woman. You know, I almost died when I worked abroad. I really saved my money so that I could send some money to my husband. He only said that I have to be patient but do nothing and even worse, he cheated on me! I was so sad, no one ever helped me.

Another woman described being out of contact with her husband for almost two years while trafficked and her happy feelings of coming home, only to learn that her husband had had an affair: "When I was [trafficked abroad], I never contacted my husband for one and a half years. When I came home he informed me that he had another woman. He said, 'Better you know directly from me, than know from others'. I was hurt. It hurts until now. He said, 'I am confused. I love you and I love her as well'". She described feeling "angry, sad, disappointed".

Some women were abandoned or divorced by their husbands while trafficked. One woman, trafficked as a domestic worker, explained how she was still being exploited abroad when she learned through her son that her husband had remarried:

When I worked for one year and two months abroad, I heard news from my son that my husband was already married with another woman in Indonesia. I received news that my husband married for the second time. I could not concentrate on my work there. All my work was incorrect... The reason why I left for migration was to fulfill the needs of my family and also, I wanted to maintain the integrity of the family.

Husbands for their part spoke about having been abandoned or "left behind" by their wives who never contacted them and sent no money home. Some husbands expressed confusion and hurt at not having been contacted by their wives while they were working away. Said one woman's husband to her upon her return: "Why did you not call me?"

Others expressed frustration over the challenges of sole parenting in the wife's absence and being solely responsible for the household, without any emotional or financial support from the migrant wife. Still other husbands spoke about the strain and stress of trying to earn enough money to support their children when wives did not send money home while working abroad. Not knowing that his spouse was trafficked and unable to call or send money meant that the husband felt upset, hurt, abandoned and betrayed.

Trafficked men also experienced disruptions in and destruction of their marriages as a consequence of trafficking. One man, trafficked for fishing, when asked what assistance he needed, explained that, most of all, he needed compensation or some payment for his work abroad so that he could resolve problems with his wife: "We all could come home to our own villages and work on our family issues... It is my hope that I could work things out with my wife, for the sake of our children".

Most commonly, marital problems for male trafficking victims were a function of men's inability to remit money while away, bring money upon return and/or support the family

¹³⁶ This is consistent with past research in Indonesia, which found that international migration can lead to marital instability and family breakups. Hugo, G. (2002) 'Effects of International Migration on the Family in Indonesia', *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal*, 11(1), p. 25.

after return. Said one man, mentioned above, resolving the economic situation could potentially heal his marriage: “There’s still hope. We just need to work on our economy”.

Another important factor in marital problems between trafficked men and their wives was that the men had failed to contact and stay in touch with their families while exploited. One man, trafficked for fishing, was at sea for years and unable to communicate with his family even once in this time. He explained how this lack of contact, coupled with his failure to remit money, was the main source of tension with his wife, even now one and a half years after his return. He explained that this was not merely an economic issue. This was about fractures in their relationship and when interviewed, the marriage was on the verge of collapse: “[After my return], I kept working and tried to provide for the family but my wife felt that it wasn’t enough. We often argued. She felt that during my three years away I never gave her updates or money. My family even thought I was dead since they never heard from me for two and a half years”.

Infidelity was less common among “left behind” wives than “left behind” husbands. However, in some instances, wives who had stayed behind were upset and unsettled about concerns (sometimes fueled by family or community gossip) that their husbands had spent money frivolously while abroad or had started relationships with other women. As one man, trafficked for fishing, explained: “There were many quarrels with my wife... I returned home without any money. She thought... that I was having fun abroad... Since I had returned, it is probably until now [that we quarrel]”.

One man, trafficked for fishing, explained how one of his friends/colleagues with whom he was exploited managed to call home only to be told by his wife that she wanted a divorce:

[He was] bones only, he was so tiny when pulled out of the float. He cried a lot in my lap, “Please tell the captain, I want to go home” ... He had a chance to make a phone call and what he heard over the phone [from his wife] was that “I want to divorce”. [He was] already neglected over there, no salary, even fighting over food. He got a phone call from his wife, asking to divorce.

In some cases, domestic violence was an issue within marriages after trafficking and at various stages of reintegration. In some cases, women were married before being trafficked and violence occurred after their return and, at least in part, seemingly in the context of stresses that emerged during reintegration. In other instances, women married their spouses after trafficking and their “trafficking past” was a source of tension. One woman described how her husband often brought up and blamed her for her exploitation, physically and verbally abusing her:

Until now, sometimes I live my life in pain. When I have a fight with [my husband], he brings my past into the fight. “It’s really hard to have a wife, like an ex-prostitute?” he says that. The reality is really hard. I am really in pain, especially, when he says that to me in front of my children. [...] I just want a husband who really loves me, who really wants to help me. My husband until now likes to torture me. When we have a fight, he always hits me. Sometimes I wanted to report him to the police but when I see the kids, what will happen to them? Besides, my family is really far away from here and I don't have anything. I am scared of that because I am not permanently working here so I am scared that if I do something, he may want to have some revenge.

In at least one instance, a trafficked man described perpetrating violence against his wife during reintegration, during fights that seemed to have much to do with problems caused by trafficking. At least one woman also spoke about being physically violent with her husband, although in response to his violence against her.

Not all violence was a function of the individual's trafficking experience. One woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, described on-going violence at the hands of the man she had married after trafficking and with whom she had two small children. This occurred most commonly when he was drinking and was severe in nature.

Damage to marriages was not easily resolved and many victims described the on-going problems in their marriage as one of, if not the most, pressing issue over the course of reintegration. One woman, trafficked as domestic worker, explained how even now, three years after her return, she still felt wounded by her husband's infidelity: "I am still hurt until now".



A man working in the fields in rural West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

Some marriages collapsed over time, under the weight of financial and interpersonal pressures. Twenty of the 108 respondents in this study had separated or divorced since being trafficked and/or since returning from trafficking. Several others described marital discord and problems that had the potential to lead to divorce. The weight of managing one's recovery and reintegration was daunting and was even more so when victims were divorced, separated or widowed (and often single parents). One young man, whose mother was trafficked for a number of years, put it as such: "We may all face economic problems, all people... But for a single parent, there is a level which it is so difficult even to fight, because I have felt it. When I am down my wife supported me. When she got down I would support her. For a single parent, who would support them?"

Tension in the immediate and extended family

There are other family members who are, in daily life, a key source of support or, in difficulties, may present additional conflict and problems. These include victims' parents and parents-in-law, siblings, aunts and uncles, grandparents as well as a range of other close and distant relatives. Victims also described fractures and fissures in many of these relationships.

One of the most important relationships within the immediate family is between adult children and their parents. A number of victims described migrating to be able to better help and support their adult parents. Failing at migration was a source of tension for some trafficking victims and their parents. One man described how his parents saw him differently than in the past: “[My] parents now see me as incapable, undeserving. I no longer feel as part of the family like it used to be. I’m aware of my unemployment status and my parents don’t have that much”. This was particularly acute when victims had borrowed money from their parents to migrate or their parents had borrowed money for migration on their behalf.

In addition, many parents had cared for their grandchildren while their child/trafficking victim migrated, with the understanding that their child/trafficking victim would remit money to care of the children and, moreover, return with money that would improve the family situation. Failure to do so was a source of strain, the degree of which varied by family.

This was further complicated when failed migration meant that adult parents had to support their child/trafficking victim and commonly also the victim’s spouse and children after return. One man, trafficked for labor, lived with his parents for several months after his return, bringing also his wife and child to live there. He described the abuse they suffered from his mother who resented their presence in her home:

My mother would make a fuss if my boy watched the TV, like, “Buy your own TV” or something. She often tries to kick me out of the house. [...] It is my wife who becomes an easy target for my mother’s anger... For example, if my wife throws yesterday’s food away because she thinks that it’s getting old, my mother would make a big fuss. If my wife mops the floor, my mother would be angry for whatever reason. It’s difficult.

Similarly, one woman, trafficked for domestic work, had been home for two years and her family relied on her in-laws. She explained that, while her father-in-law helped her family, he was also upset about their dependence on him and often spoke negatively about them with friends and neighbors: “We got food from my father-in-law. However sometimes I am not comfortable with his talk. Sometime he says bad things about us to our neighbors. He is upset with his son because he only stays at home without working. In the meantime, the income only comes from my father-in-law’s little store”.

One man also explained that he felt badly about the trouble that his exploitation had caused his parents and was hesitant to do anything that might cause them further financial or emotional grief. Although it is sometimes possible, even necessary, to pay money to find a job, he was not willing to do this so as not to further stress his parents: “Some people would get a job there if they give the recruiters some money. I do not want to give people my money to get a job. I do not have the money and I have already caused my parents a headache. I do not want to cause more problems for my parents”.

In addition to financial triggers, victims also described other stressors in their relationships with parents. One woman described how she felt badly that her mother was subjected to gossip and criticism within her family due to her forced prostitution, being separated from her husband and her debt:

Sometimes I feel pity when I see my mother listen to people around her saying bad thing about me. [They said that] I am prostitute. But I said, “Don’t listen to them. They didn’t give us food. We don’t have any debt to them” ...They are my relatives. Currently, they still don’t like me. My sisters are also the same. I don’t know what are their reasons to not like me... perhaps because I was separated from my husband. Perhaps because I have much debt. Perhaps because many people came to my house and asked me to repay my credit...

In a handful of cases, victims returned home with children born of their trafficking situation, which was also a source of stress for the parents of trafficking victims, to say nothing of the additional financial pressure this created. As one woman, trafficked for domestic work, explained: “[My mother] was crying when she saw me. It’s fate. Some people bring a lot of money from [abroad] and I brought two kids”.

Some victims faced problems with parents who did not recognize that they were trafficking victims, not perpetrators, of crime (e.g. illegal fishing, irregular migration). One man, trafficked for fishing, was detained abroad and rejected by his family once home as they believed he had been convicted of a crime (rather than being a victim of trafficking): “I only met my wife because my family was indifferent. They knew I came from prison. Only my wife still accepted me [...] even my own biological parents did not want to accept me at all... And other relatives did not comfort me. They stayed away from me”.

Many victims also described tensions in relationships with their in-laws – commonly their parents-in-law, but also other members of their family-in-law. One man, trafficked for labor, described how his marriage failed because he could not stand how he was treated by his brother-in-law when they all lived with his wife’s parents: “My brother-in-law controlled me. [...] He was so cocky and I didn’t like to be commanded. I told my ex-wife that I cannot hold on if it always went on like that so I divorced her. I told her I can’t hold on like that every day. *Alhamdulillah* [thank God] I have my current wife”. One woman was unknowingly pregnant when she migrated. When she returned home visibly pregnant after a few months she was accused by her husband’s relatives of becoming pregnant outside of her marriage: “My husband’s cousin said, ‘How could she be pregnant after two weeks of marriage?’ I said, ‘Wait until I deliver the baby. We can take a DNA test to see if it is someone else’s baby or if I slept with my boss’... But my husband believes me... I did not do anything with anyone... I am not afraid because I never slept with anyone else”.

Women trafficked for sexual exploitation were often seen as voluntarily involved in prostitution rather than having been exploited. Involvement in prostitution was a source of considerable tension in many immediate and extended families. One woman, discussed above, described tension and problems with her daughter’s parents-in-laws due to her past involvement in prostitution and how this led to tension with her son-in-law and stress for her daughter: “They could not understand why their child wanted to marry my daughter. They could not accept that their son would want a woman that was born from a mother like me, an ex-prostitute”. Another woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, described being rejected by her family because of her involvement in prostitution and use of drugs while exploited: “I came to my relatives’ house. They told me to go away subtly. They treated me like that because I used drugs [while I was trafficked] and they did not want to see me”.

One woman, trafficked for domestic work, described how she chose to integrate in a new community rather than living in her home village to avoid problems and gossip within one branch of her extended family: “I wanted to start a new life. My relatives’ mouths are not good. When we give them something, they will treat us well... If we did not give them anything, their mouths will be so bad (they will spread lies) [...] My mother also often got heartache from them. They will be nice to us if we give them something, otherwise they will gossip about us behind our backs”. This woman had already suffered at the hands of one relative who spread rumors that she was a prostitute while working abroad: “When [my relative] came home, she said to everyone, to the [other] relatives and to my family at home that I worked as a prostitute. My mother was shocked and had a stroke”.

In some cases, family tragedy occurred while trafficking victims were away from home, having a devastating impact on the individual and the wider family environment. One woman, married with three sons, was widowed while she was working abroad and managed

to negotiate her return home with her employer. Upon arrival she also learned that her father had also died during her absence:

When I arrived home, it was three days after my husband died. There were still many relatives and neighbors at home. I passed out as soon as I arrived home. I was so tired as I did not have food for two days. I was so worried about my kids that were left with their father... Suddenly I said, "Where is my father?" But there was no answer from anyone. I asked again, "Where is my father?" Before that, all I knew was that my father stayed at our home with my husband. Then someone informed me that actually my father had died four months ago while I was [abroad]. They kept that information from me when I was still [abroad].... When I first came home, I was in shock. [I had] no father and no husband. My relatives advised me, "Don't go too deep in your sadness. Just focus on the children and find some money to support the children's needs".

This woman's situation was further complicated by the reaction of her mother-in-law to her eventual decision to remarry:

When she knew that I would get married, my mother-in-law was angry and I was not allowed to stay at the house any longer. [She said], "Don't stay here anymore, just think about your new husband. Go!" All I could do was cry. That's my house. If I go out from that house, to where? I also was concerned about my children. They need a parent's attention. I left them for 20 months but after I came back I was not allowed to stay with them. I often cried. Sometimes I stayed at my aunt's house just to avoid my mother-in-law's anger. My aunty is supportive and said, "Don't worry about what she said (the mother-in-law), everything will be fine". My relationship with the children is fine. It is the biggest support for me to stay with them in that house. [My son] said, "Please stay with us here, Mom".

Similarly, one man, trafficked for labor, described how his father died while abroad and he returned home empty handed to find his wife terminally ill: "[My wife] cried when she saw me. She could still sit but she was lying down most of the time and her body was so thin. Of course, she cried but she could not say anything. Actually she was happy, she was happy to meet her husband. I never thought that I would only see her three times before she died". He explained that, after his wife's death, his three children were taken from him to live with relatives and separated from one another as well. He described this desperate period of his life:

After my wife died, I was so depressed. I was fired so I was unemployed again. I had no wife. My children were taken to [another city] to other families. Three of them were separated. I was here. [...] I was powerless. My condition was weak... I cared for nothing anymore. [...] I was disappointed. I was raging. I was regretting. I was pessimistic... The one [my wife] who always gave me spirit, [was] the one by [my] side. When she [died] everything was down. My wife always supported me with such patience. But she passed away. I could not give her anything. I was restless and I had grudge to the sponsor... as well all of the pessimistic regret.

Moreover, his wife's relatives blamed him for not having come home with money and this compromised his relationship with his children for a number of years.

In some cases, family members were involved and complicit in the individual's trafficking, which made for a complicated (and potentially unsafe) situation over the course of reintegration. It was not always (or, arguably, often) the case that trafficking victims who had been pressured (or literally pushed) by family into trafficking necessarily severed ties

with family members or confronted them about their violation.¹³⁷ One woman, trafficked into prostitution at the age of 13 by her father, explained that she had not felt able to extricate herself from this situation until she had paid her father's debt: "... my [madam] said, 'Your dad went home to the village but he borrowed my money, about 1.5 million IDR [136USD]'... I couldn't say anything, my dad borrowed the money and he was in the village, so all I can do was to pay that money first". Neither had she felt able to break ties with her family in spite of their betrayal and was, at the time of our interviews with her, supporting her mother who had been aware of (and, arguably, complicit in) her forced entry into prostitution.

Family members were also sometimes involved in recruitment and facilitation of labor migration that ended up as trafficking. One man explained how he was recruited by his brother-in-law to work on a plantation in Malaysia, but was deceived by about the conditions and terms of the work and also had his salary withheld: "I was angry at [my brother-in-law] because his words [promises] were different here [in Indonesia] and there [in Malaysia]. His attitude [and action] was also different". But he did not feel able to disclose what his brother-in-law had done, even to his wife many years after return, because of his "inferior" place within the family: "I was just the son-in-law. I did not say anything, it was my personal secret". He never confronted his brother-in-law, choosing instead to avoid him during his visits home.

Other family problems and issues arose that added pressure to trafficked persons' lives during reintegration. One man was doing well when first interviewed but at the second interview, he and his wife had just learned that their teenage daughter was pregnant and had dropped out of school. She was pushed to marry her boyfriend and she was now living with the husband's family. The situation had a devastating impact on this man as he grappled with how to manage his sadness at the "loss" of his young daughter, his disappointment with her behavior, his frustration over her missed opportunity to continue her education and his shame in the community for her teen and unwed pregnancy. He described this challenge in some detail and with great emotion:

It is about my daughter [who is 16 years]. I feel ashamed with my neighbors. It happened when she graduated from junior high school. I already wanted her to continue to senior high school. I would do anything to have that happen. But when she graduated from junior high school, we found out that she was already pregnant. I was in shock. How could it happen? We very strictly educated her. She did not even want to tell us about the pregnancy. We knew when the father of the boy came to us and told us that our daughter is pregnant...I feel so ashamed. [...] I did not think much. I decided to just marry them, although they are still too young. [...] The people around here do not know about this. [...] I will miss them. You know we usually spent time together. I feel I lost her now.

One young man, who was trafficked for fishing, was suffering precisely because he was unable to build a family himself. He explained how trafficking and his struggle to reintegrate impacted his ability to have a family of his own and more on: "I want to get married, I have not been married yet. I have no [girlfriend]. How can I? I'm still jobless".

5.2.5 Multiple issues, tensions and vulnerabilities within the family

The challenges and vulnerabilities discussed above are seldom self-standing. Trafficked persons and their families faced many, most and sometimes all of these issues and tensions, to different degrees and at different stages. That is, financial difficulties commonly created or increased conflict and tensions within the family, including feelings of shame and blame, as well as fractured relationships. One man described how he and his wife had a good

¹³⁷ See also Brunovskis, A. and R. Surtees (2012) *No place like home? Challenges in family reintegration after trafficking*. Oslo: Fafo and Washington: NEXUS Institute.

relationship and reasonable economic situation before he left, but how his trafficking changed everything and how his wife blamed him for this: “We were fine before. The family’s economy was fine. We did not have any debt. And then I went [abroad for work]. I got scammed. We were in debt and I got sick. Then I did not have a job. We ate whatever we could afford, sometimes we boiled some leaves in the garden that can be eaten”. Similarly, being physically or psychologically unwell often meant being unable to work, which amplified economic problems, as well as issues of stress and blame within the family. Issues and tensions were most commonly mutually reinforcing and coterminous and victims’ and their families struggled on many levels in moving on from trafficking.

5.3 Different reactions within the family – supportive and unsupportive, positive and negative

Family is not a homogeneous unit; family members reacted differently to trafficking victims at return and over the course of their reintegration. Some respondents found “home” to be both supportive and unsupportive, healthy and destructive, positive and negative.

One woman, trafficked for prostitution, described her mother’s reception as warm and supportive, including her willingness to house herself and her children. Since her return, her mother had been very worried about her well-being and supportive in all ways: “Everywhere I go she always worries about me... She is afraid that I will be lost”. However, this woman was in conflict with her siblings because she borrowed money from them to help repay her estranged husband’s debt, which had poisoned their perception of and attitude toward her. She described tense relationships, especially with her sister when she first returned: “My sister was angry at me.... They were angry because they helped me to pay my credit to the bank”. Fortunately, this had eased somewhat over time and her sibling would now visit their mother, with whom this woman was staying: “[My sister] sometimes visits us again but before that she didn’t visit us because she hated me”.

Similarly, one man, trafficked for fishing, described a good relationship with his sister who was living in Jakarta, but poor relations with his sibling in his home village because of his migration debt to relatives there, which he had been unable to repay. He explained that he was unable to return to live in his home village because of this debt:

If I went back, [my brother] would ask, “Do you have any money, to pay your debt?” In the beginning they were good but after they knew that I could not get my money, they were also stressed... They felt pressure. They were upset because I could not get my salary. [...] They just said, “If you get your salary, the most important thing is to pay your debt”. [...] I will go home when I can repay my debt.

One woman, trafficked for domestic work, was a widowed mother of three children who had migrated after her husband’s death to support her children. As discussed above, when she returned home she was unable to rely on her sister for help as this caused problems and resentment within her sister’s family. She also had problems with her youngest son who blamed her for abandoning him to work abroad and faced recrimination from her eldest son for her absence while abroad: “We did not need your money, we needed your attention”. This woman did have positive relations with her daughter at the time of the first interview, although this deteriorated shortly after the second interview. Nonetheless, she was able to draw on support from her husband’s family, especially her brother-in-law, his wife and their children, who supported her emotionally and financially after her return. Another man (mentioned above) described how he was accepted by his wife but was rejected by many within his family because of having been imprisoned abroad for irregular migration.

Not only did individual family members react differently to the trafficked person’s return, but reactions also changed over time. Some respondents described how, for them, the family

environment was both supportive and unsupportive, as some relationships seemed to encourage reintegration and other relationships threatened to undermine it.

Overall, trafficked persons described a wide range of family environments following trafficking. For many trafficked persons, family was an important foundation for successful reintegration, with family members providing emotional, social and/or economic support. Other respondents described unhealthy and negative (sometimes even dangerous) family relationships, which challenged reintegration. And some trafficked persons faced mixed reactions from different family members, which were fluid and changed over time. Some aspects of the family environment seemed to support successful reintegration while relationships with some family members seemed to undermine reintegration success.

5.4 Summary

Reintegration is a process that encompasses not only individual trafficking victims, but also their family members and the family environment to which they return. Not only must trafficked persons come to terms with the exploitation they have suffered, but they must also deal with the reactions and responses of their family members. At the same time, trafficking victims' family members, in addition to coping with what they have suffered while the victim was exploited, must come to terms with all that their loved one has suffered and also navigate, manage and ideally support the victim's reintegration.

Family often provides important forms of support after trafficking – emotional, social, physical and economic – which contribute to an individual's reintegration success. At the same time, the family environment also commonly involves vulnerabilities (and even destructiveness) that may work against trafficking victims' recovery and successful reintegration. For respondents in this study, the family environment was enormously diverse and highly complex, even, at times, contradictory. Indonesian trafficking victims returned and reintegrated into many different family and household constellations and some trafficked persons returned to family settings where they faced different reactions and responses, including over time.

Family was, for almost all victims, the primary source of support after trafficking. And a number of respondents generally found family to be a safe, supportive and protective environment during reintegration. Trafficked persons and their family members described feelings of relief, joy and gratitude.

Nonetheless, even in positive family settings, reintegration was not uncomplicated. Trafficked persons and their families also experienced strain and tensions on different levels and in relation to various factors. These factors included financial problems in the family; being stressed and distressed; feeling ashamed and being blamed; and damaged or destroyed relationships (fissures and fractures including disrupted parent/child relationships and damaged and destroyed marriages).

In many cases, factors were not discrete and, rather, victims and their families faced a multitude of issues, tensions and vulnerabilities, which were often coterminous and mutually reinforcing. In addition, family is not a homogeneous unit; family members reacted differently to trafficking victims at return and over the course of reintegration. Some respondents found "home" to be both healthy and destructive, positive and negative. Not only did individual family members react differently, but reactions also changed over time. Some respondents described how, for them, the family environment was both supportive and unsupportive, as some relationships supported reintegration and other relationships threatened to undermine it.

Overall, the respondents in this study reported a wide range of family environments following trafficking. For many trafficked persons, family members provided emotional,

social and/or economic support. Other respondents described unhealthy and negative (sometimes even dangerous) family relationships, which further complicated reintegration. And some trafficked persons faced mixed reactions from different family members, which were fluid and changed over time. That being said, even when the family setting was fraught, these issues were not irrevocable and many trafficked persons were able to navigate, manage and overcome tensions and problems faced within the family setting over the course of reintegration.



A woman hangs laundry outside of her family home in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

6. At home. Experiences of community reintegration

The community environment into which trafficked persons reintegrate or integrate is an important factor in and feature of the reintegration process. The community includes any number of individuals of varying degrees of intimacy and distance to the trafficking victim – friends, acquaintances, neighbors, peers, work colleagues, community leaders and so on. It includes those close to and intimately involved in the life of a trafficking victim, as well as those within the victim's wider (and more distant) social sphere. Whether returning to the home community or settling into a new community setting, reintegration is directly impacted by the wider socio-cultural environment in which victims live over time. And, as with family, the community setting can be a complex and contradictory environment, which is both supportive and unsupportive and entails different (even contradictory) reactions from friends, neighbors and others, including changes over time.

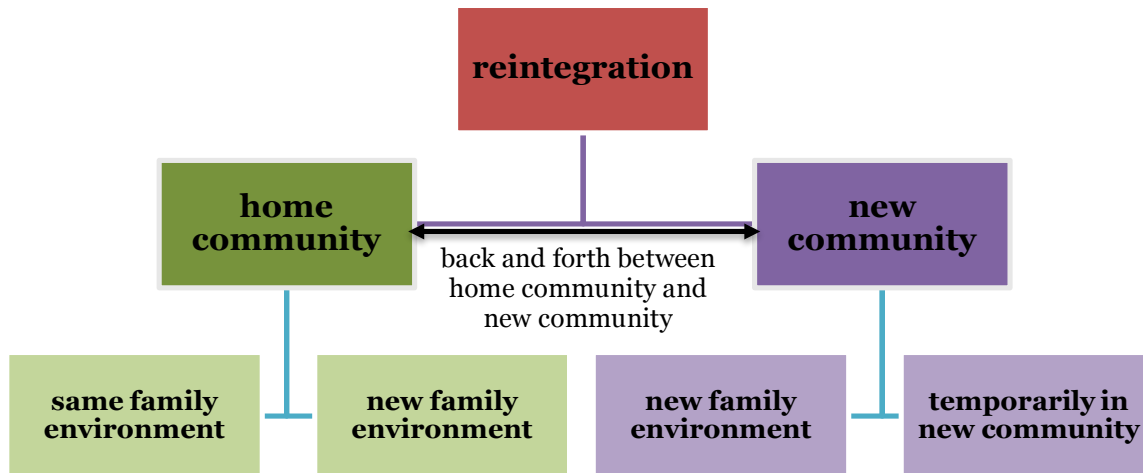


Intersection in a village in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

About community life

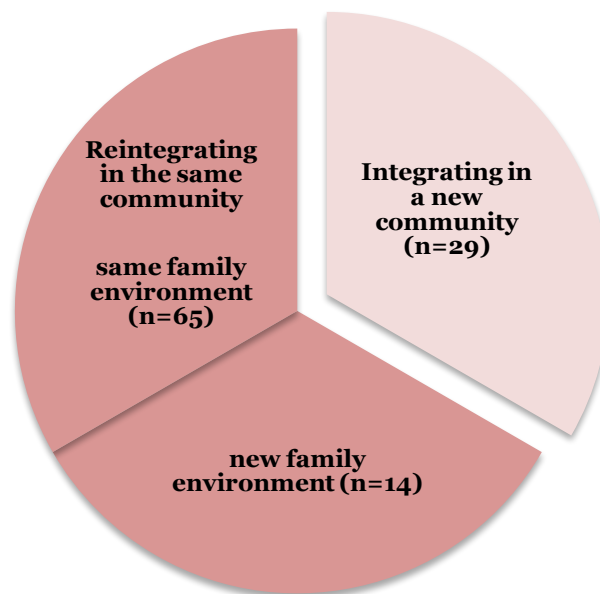
The community environments in which trafficking victims lived after exploitation differed substantially from person to person. Some victims returned to live in their home communities; others integrated in new communities. And some victims moved between different community settings at different stages of reintegration, based on changes and developments in their lives. Diagram #8 (below) details the different community constellations into which victims may integrate or reintegrate.

Diagram #8. Community settings into which trafficking victims reintegrate/integrate



Many victims (79 of 108) reintegrated in their home communities, returning to the same or similar living arrangements as when they were trafficked. As discussed in the previous section, 65 of these 79 individuals returned to the same family environment (in the same community) in which they had been living at the time of migration. Fourteen of the 79 individuals reintegrating in their home communities returned to the same community but were living in a new family situation (e.g. due to marriage, divorce, remarriage).

Diagram #9. Community settings into which trafficking victims were reintegrating/integrating



By contrast, some victims (29 of 108) integrated in “new communities”. However, this meant different things in different victims’ lives. In some cases, integration in a new community was only temporary and their community environment was somewhat fluid. Some victims (8 of 29) were involved in a legal case against their traffickers and had opted to stay in a new community (primarily Jakarta) until the case was resolved. Some were working during this

temporary stay in the new community. Of these eight individuals, three returned to their home communities after their first interview.

In other cases, victims (3 of 29) were temporarily staying in a new community at the time of their interviews because of work options that were available there but not at home. Additionally, five (of 79) respondents who had been reintegrating in the same community at the time of first interviews later moved to new communities for work. And some individuals while living in their home community at the time of the interviews had moved back and forth to new communities (usually nearby cities or Jakarta) temporarily for work. In most instances of temporarily being in a new community, the individual planned to return to his/her home community to live and was often traveling back to stay with family when work and resources permitted.

In the other cases (18 out of 29), victims were living permanently in a new community, having settled there after trafficking. In a handful of cases (7 of 29) this was integration in a community setting where they were exploited, most commonly women who had been trafficked for prostitution in Jakarta and had since remained in the capital city. That being said, one of these individuals (1 of 7) who had been living in the new community later moved back to her home community after her first interview.

Other victims (8 of 29) integrated in a new community with a spouse, living with his or her family. In some situations, this meant moving quite far from their home communities (and support networks) including to villages in different and sometimes quite distant provinces. In two instances, respondents integrated in a new community with their spouse but then returned to live in their home community following divorce.

In still other instances (3 of 29), victims integrated in entirely new areas after being trafficked, locations where they had no family or personal connections. In one instance, a divorced woman bought a house in an area where she had no attachment—living there initially with her children and subsequently on her own. Another woman lived with her sister (and her sister's family) after her return from trafficking and until she migrated again. A third woman moved to live with her mother after her return while her husband was working in Jakarta so that she could take care of her aging mother: "I have moved again to my mother. Previously, I was at [that village] then I moved here again to [this village]. I said to myself, 'When I was young over there she was the one who took care of me. Now, it's my turn'. My mother is here".

Living situations were fluid over time and some victims moved multiple times over the course of the research project. For example, one man, trafficked for fishing, returned to his home community after trafficking but then moved back and forth between temporary housing in Jakarta and his home community in Central Java. At the time of second interviews, he had re-settled in his home community. Another man moved between Jakarta and his home community in West Java, where he had settled at the time of second interviews.

About community life over time

Some living arrangements changed over time and in response to evolving (or deteriorating) family situations. As noted above, two women who initially lived in their home communities subsequently integrated in their husbands' communities and then, following divorce from their husbands, returned to live again in their home communities. Similarly, one divorced woman, who was trafficked for domestic work, initially returned to live with her daughter in her home community but then moved to a nearby village to live with her husband when she remarried. Several months after the second interview, however, she and her second husband were having serious marital problems and she was uncertain as to whether she would remain in their home and his village or return with her daughter to their home community or

perhaps settle somewhere else entirely. One woman (mentioned above) who lived with her sister and her family (in a new village) for some time after being trafficked subsequently migrated again on two occasions, becoming pregnant during her second migration experience after which she returned to live with her parents (while her foreign husband remained abroad). After some time, she remarried and is now living with her second husband and two children in his home community.

In addition, some respondents had longer-term plans to move their households. One woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, had, since escaping trafficking, integrated into a *kampung* (neighborhood) in Jakarta. However, during her second interview she explained that she had recently bought some land in her home village where she planned to return to live once she was able to save enough money to build a house.

An important factor in many victims' reintegration success is having support within the community. In some situations, the community setting was a constructive and supportive setting, which offered fertile ground and opportunity for recovery and reintegration. In other cases, victims were exposed to discrimination, exclusion, vulnerability and structural inequality in their community environments. At the same time, the reaction of community was often uneven and trafficking victims described different reactions from different friends, neighbors and community members.

6.1 Supportive communities

Many victims described a positive reception and a supportive community setting when they returned home from trafficking and moved on with their lives. Trafficking victims described receiving reassurance and encouragement; pity and sympathy; support and kindness; and overall acceptance from different people with the community – friends, neighbors, peers and community members.

Box #3. Support and positive reactions from friends and neighbors

The neighbors felt sorry for me because I was so skinny returning back from [the Middle East]. (*Woman trafficked for domestic work*)

I received various reactions [from the community], pros and cons... It was my destiny. Also they felt pity since my husband already remarried. But actually I was so happy since my daughter succeeded. She graduated from the SMK (high school). (*Woman trafficked for domestic work*)

They [the neighbors and community members] treated me well, *Alhamdulillah* [thank God]". (*Woman trafficked for sexual exploitation*)

Yes, the neighbors knew...I told them my story. [...] They said: "*Alhamdulillah* [thank God], you arrived back safely". All of them prayed for me, and said that, "*Alhamdulillah* [thank God], you can survive and arrive home safely". (*Woman trafficked for domestic work*)

[My neighbors] were kind to me. Many came and visited me, just checking in on me. (*Man trafficked for labor*)

The neighbors treated me well. We are fine and we never have any problems. They are nice to me. (*Woman trafficked for domestic work*)

The neighbors are good. They have always treated me well. Neighbors, relatives, *Alhamdulillah* [thank God] they stay the same, they never change. (*Woman trafficked for domestic work*)

My neighbors are fine. There is no bad reaction from them. Most of them are my relatives. *(Woman trafficked for domestic work)*

[The neighbors] came over and greeted me [when I came home]. If people came over I told them my story. They said it was okay, the most important thing is that you came home safely and healthy. “We can get money, fortune somewhere else”, they said. People came, I told them my story and they gave me support. That’s what happened... There were no [negative reactions]. They were nice, *Alhamdulillah* [thank God]. *(Woman trafficked for domestic work)*

My closest neighbor was kind. He wanted to hear my story. *(Man trafficked for labor)*

[My neighbors] were crying. [They treated me] nicely, many of them provided food. When I came home many neighbors visited me, from night until morning. Some of them advised me to not work abroad anymore. Some of them wanted to know my condition. *(Woman trafficked for domestic work)*

In some cases, friends and neighbors offered more tangible support, including financial support, providing food and basic needs and assistance in finding work, both of which were urgent needs for the vast majority of trafficking victims not only at return but also over time.

Box #4. Informal assistance and support from neighbors, friends and community members

All of my neighbors came to visit me. Even though my house was far away, they still came to visit me. [...] They usually gave me money. *(Woman trafficked for domestic work)*

No one was cynical. When I just came back, they invited me to work together, peeling *belinjo* (a nut) for 500 IDR [.05USD] per liter, until I got 7,000 IDR [0.65USD] for my children. *Alhamdulillah* [thank God], my close neighbors are fine. *(Woman trafficked for domestic work)*

Yes, a lot [of neighbors visited when I came home] ... Yes [they brought rice] and all other kind of meals... They pitied me, basically. *(Woman trafficked for domestic work)*

All my friends give me motivation. They also try to help me get information. They told me they would let me know if they get some information about job vacancies... *(Man trafficked for fishing)*

When I moved to [my village] all of my neighbors were watching me over. They asked me, “You just arrived from [the Middle East]? Why were you sick?” Some of them gave me food. Since I stayed in the boarding school area, they also knew that I was a widow. Sometimes one of them gave me 15,000 to 20,000 IDR [1.36 to 1.81USD] ... Maybe once in a month [I receive a donation]. If they have more money to donate, they will give me. *(Woman trafficked for domestic work)*

Sometimes there is a neighbor whose husband is working abroad and when she got money that was sent to her (from her husband), she will say to my wife, “Do you have money? If you don’t have money, I can lend money to you”. Sometime I also feel ashamed. Sometime when her husband sent the money, we borrowed from them. *(Man trafficked for fishing)*

There was our neighbor next door. We helped each other out in times of need. If I had rice, we shared and the other way around. I am not a local, I am a migrant from another village so I wasn’t so close with the other neighbors. *(Man trafficked for labor)*

Luckily, I had a good friend. He is kind. He gave me twenty million IDR [1,818USD]. When I told him that I did not have a house, he already has stable life, he said, “This is for you and you can use the rest to renovate the house”. *Alhamdulillah* [thank God], the house was almost falling apart. That was the beginning they were nice to me. [He was an old friend], from when I worked in Jakarta... He came by and he felt sorry [for us] ...We met once in *Eid al-Fitr*¹³⁸ last year. If there was no traffic jam, he would not come by because his house was in East Java. He came by unintentionally. I believe it was because I prayed. (*Man trafficked for fishing*)

When I was stressed so much, all of my family and relatives were supporting me. There was also a religious leader who gave me a motivation and advice so that I could manage myself and I so I could also accept my destiny with sincerity. (*Woman trafficked for domestic work*)

A supportive community was more common among those who were trafficked for various forms of labor and less common among those trafficked for sexual exploitation. In some cases, this was because a woman’s involvement in prostitution was known in the community where they lived and they were looked down upon as a consequence. It was also, arguably, because many women trafficked for sexual exploitation integrated into new communities and, therefore, could not rely on existing contacts and relations with friends and neighbors.

6.2 Tensions, issues and challenges within communities

While some trafficking victims found support in their communities, this was not the case of all. Many trafficking victims felt uncomfortable, stressed and even ashamed in the wider community as a consequence of their trafficking exploitation and because they failed in their migration. In a number of cases, this shame and discomfort were a function of how victims themselves felt rather than judgments or critiqued from friends, neighbors or community members.

Box #5. Trafficking victim’s feelings vis-à-vis community

I felt ashamed [with my neighbors]. It’s far away to [the destination country] and I didn’t bring anything (money) home. (*Man trafficked for labor*)

I never sat together with the neighbors. I was embarrassed at that time... my condition at the time was so mentally [weak]. (*Man trafficked for fishing*)

When I first got home, it was so stressful. I did not bring money home. I wished I had not returned home. I wanted to go back sailing. Why should I go home without money? It’s just embarrassing for my wife for her to face the neighbors. It was just disappointing. (*Man trafficked for fishing*)

I never told neighbors about my bad experience...I do not trust them. I worry that they will spread it [around]. (*Woman trafficked for sexual exploitation*)

When I had just arrived at the village, I felt ashamed. All of the people knew that I did not succeed. All of the people wanted to know more about my story. I still have debt to [the money lender] that I still needed to pay back. (*Woman trafficked for domestic work*)

The most difficult challenge is [feeling] ashamed...ashamed with the family, with friends. Because I came abroad for work, far away, usually all people would bring money, right? In

¹³⁸ *Eid al-Fitr*, also known as *Lebaran*, means the “festival of breaking of the fast”. It is an important Muslim holiday celebrating the end of the holy month of Ramadan.

the meantime I did not. The most difficult challenge is the shame. I did not feel good with people, especially with my family. (*Man trafficked for fishing*)

It was a feeling of longing and a bit ashamed. Because after working abroad for so long we came home with nothing. As the time went by, other people began to ask why my life was still the same back at home. I did not have the heart to tell my story to everybody, but, on the other hand, they may misinterpret me as stingy. (*Man trafficked for fishing*)

Feelings of shame were particularly acute when others in their community had migrated successfully. One woman, trafficked to the Middle East, juxtaposed her experience with that of her children's friends whose migrant mothers returned home successfully: "[My son] knows [that I went to work]. But he does not understand. The most important thing is when I come home I must buy some toys for him... their friends, when the mother came home, she bought a new toy, new clothes".

In other instances, feelings of shame, embarrassment and discomfort were a function of how victims were received, perceived and treated within their communities at return and over the course of their reintegration. Many victims faced gossip, discrimination, criticism and censure within their communities when they returned home after trafficking. One woman, trafficked for domestic work, described the gossip she suffered from her neighbors: "[The neighbors] were just gossiping about me always... They didn't help me or assist me. They were badmouthing me but I don't really care. I was just thinking about my son and my husband". One man, trafficked for labor, described similar criticism of his failed migration: "I could sense from their tones [which were] a bit insulting. [The neighbors] talked behind my back, [saying], 'He came home just like this, despite all the efforts spent to migrate'. Well, what could I say? That's just what neighbors did since many of them had succeeded with their endeavor".

There were different triggers or reasons for these negative reactions and attitudes within the community, including: failed migration and not returning with money; criticism for "ambition"; community perceptions of stressed or "problematic" behavior at home; discrimination because of "unacceptable" behavior (e.g. prostitution, pregnancy); and jealousy about being assisted.

6.2.1 Not returning with money; failed migration; not being "successful"

A number of trafficking victims described being criticized and gossiped about for their failed migration, for not having returned home with money nor having sent remittances while they were abroad. This was the case for victims of all forms of trafficking, both men and women.

Box #6. Criticism and gossip within the community for failed migration

[The neighbors] said, "You didn't get any money. You are just stupid. You can't write why did you go to [the Middle East]." Indeed I cannot write and it is difficult for me even to write. I did not graduate. I can only read two words... They said, "Why didn't you bring the money?" (*Woman trafficked for domestic work*)

[The neighbors] talked behind my back. [They said], "He came home just like despite all the efforts spent to migrate" ... [The negative reactions] were usually from the women. Women usually did those things, like talking behind people's back between women. Men didn't deal with that kind of stuff normally... [They said], "What do you eat at the house since everyone is unemployed?" something like that. (*Man trafficked for labor*)

About the community, well, it seems no one cares. Like in Javanese language *ngreken* (care). It seems nobody cares so I am reluctant to get out. If I go out, definitely no one cares about me... close people surrounding me also do not care. In my hometown, they are too... when someone is not successful, they are so... It's hard. How could I tell this? The pressure is hard. When someone is successful, they all would be close to us. At that time I was successful, they were all close to me. But if we do not succeed... we must be shunned. My hometown is difficult. It looks like that but it is difficult. They used to heat up. When I returned [they said], why did it become this and this? You never did any hard work this and this. I just kept silent. It's me who feels it. I am the one who felt how the work was there. (*Man trafficked for fishing*)

The relationship with the community is not really good. I was a little bit intimidated by how they treat me. They teased me because I went abroad and did not bring money home. They said I was stupid. I knew about it from my friends. That's why, honestly, I don't feel like being in the village. I just stayed inside. I only go out to visit my friends far from the village... I only went to my friend's house who also worked on the ship. No [I don't have friends in the neighborhood]. I was reluctant to go out mingling with others because of the teasing. [...] [When they teased me] I felt intimidated. I even had a fight once... because they teased me. But after a while, I realized that I should confine my anger. They are old people, I should just ignore them. (*Man trafficked for fishing*)

...at that time some of my neighbors have been leaving, when they returned home, they are success. So they could build a house. I was teased that my friends could buy motorcycle by their own but I could not... I was teased by other friends. (*Man trafficked for fishing*)

In some cases, trafficking victims described how their failed migration (i.e. trafficking) led to unfair and untrue accusations from friends and neighbors that they had squandered their salary and spent it frivolously and only on themselves while abroad:

I overheard how [my neighbors] made me an example of someone who worked abroad but never brought any money home. They thought that I was just spending my money for fun. It's a common perception here that if you don't bring money home, that you spent it abroad for fun". (*Man trafficked for fishing*)

Well I just heard rumors [from neighbors] that I went overseas not to work for money but I spent it... Yes, they said she's getting old and doesn't have house but she already went overseas. They said I spent a lot of money [while abroad]. (*Woman trafficked for domestic work*)

That being said, the woman in this latter example explained how the situation had changed and calmed over time. This was due, at least in part, to support from her husband, who would become angry about any gossip or bad words spoken about his wife. When asked how neighbors responded over time, she explained: "They are afraid of my husband. Only people who are close to us asked me". Another factor was likely this woman's relationship to the community, as she came from a family that was respected in the community – one that did not engage in gossip about others and, in turn, did not accept to be gossiped about:

Now that I got home from the shelter in Jakarta, nobody asked us about anything. We do not like to be nosy and we definitely do not like people who want to know... Yes, the neighbors do [respect our family]. It's not like we are snobby people. But if something is going on with other families, we are not nosy. And we also expect other people are not nosy with our business.

Some victims were accused of not working hard while abroad and, thus, blamed for their exploitation and abuse. One woman, trafficked for domestic work, described criticism from neighbors: “Some [neighbors] said that I did something wrong there. I don’t understand why people talked like that, about bad things that happened to other people”.

Another woman, trafficked for domestic work, explained how her close neighbors criticized her for what they perceived to be her “pickiness” and “laziness” when working abroad: “There were some [negative comments]. [Neighbors said], ‘If you go abroad to work, then work, whatever the conditions are’... The neighbors across from us are under the impression that I did not want to work and that I was too picky”. This situation did, however, improve over the several months after her return and may have been, at least in part, linked with improvements in her life generally. When asked at the second interview about the situation with her neighbors she explained that they were no longer gossiping and questioning her about her migration and early return: “[They don’t question] anymore. They are now more interested in [my new] baby”.

In another instance it was precisely a woman’s “success” that led to community gossip and censure. This woman (mentioned above) was trafficked for domestic work but managed to escape and find work in the destination country and eventually send home money to support her mother and her children. However, this woman’s relative spread rumors that she was working in prostitution, which was why she was “successful”. This woman opted not to reintegrate into her home community as a result of this gossip and instead moved to an entirely new community. She described how her home community, where many of her extended relatives lived, was a difficult place to live because of so much gossip and negative reactions:

No [I didn’t return to my old house], I wanted to start a new life. My relatives’ mouths are not good. When we gave them something, they will treat us well, [but] that’s the thing that makes me uncomfortable. If we did not give them anything, their mouths will be so bad (they will spread lies). [...] Actually I did not like the situation for a long time. [It was] only because my parents stayed there that I stayed there also. It’s better if we stay away from people like that. It’s like a tradition there. My mother also often got heartache from them. Because they will be nice to us if we give them something. Otherwise they will gossip us from behind [speak about us behind our backs].

Her experience also illustrates the fluidity between relatives and community members in village life with many victims living in settings where “community” is comprised of both immediate family members and more distant relatives.

In another instance, one man, who was trafficked for labor, described a complicated situation with his neighbors. When first interviewed he explained that his neighbors treated him badly and gossiped about him because of his failed migration: “They talked behind my back I guess. [They said], ‘He came home just like despite all the efforts spent to migrate’”. At the time of his second interview, several years since his return, he described a still difficult relationship with his neighbors, which affected his whole family. His son-in-law who was running a successful business in the neighborhood had recently been accused by neighbors of using magic to be successful; his daughter was accused of stealing money from the rotating savings and loan scheme in the village and he described being generally poorly treated by many neighbors. When he lost his job, none of his neighbors helped him to find work or loaned him any money: “I did not work for a whole year. But I did not ask for help from the neighbors. I did not borrow their money. But they accused my family of doing something awful”.

Failed migration also meant that victims/migrants were unable to realize their social obligations within the community, which was a source of tension with some victims' friends and neighbors. Social codes require that returned migrants bring gifts for friends and neighbors or loan (or sometimes give) them money from their earnings. This expectation is especially pronounced in situations where friends and neighbors have assisted the migrant/victim's family in their absence – for example, helping to care for their family members or covering costs for the family's needs (schooling, food, repairs to the house) while the victim/migrant was away. One woman, trafficked for domestic work, explained how her neighbor asked to borrow money after her return because she had been a migrant worker, but she was unable to lend this money (as she had been trafficked and not earned any money). This, she felt, created tension in their relations afterward.

In addition, there is often an expectation for victims to make some donation or contribution to the community itself – e.g. for the village office, tools for village infrastructure development and so on. This may be feasible for successfully returned migrant workers, it is less possible for trafficking victims. But because the community and community leadership is often unaware of the severe problems that victims have faced while trafficked, they may be criticized for not contributing.

In many instances, trafficking victims did not reveal that they had been exploited (or the full extent of their exploitation) to friends and neighbors, which led to miscommunication and misunderstanding between victims and those in the community. One man, trafficked for fishing, explained how his male friends within the village were upset with him after his return, thinking he was arrogant and unkind for not spending time with them and sharing his earnings: “My friends, they are men, they think I'm arrogant. Yes, so I just stay at home... They think that I came home bringing money. Those that do not know [about my trafficking] think that I came home bringing money... They thought that I came home from abroad bringing a lot of money.”

Negative responses from persons within the community not only impacted victims' mental well-being, but also influenced their decision of where to live and what to do after trafficking. One man, trafficked for fishing (mentioned in Box #6 above) explained that criticism in the community led him to not go home to visit his family, friends and neighbors: “It has been quite long since I went back home the last time. Even when I went home I only spent one day there. I came in the morning and I left again in late afternoon”. That being said, this situation did improve over time and over the course of the research project he eventually returned to live in his home village.

6.2.2 Criticized for ambition, “aiming too high”

Another source of tension between some trafficking victims and community members was what was perceived as the individual's “ambition” – i.e. “aiming too high”, wanting too much, not being satisfied with what they had, not appreciating life in the village. One man, trafficked for labor, described being criticized for his “ambition” by friends and neighbors when he came home from working abroad: “[The neighbors made] some negative comments. [They said], ‘Don't aim too high, it's like aiming for the moon’. [They said], ‘Don't be arrogant, just stay and seek your fortune here’... I told my friend about going [abroad] and the desire to own a house. Apparently, that was perceived as something [arrogant] and now that friend always brings it up”. Similarly, one man, trafficked for fishing, faced a similar issue when he returned to live at home after trafficking and had to navigate the criticism of neighbors: “I said to my parents before that when I came back from abroad, I would renovate the house. My neighbors heard about this and... they teased me... It is in my parents who have heard that. I told them to stay calm, be patient”. One woman, trafficked for domestic work, explained how her neighbors criticized her for wanting to work abroad. As she

explained, she was told by many neighbors that instead of working, she should be happy with her home situation: “I received a lot of advice just be content with your husband”.

Even in situations when the trafficking victim had suffered a great deal, he/she was still sometimes exposed to criticism and censure. One woman, who migrated as a domestic worker, returned home injured and blind as a result of violence inflicted by her employer while she was trafficked. Nevertheless, she explained that some neighbors criticized her for her “ambition”, for wanting a high salary:

Here there were some people who did not like me. They insulted me. Some felt sorry for me, so sorry, saying, “Why did you go to work there? You can work here too.” I said, “Working here was tiring and the income was not that much so I went there to search for bigger income.” [They insulted me, saying], “Now you are blind, right? You went abroad to search for a bigger income but now you are blind”.

6.2.3 Because of stressed or “problematic” behavior at home

All respondents described some level of mental and/or emotional distress as a consequence of trafficking, including being abused and violated, witnessing the abuse of others, suffering harsh living and working conditions, being separated from loved ones, being unpaid for their work and being ashamed about what had happened to them. Many trafficked persons returned home stressed, anxious, depressed and generally unwell. Many were also stressed and depressed for some time after their return, for many months and even years. This often led trafficked persons to behave and react in stressed ways, behaviors and actions that were a source of gossip and criticism among neighbors and friends.

One woman, who managed a dangerous and dramatic escape, returned home in a stressed condition and behaved erratically and emotionally for some months after her return. She explained that while she was in shock from what she had endured and needed time to recover, there were many neighbors who said that she was crazy: “When I just arrived at the village I was in shock. People in my village thought that I was a crazy person. They heard the news that I was stressed, escaped and hid in the jungle... Actually, I was not crazy. I just felt depressed and wanted to go home because I did not receive my salary.

Another woman, trafficked for domestic work, was accommodated for six months in a shelter program after which she returned home. Even after this assistance she explained that she returned home in a stressed state, feeling deeply anxious and often crying for up to a year after her return home. Once home friends and neighbors gossiped and spread rumors that she was crazy: “...sometimes people said things to me. When I was still crying a lot, they said I was half crazy. I prayed. What if the same thing happened to them?... I let them insult me”. At her second interview, almost three years after returning home, she was still subjected to this type of community gossip and criticism:

People say that I’m crazy... my neighbors. Everyday some people say that. My neighbors say [this]. I think I am normal... I never go anywhere. Sometimes for two days I do not go anywhere. I just stay at home, that’s all. I never go out. I go out just when I met you. And there are always people who are mocking me. [...] [They said], “Don’t be with [her], she is crazy”. They said many things... They said, “No one wants you. You are crazy. You are depressed” ...Every day, there would always be someone mocking me, [saying] that I am crazy, depressed, an idiot, stressed or anything.

This type of criticism was especially likely to be the case when community members did not know what had happened to victims and many victims chose not to share their stories with their families, let alone within the community. This meant that friends and neighbors did not

always understand why the individual was behaving in erratic and stressed manner, leading to misunderstanding and also mistreatment.

6.2.4 Discrimination because of “unacceptable” behavior - prostitution, pregnancy, being arrested

In some cases, victims were subjected to discrimination and censure because of things they had done (or been forced to do) while trafficked, which breeched social and cultural norms of appropriate behavior. Women and girls trafficked for sexual exploitation often faced different types of discrimination within their communities because of their involvement in prostitution. This included discrimination and criticism as well as harassment and abuse.

One woman, trafficked into prostitution, described discrimination from persons living in her community, including been abused and pressured to move away from her home:

People living around us... talked about us. They said, “There were many *jablay* (prostitutes), not married yet but living together” ... When [my husband and I] were caught by the village government officer and brought to the village office, there were people who spat on me. They said, “Get them out of this place!”. There were also [others] who hated me around there... The head of the RT [*Rukun Tetangga* or harmonious neighborhood] did not like me and suggested that I move to another place.

By contrast, this woman did not face problems in the community she moved to after she married because the neighbors were not aware of her past involvement in prostitution and she was more easily able to integrate into the community: “[The neighbors] are nice to me. They did not know my background. They only knew that we were newlyweds”.

Blame was levied at sexually exploited women and girls even when the forced nature of their prostitution was known by community members. As one woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation as a girl, explained of the wider community dynamics: “The challenge is when the public finds out [about my prostitution]. Those who were unaware wouldn’t care how I had gotten into it in the first place. They just know that I was ‘naughty’...”

Trafficking victims also suffered discrimination and criticism because of events that occurred while they were trafficked – e.g. rape, pregnancy out of wedlock. One woman was trafficked as a domestic worker to the Middle East where she was raped and became pregnant from the rape. She was charged with adultery (rather than assisted as a victim of rape) and sentenced to several months in prison, where she gave birth to her child. When she returned home with the child she was accepted by her husband and mother but was blamed and stigmatized by neighbors for the rape. She explained how she was gossiped about by many neighbors and her “adultery” was broadcast over the village loudspeaker by the local *ustad* (religious teacher), which was difficult for her in her daily life. This woman also explained that her mother who worked as a vendor in the village was also subjected to censure and verbal attacks from neighbors and community members after her return:

I tried to make my face thicker (to develop a thick skin). But the problem was what they told my mother. My mother was a vendor selling around [the village]. They told my mother, “You have a thick face (to have thick skin), having a child like that, but still daring to sell things around”. [...] Someone said, “If I were you, I would have hung myself”.

One woman, who was initially trafficked for domestic work, married while still abroad to another migrant worker, from a neighboring country. He remained abroad to work when she returned home with their two children. However, the community viewed the children as born out of wedlock and she described how people within the community gossiped about her

and her children: “Well, people talked. That hurt me. Sometimes they called them ‘out-of-wedlock kids’”. This gossip was only assuaged when neighbors understood that she was married to a foreign national and her husband was working abroad: “Since then, they knew that I had a husband”. Now two years since her return the gossip has abated, which was, she explained, likely aided by the fact that she had since divorced and remarried a man in the village who accepted her children as his own: “I do not think people are still gossiping about me now...It’s been two years... *Alhamdulillah* [thank God], there’s no one who makes fun of my kids anymore. Because if they did, they will face my angry husband. [One time, my new husband] said: ‘Even though they are not my biological children, I love them like my own children’”.

Another common source of criticism and discrimination was when trafficking victims were arrested and imprisoned while abroad. Most commonly they were detained as irregular migrants, but misunderstood to have committed a crime while abroad. This misunderstanding often led to serious problems for the returning migrant and his/her family in the community at large: “[The neighbors] were indifferent when I first came home... That made me sad. They talked to me in the store every day, in the vegetable seller. My wife came home crying, they said I was ex-convict. How could they know?”. Another man, trafficked for labor and detained abroad, spoke about the tragic effects of such community stigma on his family: “...my father, in the village, heard that I was in prison [while abroad] ...my father was shocked and then my father passed away”.

Some victims also faced problems within the community for what they were imagined to have done while trafficked - not working hard, having affairs and/or wasting their salary while abroad, as one man explained:

Maybe there were negative responses, but they didn’t say it directly to me. They said it to my wife, “Ah your husband must have become a drunkard abroad, a womanizer, that’s why he returned without any money”. It was like that. So automatically my wife got the same opinion in her thoughts. Finally, I was to be blamed. Even though I had explained, I was to blame.

Trafficking victims did have strategies to avoid or limit negative community reactions. One woman, who was sexually exploited in street prostitution in Jakarta, explained how she behaved and dressed differently when she visited her family in her home community to avoid being “identifiable” as a “prostitute”:

When I went to Jakarta, the way you dressed or the way you put make-up, it’s different. But when I came home, I became *orang kampung* [village person] so I didn’t dress up or put on make-up like I did in Jakarta... Sometimes they [the neighbors] thought that I went to Jakarta and became a “bad girl” (a prostitute). But because I dressed normally they didn’t believe that was why I went to Jakarta and [they thought that I] didn’t change at all.

However, this was not always possible and one woman, whose pictures appeared on Facebook while she was sexually exploited, explained that she now faced problems among her friends at home who had seen the photos: “They saw my photos on my Facebook page, my sexy photos. [...] when I drank alcohol..., when I worked in the café. [...] Until now, [they] still say bad thing about me... if I used make-up and I went to [town], they looked suspicious. Perhaps they think that I will go to do prostitution”.

For some victims it was not always possible to easily disentangle the source of discrimination. One woman, trafficked for prostitution, described how even after many years she faced harassment and stigma in her community. This was, in part, because of her past involvement in prostitution, but also due, in part, to being a divorced woman in the

neighborhood. As she explained, she often tried avoided contact with neighbors as a result: “I actually rarely go out... Sometimes when I go out, the men would tease me. They steal a glance. I tell them not to or their wives will be angry with me. They say things like, ‘Whenever I see you come home from work and take a bath, it arouses me’. Men just like to say things like that”. She went on to say: “They call me a widow and discriminate me as an ex-prostitute”.

Community reactions also impacted relations within the family and sometimes severely undermined reintegration. One man, trafficked for fishing, explained how at his return some neighbors spoke badly of him, saying that he was a drunkard or womanizer abroad, which influenced his wife and, at times, compromised their relationship:

I told her everything, but that is just my wife. At times she would understand. But, at other times, she would remember the neighbors saying things about me. It is difficult. It is difficult for her to trust me 100%. My wife’s reaction, her thoughts were definitely very negative because I didn’t send her any news while I was in jail, the government didn’t send any news as well. That was what made her so negative.

One woman, trafficked into prostitution as a girl, described how she was rejected by her family at least in part because of concerns about how the community would perceive the family due her (double stigma of) prostitution and pregnancy: “...my step-mother did not accept me. She was ashamed of me because I was in the news, on television and all [because of the police raid]. Also I came back pregnant. She said she was ashamed facing neighbors because our family is well-known and my grandfather has company in [that city]. So in the morning, father moved me to the house of my step-grandfather”. However, she was also rejected by her step-grandfather when he learned that she was pregnant and, when she returned home, her step-mother enlisted the help of neighbors to throw her out again: “My step-mother did not want to accept me... and she asked the leader of [neighborhood] to cast me away. It was raining hard and my father was not there. Nobody was in the house. The leader of the [neighborhood] came with three other people. He said, ‘Go away from here. You make us ashamed”.

In some instances, victims’ perceived “unacceptable” behavior was not as a consequence of trafficking but rather arose over the course of reintegration. One common source of criticism and discrimination for some female respondents was being a second wife or being a separated or divorced woman. When formerly trafficked women were or became second wives this sometimes led to tense relations with some neighbors who disapproved or feared the implications for their own marriages. Said one woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, of her situation in the community: “I do not want to tell the neighbors the truth [about being a second wife]. This is my real life actually. After [I told them] their views would be changed. Those who are good in the beginning gradually would change. They would be afraid if their husbands are seized”. Another woman, whose husband divorced her while she was trafficked, described difficult relations with some people in her community as a result of her status, including being sexually harassed by some married men and being criticized and disliked by some women in the community who feared she would “steal” their husbands: “...they were afraid that I would steal their husband or they just didn’t like women like me. I felt hopeless”.

6.2.5 Jealousy about being assisted

Some victims described problems because community members were jealous or resented them being assisted or receiving some form of support over the course of their reintegration. One man, trafficked for fishing, explained how in his community his neighbors were jealous about the assistance he received:

[Neighbors know I was assisted]; they are indifferent. But sometimes they seemed not to like it if I could afford to buy something... and they could not. Sometimes it is like that. [When I was assisted] it was like, they were unhappy... They quipped at me that if I had not received assistance, if the money was not given, I might not have been able to get married...



A man and boy register for medical services at a local health clinic in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

In other cases, victims described how some in the community resented them being able to buy or afford things that they could not and “doing well” when they themselves were not doing as well:

It seems the problem is like this. For example if I bought some things, [the neighbors] would get angry. They want to see me doing poorly and unable to move forward. *(Man trafficked for fishing)*

Yes, the neighbors were mocking me. If their neighbors are in bad situation, they would be happy. If their neighbors are happy, they would be upset. *(Man trafficked for labor)*

One woman, who had been trafficked for prostitution, described testy and jealous relations with neighbors who resented what they perceived as her now successful life (she worked in an office) and what they perceived as her “haughtiness” in that she did not try to make friends in the community. She explained that none of them knew of her prostitution but rather seemingly reacted to her perceived “success” since leaving her exploitative situation. They also did not know about her status as a second wife and how this negatively impacted her economic situation:

... when I return home from the office, I just stay at home... It’s like they are judging me as a person who does not want to make friends. In fact it’s not that I do not want

to make friends, but I am tired... When I needed to find information about the school, my neighbors asked this and that. It seemed when they gave information, it's like giving it half... Maybe because they see that I am working... They do not know my economic condition... Because what they see is, my husband is around every day, every night. They just don't know that I am the second wife... Yes, because they see my husband lives well as a civil servant and his wife is working but still selling at home, afraid of being poor. In fact they just don't know my real economic condition. My husband is just a symbol. Everything he has, he sends to his first wife. My neighbors do not know about this. The income is limited...

Similarly, the step-father of one young woman trafficked for sexual exploitation explained of the general climate in their living environment: "The society here in the village, usually in the villages, when we have money and our life is better, people will be close to us. But not if we are in a difficult economic situation..."

6.2.6 Multiple sources of tension and issues within the community

In some instances, issues and tension between victims and those within their communities were multiple, coterminous and mutually reinforcing. One woman, trafficked for sexual exploitation, described the serious problems she faced with her neighbors, including verbal and physical abuse and on-going harassment both of herself and her two small children:

They are throwing things at my children... When I am washing clothes, they throw something at me, like gravel. Adults [do this] and they teach their children to do the same. [...] They spread rumors about me so that I would be cast out [of the community]. Yesterday when I was working they spread gossip that a prostitute lives there and will bring bad luck... I had excrement in a plastic bag put in front of my door. I do not know what the problem is. I never spent time with them, just greetings. I never talk about them. I do not know why they are so cruel to me.

Neighbors did not know about her past involvement in prostitution. Rather, the issues seemed to derive from other sources, as she explained, including neighbors who were jealous of assistance that she and her family received, gossip that she was a prostitute because she worked long hours (albeit as a domestic worker), being looked down on because her husband often drank and was abusive toward her:

[The neighbors] knew we were assisted when we built a house. They gave a negative response [saying], "How can [your husband] build a house with his work like that?" ... I worked in a house [as a domestic worker] ... from 5am to 10pm with the payment of 25,000 IDR [2.27USD] plus rice and baby food. I brought food home and the neighbors suspected that I was a prostitute because of my working hours... And the [employers] gave me stuff, clothes and other stuff. The neighbors said, "How come you worked only a few weeks and already had everything?" Well, it was occasional stuff but the package was like new. [They said], "She must be selling herself. Who is working that early? Normally domestic workers go at eight and come back in the afternoon". They gave negative responses.

In addition, the experience of one man, trafficked for labor, illustrates a range of dynamics at play in the community setting and how negative reactions in the community impact not only the recovery of the individual victim, but also the well-being of family members and relations within the family and community more broadly. He explained how when he came home from trafficking he faced much blame from the neighbors, including false accusations of taking another wife and squandering the money he had earned:

... the moral burden came from neighbors... Finally, when I came home, facing the neighbors was the most difficult thing. It was the heaviest part that my neighbors

blamed me.... They accused me of being irresponsible. That is the problem until now... Before I went home [while I was in the destination country], people had negative thoughts like I got married again. Some considered that I was dead... And the neighbors had many wild thoughts about me.

When his wife, who became ill during his absence, died shortly after his return, the blame and recrimination from neighbors further increased and amplified: “When I arrived home, everyone had happy faces even if they were crying. But when my wife died, they thought differently. I did not know how they think that way, but they thought that I was the cause of all of this”. He went on to explain:

My close friends who had clear minds understood this. It was clear that I had a bad sponsor. But sometimes people made big talk... It was heavy, it was very heavy that I had to face all of that in my life. [The hardest part to hear was], “He is a husband but he seeks pleasure for himself”, that I got married again there.... The neighbors were the worst. I could not stand them. [...] The ones who did not understand at all were women in the neighborhood. Men understood because one or two of them had experiences working in Malaysia, so they understood, they also knew the sponsor. But the women did not understand at all.

Community gossip and censure severely impacted his relationship with his children who were raised by relatives and exposed to negative stories about him throughout their childhood. These negative (and false) stories came from the community as well as the family and seemed to reinforce one another. This man no longer lives in his home village because of community problems and is rarely able to visit home: “I left anything that hurt me, I intended to. If I go [to the village] too long, there is still a shock. Now I just come when I need to, sometimes just to meet my son, and go home after that... I don’t want to be friends with people who have negative thinking, who prevent me from moving forward”. Even when he did visit home, he avoided contact with community members: “...I go there in the evening, after *Isha* (last prayer in the evening). I want to meet my old friends but I am not daring during the day... During *Eid* celebrations I visit my parent’s home only. I never go anywhere. And the rest is during the evening”.

Even after he remarried, discrimination continued and his second wife was exposed to gossip and negative stories about him whenever she was in his home village, which led to problems and tension in his marriage:

... when my wife came to [my village] and had a chance to interact with the community there in a religious teaching group, she returned with bad news. [...] There was a person who came and talked about my disgrace. When she went home there was a reaction. She was provoked... That’s why I worry when my wife goes there alone. I am worried. There is anxiety until today. I’m worried. I am fearful when she goes there, because of incidents like that. When she took a long time, about three hours there, many people gather and my wife would listen to people who were talking. When she returned home she would tell me the negative things... But when it was told again, there is something that came out from me... I’m traumatized again. The things that I want to bury before; the things that I have forgotten about. The trauma comes again. It comes again. That’s it. Getting rid of the trauma is difficult.

In his new village he is able to live with his new wife without problems: “They [the neighbors in the new village] don’t know my history. Therefore, this is my luck. Imagine if I got married then I still lived in my previous village? Maybe until today my marriage is interfered with because of negative issues that were in the air”.



Villagers working in the fields of West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

6.3 Different reactions – some positive, some negative

In many communities, reactions to and treatment of trafficked persons during reintegration differed from person to person. Some friends and neighbors were a source of support or comfort to victims, while others gossiped, criticized and discriminated. Some respondents faced mixed reactions within their communities – receiving support and understanding from some friends and neighbors, but not others.

One woman, trafficked for domestic work, described differing and contradictory interactions with neighbors over the course of her reintegration in her community:

Some were badmouthing, but some were not. Some neighbors understood me. Some said what happened to me was just a bad luck because I went far away and did not succeed like the others. I told myself to just listen to them. But not all of them were like that. Some [neighbors] said that I did something wrong there. I don't understand why people talked like that, about bad things that happened to other people. People's destiny is in the hands of God. But some of my neighbors also think like that. Even the bad destiny is in the hands of God.

Another woman, trafficked for domestic work, explained how she returned home to a positive reception from some neighbors who offered support and advice. However, other neighbors blamed her for being trafficked and exploited: “[The neighbors] across from us are under the impression that I did not want to work and that I was too picky”. One man, when asked how he was received by friends and neighbors, put it as such: “There is a greeting; there is a scorn. Some people greeted me... Some people are cynical too”.

One man, trafficked for fishing, described how some neighbors were encouraging and supportive when he came home: “They were good, they gave advice. It's better that you stay home, don't go abroad”. Others, though, spread rumors and lies about him. However, time

was also an important element in reactions from friends and neighbors and two years after his return, relations had improved: “Well it is much better now because we are much closer now. Previously we were distanced, so we rarely talked. Now we do, we often communicate, to find information as well. Perhaps if there are many friends, there will be many fortunes”. This man also experienced positive reactions from neighbors living close to his mother, but negative reactions from those in his parents-in-laws’ community: “Thank God [the neighbors close to my mother] still welcome me. They still accept me... if there is any work that I could do, they did invite me... But in my parents-in-laws’ hometown, no one is like that”. He went on to explain how he was negatively perceived: “About the community around my parents-in-law, I could not communicate with them. I also could not get along with them too... because of their impression that I am jobless and I am a lazy man. [...] Those surrounding my parents-in-laws’ house are farmers, all of them. They are farmers and, in other words, they are tough. When they look at me, they are cynical”.

Even in the midst of an overall negative response within the community, it was often possible to find someone (or some people) who were supportive. One man, trafficked for labor, described how many neighbors would speak about his failed migration, but how his next-door neighbor provided him with help and support:

[They didn’t talk] in front of my face but I could sense from their tones, a bit insulting. So they talked behind my back, I guess. “He came home just like that despite all the efforts spent to migrate”. Well, what could I say? That’s just what the neighbors did since many of them had succeeded with their [migration] endeavor. [...] There was our next-door neighbor. We helped each other in times of need. If I had rice, we shared and the other way around. I am not a local, [I am] a migrant from another village, so I wasn’t so close with the other neighbors.

This was also the experience of one man, trafficked for labor, who was able to speak with a former schoolmate about what he had suffered. He explained how these conversations with his schoolmate were important to him and motivated him to move on with his life. This relationship and the support from his schoolmate was an important, indeed critical, counterpoint to the mockery and criticism from his neighbors:

My neighbors were curious about how I ran away [from my trafficking situation] and they said that I should not go back overseas. Nobody motivated me though... I told [my schoolmate] about what happened. He gave me motivation. He told me I should not give up and I could go back to work. He was very positive. He was supportive, unlike my neighbors... Yes, the neighbors were mocking me.

Similarly, one woman, mentioned above, described gossip for her failed migration and allegations that she had not been willing to work hard. But she also spoke about one woman across from her house who supported her and encouraged her in the face of this neighborhood criticism and negativity: “The woman right across my house [supports me]. She said that the most important thing for me now is to take care of myself and [my new] baby. I don’t need to think about other things”. She also explained how community gossip and criticism had waned over time and, at the second interview (several months after her return), gossip had largely abated and neighbors were more interested in recent and positive developments in her life.

In a number of instances, community reactions changed over time. One man, trafficked for fishing, was initially mocked and faulted by some community member. However, the situation had improved in the two and a half years since his return: “[Now community reactions are] normal, no more mockery... Normal. It’s like what it used to be [before trafficking]”. Similarly, one woman, trafficked for domestic work (mentioned above), was initially treated as crazy by persons within her community but she explained that the

situation had improved over time: “They treat me well now. I am a cheerful person, making jokes with them. I forgave those who said that I was crazy. I have no offense to them anymore. I am a free person. I do not think of what other people say for too long”.

But time did not inevitably lead to an improvement in community relations for victims. One man, who was trafficked for fishing, was treated badly immediately after his return as he was detained abroad (as an irregular migrant) and many neighbors gossiped, saying that he had committed crimes while abroad, calling him an ex-convict. He explained at his second interview (and almost two years since his return) that community relations were still an issue in his daily life:

The community is still difficult until now, even though I already work. Now they think that I am a robber. They are confused because I work for ten days, sometimes seven days and 15 days maximum. Now I am home, then after three days, I would go for ten days. They are confused because people usually work for two months or one month.

Similarly, another man described a deteriorated situation with his neighbors over time,

When I had just come back they were nice. Since the previous years... only a few are nice to me... It might be because I had the legal case (for trafficking). They teased me, [saying], “Are you waiting? The money is given” and “What things can he buy, rice or what?” My neighbors are like that. They sometimes envy, for example, if I could buy a fridge, they all would buy it also. I just want to make my parents proud of me. I still could not build a house or whatever so I just bought them the fridge, the cheap one, from the money I got during my work in the company. Then I bought chairs. At that time they did not have chairs, they only sit on the floor, and it was not cement floor. [...] The neighbors were good [in the beginning] but now they are all suspicious. Only a few neighbors... only five houses say hello.

6.4 Summary

The community environments in which trafficking victims lived after trafficking differed substantially from person to person. Many victims reintegrated in their home communities, returning to the same or similar living arrangements as before they were trafficked. However, some victims integrated in new communities, with some integration being temporary (e.g. victims involved in a legal case against their traffickers or while accessing available work options) and other victims integrating permanently in the new community. Moreover, some living arrangements changed over time and in response to evolving (or deteriorating) family situations.

An important factor in many victims’ reintegration success is having support (or at least the absence of criticism and discrimination) within the community. In some situations, the community setting was a constructive and supportive setting, which offered fertile ground and opportunity for recovery and reintegration. In other cases, victims were exposed to discrimination, exclusion, vulnerability and structural inequality in their community environments. At the same time, the reaction of community was often uneven and trafficking victims described different reactions from different friends, neighbors and community members, as well as changes over time.

Many victims described a positive reception and a supportive community setting when they returned home from trafficking. Trafficking victims described different reactions from neighbors, including reassurance and encouragement; pity and sympathy; support and kindness; and overall acceptance.



A small business in a village in West Java. Photo: Peter Biro.

While some trafficking victims found support in their communities, this was not the case for all. Many trafficking victims felt uncomfortable, stressed and even ashamed in the wider community as a consequence of their trafficking exploitation and because they failed in their migration. In a number of cases, this shame and discomfort were a function of how victims themselves felt rather than judgments or critiqued from friends, neighbors or community members. In other instances, feelings of shame, embarrassment and discomfort were a function of how victims were received, perceived and treated within their communities at return and over the course of their reintegration. Many victims faced gossip, discrimination, criticism and censure within their communities when they returned home after trafficking.

There were different triggers or reasons for these negative reactions and attitudes within the community. A number of trafficking victims (both men and women, for all forms of trafficking) were criticized and gossiped about for failed migration (i.e. for not having returned home with money nor having sent remittances while abroad).

Another source of tension between some trafficking victims and community members was what was perceived as the individual's "ambition" – i.e. "aiming too high", wanting too much, not being satisfied with what they had, not appreciating life in the village. Even in situations when the trafficking victim had suffered a great deal, he/she was still sometimes exposed to criticism.

Many trafficked persons returned home stressed, anxious, depressed and generally unwell (sometimes for long periods of time) which led them to behaviors and actions that were a source of gossip and criticism among neighbors and friends.

Trafficking victims suffered mental and/or emotional distress as a consequence of trafficking and many trafficked persons returned home stressed, anxious, depressed and generally

unwell. Many were also stressed and depressed for some time after their return – months and even years. This often led trafficked persons to behave and react in stressed ways, behaviors and actions that were a source of gossip and criticism among neighbors and friends.

Some victims were subjected to discrimination and censure because of things they had done (or been forced to do) while trafficked, which breeched social and cultural norms of appropriate behavior. This included involvement in prostitution, pregnancy out of wed-lock, being arrested and detained while abroad.

Some victims described problems because community members were jealous or resented them being assisted or receiving some form of support during reintegration. In other cases, victims described how others in the community resented them being able to buy or afford things that others could not and “doing well” when community members themselves were not doing as well

In some instances, the source of issues and tension between victims and those within their communities were multiple, coterminous and mutually reinforcing.

In many communities, reactions to and treatment of trafficked persons during reintegration differed from person to person. Some friends and neighbors were a source of support or comfort to victims, while others gossiped, criticized and discriminated against them. Some respondents faced mixed reactions within their communities – receiving support and understanding from some friends and neighbors, but not others.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

Indonesian trafficking victims bore substantial scars and burdens as a result of their experiences of exploitation – physical, psychological, economic, emotional – and often struggled to recover and move on after trafficking. They also returned to face pre-existing problems and vulnerabilities in their lives and families, which they had hoped to address or alleviate through their migration. Reintegration policies and programs should address the wide range of victims’ needs and vulnerabilities.

But it is insufficient to consider reintegration after trafficking only from the perspective of individual trafficking victims. Reintegration does not happen in isolation. It takes place within a wider social field of family and community, making it important to understand and take into account the perspectives and experiences of victims’ family members and the community settings where they reintegrate. It involves often very many different family and community members, each of whom has the potential to (positively or negatively) influence and impact the recovery and reintegration of trafficking victims.

As has been discussed in previous sections, the family environment is a key factor in either the success or failure of a trafficking victim’s reintegration. In addition to managing their own individual challenges, trafficked persons must navigate and manage the reactions and responses of their various family members when they return from trafficking and also family reactions and responses over time. Trafficking exploitation took a heavy toll on the families of Indonesian trafficking victims – their children, spouses, parents, siblings and relatives. Family members were profoundly and, in some cases, irreparably affected by the trafficking of their loved ones and often struggled to come to terms with how the victim’s trafficking had impacted their own lives. They also struggled with the impact that trafficking had on them as individuals and their family more generally. Family members may play different (and sometimes conflicting) roles in either supporting or undermining a victim’s reintegration and may further behave differently over time and in response to different issues and factors. Tensions and issues within the family centered around financial problems in the family (no remittances and the burden of debt); being stressed and distressed following trafficking; feelings of shame and being blamed; and damaged or destroyed personal relationships.

Equally important is to take into account the social environment into which trafficked persons reintegrate or integrate. Whether returning to their home communities or settling into a new community setting, reintegration was directly impacted by the wider socio-cultural environment in which victims lived over time. And, as with family, the community setting was a complex and contradictory environment, both supportive and unsupportive and involved different (sometimes contradictory) reactions from friends, neighbors and others, including those that changed over time. Tensions and issues within the community centered around failed migration and not returning with money; criticism for “ambition”; community perceptions of stressed or “problematic” behavior at home; discrimination because of “unacceptable” behavior (e.g. prostitution, pregnancy); jealousy about being assisted.

The many challenges and vulnerabilities in the family and community settings were seldom self-standing. Trafficked persons and their families faced many, most and sometimes all of the issues and tensions discussed, to different degrees and at different stages. These issues were mutually reinforcing and coterminous. That is, financial difficulties commonly increased conflict and tensions in the family, including creating feelings of shame and blame. Being physically or psychologically unwell often meant being unable to work, which amplified economic problems. And reactions from different community members were often central in terms of how both victims and their family members experienced and navigated the reintegration process over time.

At the same time, in addition to tensions, issues and challenges faced within the family and community settings, there were also significant sites of resilience and support that supported, bolstered and galvanized victims' recovery and reintegration success. This is a significant finding in a setting where so many victims are unidentified and unassisted and indicates a great need to identify and replicate indigenous and informal forms of support and assistance.

These findings highlight the need to better understand the family and community environments to which trafficked persons return in all of their complexity, complications and messiness when designing and implementing reintegration (and indeed all protection) interventions. Identifying and disentangling common points of tension and resilience is a valuable starting point for better understanding reintegration within families and communities after a trafficking experience, an understanding which should, in turn, contribute to improved reintegration programs and policies for trafficking victims. Taking into account family dynamics and community relationships in the design of reintegration responses can contribute substantially to more efficient and appropriate assistance and protection. Failure to take the trafficking victim *and* the family and community into account in any discussion or intervention misses an important, arguably pivotal, factor in the reintegration process and the likelihood of its success. With this in mind, the following recommendations are aimed at improving reintegration policy and programs for trafficking victims, including working with their families and in their communities of reintegration. These recommendations are offered to practitioners and policymakers to support their work with victims and their families to "move on" from trafficking.

Recommendations for supporting individual trafficking victims

Offer long-term, comprehensive assistance programs aimed at reintegration.

Most trafficked persons have long-term assistance needs that require comprehensive services and support, including professional case management. The long-term nature of reintegration means that programs and services must be available over time –for months and even years. This requires an adequate planning process, as well as adequate allocation of budgets/resources.

Offer assistance to meet all of victims' needs and address all vulnerabilities.

Assistance should meet all of victims' needs and vulnerabilities, whether caused by trafficking or linked to pre-existing vulnerabilities. Assistance and services should respond to the full range of victims' needs (and those of their families) over the course of reintegration, both to address the impacts of trafficking and to alleviate their general social and economic exclusion and vulnerability.

Offer assistance to all trafficking victims. Assistance needs may differ substantially between different types of victims (male and female, adult and child), victims of different forms of trafficking as well as according to each victim's individual life circumstance before and after trafficking. Assistance should be tailored to the individual needs of each trafficked person, including when needs change over the course of reintegration and in response to evolving personal, family and community circumstances.

Enhance victims' access to services at a village level. Trafficked persons should have access to a comprehensive package of individualized and tailored reintegration services to meet their wide-ranging needs over the course of reintegration. Adequate provision of assistance will involve developing and enhancing community-based services in areas where

victims reintegrate which, in turn, requires an adequate budget allocation at both the national and local level.

Ensure that trafficking-specific needs are identified and addressed. In some cases, assistance to trafficking victims can be addressed within the framework of general social protection and assistance, including access to health care, education, training, job placement, legal assistance and so on. Nonetheless, there are some needs and issues that, while not unique to trafficking victims, may be more pronounced or differ in nature than those of other vulnerable groups. In such cases, specialized assistance and support should be provided.

Increase the role and competency of social workers at a local level. Social workers should be trained in how to work with trafficking victims, from identification and over the course of their reintegration, including over time and in response to crises and issues that may arise in their lives and families. This will include training in victim identification, conducting needs assessments, designing and monitoring a reintegration plans and overall case management. Social workers should be equipped with skills and tools in case management specifically for trafficking victims. Social workers are needed to work with victims in the villages and community settings where they reintegrate which will involve expanding the reach of social work to a more local level.

Protect victims' rights when assisting family members. Ensure that the victim's rights – e.g. to privacy, confidentiality and safety – are respected when assisting family members. This will require considering how to involve family members in assistance programs when they are not aware that the individual has been trafficked and without disclosing the individual's trafficking exploitation. Assistance may be packaged as “general assistance” or “social protection”. This may also require considering and anticipating whether assistance may involve some safety issues for victims within their families – e.g. domestic violence. Service providers should work with victims to anticipate and handle any questions from family and community members about assistance and how, if needed, best camouflage the reason for this assistance and support.



Recommendations for work with trafficking victims' families

Identify the impact of trafficking on victims' families. Trafficking exploitation has impacts and implications beyond individual victims. Victims' family members also suffer as a consequence of trafficking – having suffered separation, no remittances and insecurity while the victim was away, being upset and even traumatized when they learn about the victim's exploitation, and facing many challenges over the course of reintegration. Practitioners and policymakers should conduct research to better understand the impact and implications of trafficking on victims' families and design interventions that take these factors into account.

Include trafficking victim's family members in the provision of assistance. For many Indonesian trafficking victims, their family's assistance needs were paramount and assisting family members went some way in supporting the reintegration of trafficked persons. Victims are likely to experience substantial improvements in their physical and mental well-being, as well as in their economic situation, when their family members are also included in assistance programs. This might take the form of any number of assistance options, including, but not limited, to job placement, business programs, medical assistance, school reinsertion and so on. It is necessary to look at the family system as a whole in the design and implementation of reintegration policies and programs, to ensure that victims have a viable family setting into which they can reintegrate.

Understand and accommodate the family setting in all reintegration work.

Reintegration takes place most commonly in a family setting and family members have the potential to either support or undermine reintegration success. Reintegration plans and programming should take into account the family situation of each victim as part of needs assessments and reintegration planning, including how the family situation may improve or deteriorate over time and in response to different factors and triggers. On-going family assessments are needed as part of reintegration efforts and case management.

Offer opportunities for family mediation and counselling. Family members may be profoundly affected, even traumatized by, the exploitation of their loved one. They may also struggle to recover from what they have suffered (financially, physically, emotionally and mentally) while their loved one was trafficked. And they may struggle in their relationship with the returned trafficking victim who may have behaviors and reactions that are difficult to understand and react to. For some victims the most pressing issue (and therefore assistance need) was in terms of repairing or strengthening their relationship with various family members. Family counseling and mediation can be an important form of assistance in supporting victims' reintegration in their family environment. This support need not be trafficking specific but could be provided through existing programs such as for the socially vulnerable, single parents, family mediation programs and so on. However, these counselors and service providers will likely require training and sensitization on the issue of human trafficking as well as the complexity and multi-faceted aspects of reintegration after trafficking.

Provide assistance that takes into account the various needs and situations of victims (with their different families, constellations and needs). Victims reintegrate into very different family settings and family situations and household arrangements may change over time. Assistance should be offered in ways that take into account the specific family situation of each individual trafficking victim, as well as be adjusted to changes in families over time. For example, shelter-based assistance may be desirable when victims suffer substantial injuries or are subjected to security threats; other victims would benefit from non-residential services and local community-based assistance. Similarly, different assistance may be needed when victims are integrating into a new community where they may not be able to rely on family and friends to support them.



Recommendations for enhancing reintegration of trafficking victims within their communities

Recognize and accommodate community dynamics in reintegration programs and policies. The wider social and community environment is critical in victims' reintegration after trafficking. Community relationships and dynamics can either support or undermine victims' reintegration success. Reintegration plans and programming should take into account the individual victim's wider social field, including the community into which he/she integrates or reintegrates. This requires attention to how the community environment may improve or deteriorate over time and in response to different factors and triggers. On-going community assessments are needed as part of case management work with victims as they reintegrate.

Sensitize community leaders to the issue of trafficking, including all forms of trafficking and all types of victims, and the rights/needs of victims. Most reintegration takes place at a community level, which requires that local authorities are able and willing to support this process. All local institutions and leadership (e.g. village administration, schools, health clinics) should be trained and sensitized on the issue of trafficking, as well as social protection, vulnerability and post-trafficking reintegration. This is needed to prevent (further) harm to trafficking victims, including lack of sensitivity, re-

victimization, discrimination and marginalization. There is an important role to be played by community leaders in supporting reintegration and mitigating stigmatization and discrimination.

Work with community leaders in the identification and referral of trafficking victims. There is an important role to be played by community leaders in the identification and referral of trafficking victims who are living in their communities. However, the identification of trafficking victims is a vexing task and requires that those involved are equipped with an adequate understanding of what constitutes human trafficking, who may be a trafficking victim, what are signals or indicators to identify a trafficking victim, how a trafficking victim should be approached and what rights and protections are available to trafficking victims in their home communities as well as at the district, provincial and national level. It is also important that community leaders are aware that victims may choose not to be identified and respect this decision as well as their confidentiality. Community leaders should be equipped with information about assistance available to any trafficking victims they identify and how and to whom they can refer trafficking victims for assistance and protection.

Address discrimination, marginalization and stigmatization as part of reintegration efforts in communities. Many trafficking victims face discrimination and stigmatization within their communities, which, in many situations leads to marginalization. It is important to identify factors that mitigate and address discrimination and stigmatization within local communities and work to replicate effective strategies. A systematic approach to stigma and discrimination alleviation can be of help in minimizing adverse outcomes over the course of reintegration. These strategies need to address different (and often multiple) sources of discrimination and stigma including: “failed migration” (not having returned home with money or sent remittances); “aiming too high” and being ambitious; behaviors and actions related to stress, anxiety, depression and being generally unwell; things that victims did (or were forced to do) while trafficked (e.g. prostitution, pregnancy, being arrested) or were perceived to have done while trafficked (e.g. not working hard, wasting salary); and jealousy or resentment for receiving assistance. Many trafficked persons suffer multiple sites of stigma which each have their own triggers and, equally, their own solutions.

Identify different causes of community tension, stigma and discrimination for different victims, forms of trafficking and in different settings. Trafficking victims faced criticism, discrimination and censure within their communities for a wide range of reasons including: “failed migration”; being ambitious; stressed behaviors and actions upon return; (forced) involvement in socially stigmatized behaviors (e.g. prostitution, unwed pregnancy, being arrested); and jealousy or resentment for being assisted. It is important to pinpoint the different sources of discrimination and stigmatization to be able to effectively redress them. Contributors to stigma and discrimination should be identified, including how this differs from individual to individual, setting to setting, as well as according to form of trafficking. Research is needed into these issues – both causes of stigma and how it can be addressed.

Offer assistance that is not visible within the community. Victims receiving assistance may lead to jealousy and resentment on the part of community members who themselves may be in a difficult social or economic position and also need some form of support. Resulting tension among friends and neighbors can cause further problems that may ultimately undermine reintegration success. In addition, some forms of assistance may identify individuals as trafficking victims to those within the community, which may breach privacy and confidentiality and lead to community discrimination and stigma. Assistance should be designed and implemented in ways that take into account and mitigate these wider community dynamics and the potential for negative impacts.

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