

RECOVERY AND REINTEGRATION OF TRAFFICKING VICTIMS

A Regional Support Office of the Bali Process and NEXUS Institute Practitioner Guide



REGIONAL SUPPORT OFFICE
THE BALI PROCESS



This Practitioner Guide was prepared by NEXUS Institute in the framework of the project: Improving the Identification, Protection and Reintegration of Trafficking Victims in Asia: Practitioner Guide Series, implemented jointly by NEXUS Institute and the Regional Support Office of the Bali Process. The Practitioner Guide Series supports the work of practitioners in ASEAN and Bali Process Member States by identifying, distilling and presenting existing evidence in a succinct and accessible format and offering guidance on how to address issues and challenges to improve the identification, protection and reintegration of trafficking victims in the region.

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The NEXUS Institute® is an independent international human rights research and policy center. NEXUS is dedicated to ending contemporary forms of slavery and human trafficking as well as other abuses and offenses that intersect human rights and international criminal law and policy. NEXUS is a leader in research, analysis, evaluation and technical assistance and in developing innovative approaches to combating human trafficking and related issues.



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The Regional Support Office of the Bali Process (RSO) was established in 2012 to support ongoing practical cooperation among Bali Process members. The RSO brings together policy knowledge, technical expertise and operational experience for Bali Process members and other key stakeholders to develop practical initiatives in alignment with Bali Process priorities. The Bali Process on People Smuggling, Trafficking in Persons and Related Transnational Crime (Bali Process) established in 2002 and Co-Chaired by Australia and Indonesia, is a voluntary and non-binding process with 45 Member States and 4 international organizations, including the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the International Labour Organization (ILO) as well as several observer countries and international agencies.



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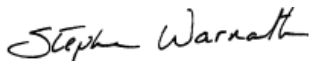


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Cover photograph by Peter Biro for NEXUS Institute.

This photograph illustrates various aspects of reintegration. Unless stated otherwise, individuals in this photograph are not trafficking victims.

Our measure of success in human trafficking cases should be recalibrated to recognize that the enduring experience of those who have survived human trafficking can often be one of continuing challenge and struggle. This reality must be met by pro-actively providing leadership for effective national and transnational opportunities for victims' recovery and reintegration. Separating victims from the hard clasp of the traffickers is critical but it is only a first step. Returning those who survive to their home countries, communities and families is often a welcomed response but, without more, it also is not enough. It is only with committed support for meaningful and holistic recovery and reintegration that embraces those whose lives and aspirations have been disrupted and harmed by this severe exploitation in ways that clash with the conscience of the collaborating nations of the Bali Process that we can most fully and tangibly express our shared rejection of human trafficking that continues to exist within the countries of Asia and the Pacific region and beyond.



Stephen Warnath,
Founder, President and CEO
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The experience of trafficking does not always stop when the trafficking ends. Many victims continue to suffer the harmful effects of trafficking, and face additional and evolving challenges long after they have left the trafficking situation. Recognizing that reality, this Practitioner Guide takes a holistic and far-reaching approach to victim recovery and reintegration. Drawing on the lived experiences and challenges that victims themselves have faced in recovering from trafficking and reintegrating into their families and communities afterwards, this Practitioner Guide aims to support practitioners across Bali Process Member States in their efforts to individualise the support they provide to the extent they are able, to individual needs and experiences. This guide supports efforts called for in the 2018 Bali Process Ministerial Declaration to build cooperation and participation in policy dialogue, promote transparency and facilitate exchange and joint learning to increase capacity on the complex challenges linked to sustainable return and effective reintegration.



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About the Practitioner Guide: Recovery and Reintegration of Trafficking Victims



What it is

This Practitioner Guide presents existing research and evidence on the recovery and reintegration of trafficking victims, including challenges faced and practices that can be mobilized to enhance reintegration outcomes. It is part of the NEXUS/RSO Practitioner Guide series: *Improving the Identification, Protection and Reintegration of Trafficking Victims in Asia*, which shares knowledge and guidance on different aspects of trafficking victim protection, including:

- Trafficking victim identification
- Trafficking victim protection and support
- Recovery and reintegration of trafficking victims
- Special and additional measures for child trafficking victims

This series is drafted by NEXUS Institute and published jointly by NEXUS Institute and the Regional Support Office of the Bali Process (RSO). Practitioners from Bali Process Member Governments of Australia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Thailand and Vietnam contributed to the development of these guides in a virtual roundtable discussion convened by the RSO in April 2021. The project is generously funded by the Australian Department of Home Affairs, through the RSO. The series is available on the NEXUS Institute website and RSO website.



Who it is for

This guide is for **practitioners** in Bali Process Member States as well as further afield, seeking to better understand the recovery and reintegration of adult and child trafficking victims. This includes social workers and social assistants, healthcare practitioners, psychologists and counselors, child protection specialists, lawyers and paralegals, teachers and school administrators, vocational trainers, job counselors and business experts and public administrators. This Practitioner Guide will also be useful for **policymakers** tasked with improving practice and procedures in the recovery and reintegration of trafficking victims.



How to use it

This Practitioner Guide offers a comprehensive overview of key issues and challenges in the recovery and reintegration of trafficking victims, both adults and children. Practitioners can use this guide to better understand victims' experiences during reintegration as well as structural and institutional challenges. The guide also offers concrete and practical guidance on how they can address these barriers and improve victims' recovery and reintegration after trafficking.



Key



Guidance



Notes



Tips



Victim experiences



Structural and institutional challenges

What is recovery and reintegration?ⁱ

Reintegration is the **process of recovery and economic and social inclusion** following a trafficking experience. It includes:

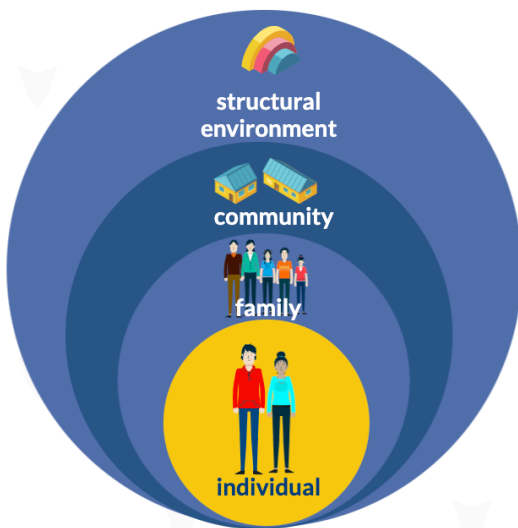
- living in a stable and safe environment;
- access to a reasonable standard of living;
- physical well-being;
- mental well-being;
- opportunities for personal, social and economic development; and
- access to social and emotional support.

Some victims reintegrate in their families and/or communities of origin, while others integrate in a new community or in a new country.



Trafficking experiences can negatively impact victims on a personal level – their physical, mental, emotional and economic well-being. Trafficking experiences can also create tensions and problems in their relationships and interactions with family, community and wider society. Reintegration efforts, therefore, need to consider and address the myriad impacts of trafficking at the **individual, family, community** and **structural levels**.

In addition to the **impact of trafficking**, many trafficking victims faced problems in their lives **before trafficking**, which pose obstacles to reintegration (for example, economic problems, health issues, family tensions). Other problems may emerge in their lives and relationships **after trafficking**, over the course of recovery and reintegration.



As such, reintegration is not only about addressing the impact of trafficking. It is also about addressing pre-existing vulnerabilities and problems that emerge in victims' lives after trafficking. Addressing all of these issues is important in preventing re-trafficking or further exploitation.

A victim who is **successfully reintegrated** experiences well-being in all aspects of their lives. This includes: safe, satisfactory and affordable accommodation; physical health and well-being; mental health and well-being; legal status and access to services; access to justice; safety and security; economic well-being; educational and training opportunities; healthy social environment and personal relationships; and well-being of family and dependents.



A comprehensive package of reintegration services includes:



Services should meet the reintegration needs and interests of different victims and victims of all forms of trafficking. Some victims need a single service (for example, return home, emergency medical care, job placement) while others need multiple services (for example, a combination of accommodation, psychological care, medical assistance, legal support, education and vocational training). Services may be trafficking-specific (offered by anti-trafficking organizations and institutions) or they may be more general (offered by agencies/institutions working with vulnerable persons, returned migrants, community development, child protection). In the initial **crisis phase**, victims often require intensive support and extensive services. Their needs may ease during the **transition phase** and over the course of **reintegration and inclusion**.

Nevertheless, **crises or setbacks** may emerge at various stages of reintegration, depending on the victim's individual, family and community situation, and services may be needed in response to these crises.



exit from trafficking → crisis phase → transition phase → reintegration and inclusion



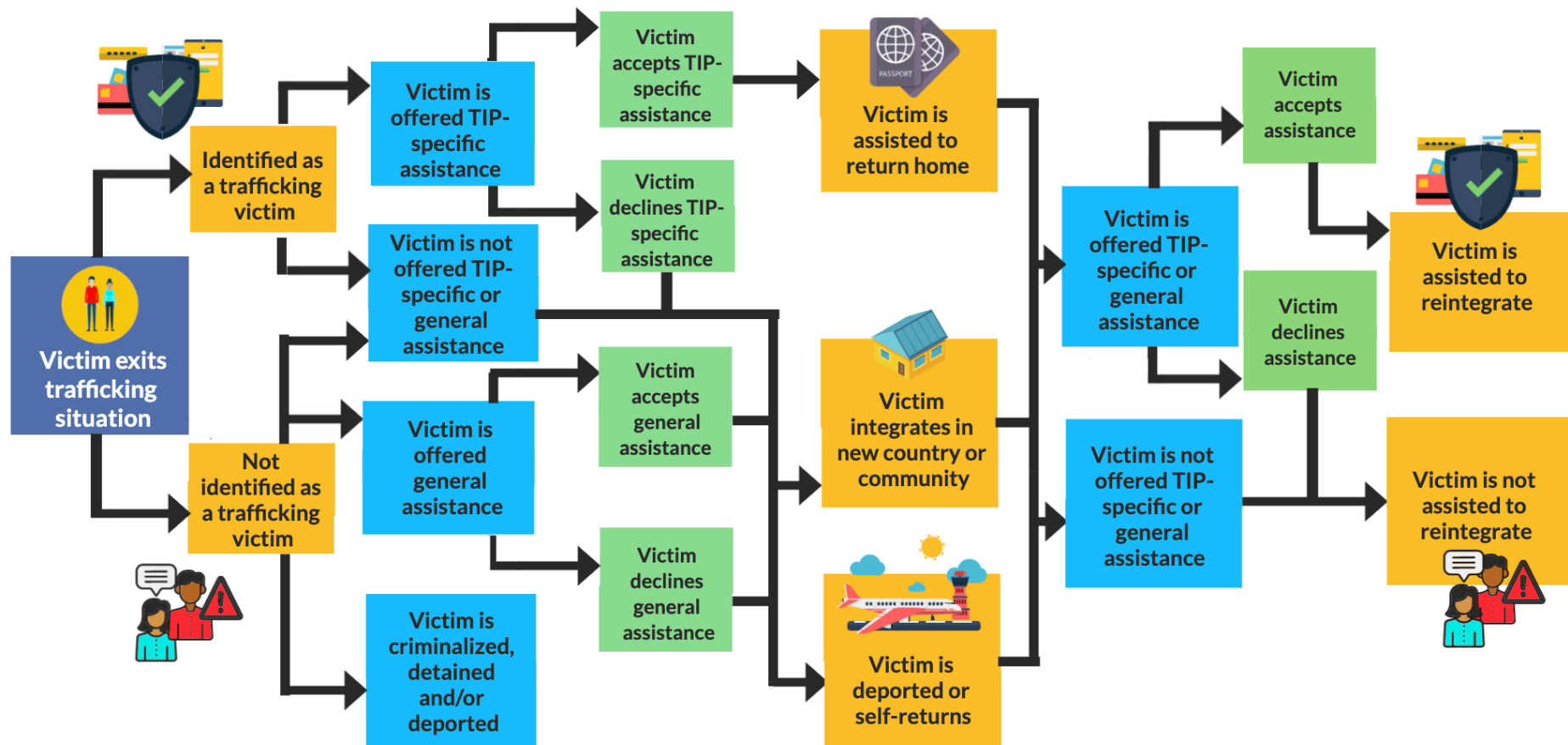
- trauma-informed:** recognize the impact of trauma and promote environments of healing and recovery
- victim-sensitive:** prioritize the victim's wishes, safety and well-being in all matters and procedures
- child-friendly:** design and implement measures with the needs, interests, safety and best interests of the child in mind
- gender-sensitive:** treat all victims with equal respect regardless of their gender identity, refraining from stereotypes or assumptions on the basis of gender
- culturally appropriate:** take into account and respect the victim's cultural and religious beliefs, values, norms, practices and language

Reintegration services should be voluntary, confidential, non-discriminatory, non-judgmental and in line with human rights principles. They should be **trauma-informed, victim-sensitive, child-friendly, gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate**. Trafficked children should receive specialized, child-friendly reintegration services. A wide range of practitioners should be involved in a victim's recovery and reintegration. This includes social workers and social assistants, healthcare practitioners, psychologists and counselors, lawyers and paralegals, teachers and school administrators, vocational trainers, job counselors and business experts, public administrators and child protection specialists and authorities.

While reintegration of trafficking victims is the responsibility of the state, civil society organizations often support governments to fulfill their obligations and may have specific expertise in recovery and reintegration.

Not all victims follow an ideal reintegration pathway – that is, being identified and referred for reintegration services. Many trafficking victims are **unidentified and go unassisted** as a result. Some trafficking victims are unidentified but are offered general forms of assistance that support reintegration. Others are **misidentified** (for example, as irregular migrants) and are criminalized and detained rather than supported in their return, recovery and reintegration. And some trafficking victims **decline assistance** because the services are not what they need or because they face various other challenges and barriers to accessing services. Victims’ reintegration trajectories are often complex and non-linear, including missed opportunities, that require understanding to address.


Different pathways of identification, protection and reintegration experienced by trafficking victims





Legal obligations in trafficking victim recovery and reintegration


The return, recovery and reintegration of trafficking victims are addressed in some international and regional instruments, which may be relevant for domestic laws and policies.

International law and guidance

 **UN Trafficking Protocol** (2000) calls on Member States to protect and assist trafficking victims, with full respect for their human rights, (Article 2). While not referring to reintegration, it calls for measures to provide for physical, psychological, and social recovery of trafficking victims (Article 6(3)); the physical safety of victims (Article 6(5)); temporary or permanent stay of trafficking victims (Article 7); and the safe return of victims (Article 8).

 **UNOHCHR Recommended Principles and Guidelines on Human Rights and Human Trafficking** (2002) call for the safe and voluntary return of trafficked persons, including residency in the country of destination or third-country resettlement. States are also to ensure the provision of appropriate physical and psychological health care, accommodation and educational and employment services (Guideline 6) as well as special measures for the support of child trafficking victims (Guideline 8).

 **UNICEF Guidelines on the Protection of Child Victims of Trafficking** (2006) call for local integration if return to the country/place of origin is not in the best interests of the child (Guideline 9.1); the child's right to return to their country or place of origin (Guideline 9.2); the right to a guardian and access to long-term care and protection (including security, food, safe accommodation, healthcare, psycho-social support, legal assistance, social services and education with a view to their social reintegration) (Guideline 9.2.1); and that child victims have the right to resettlement and integration in a third country when they cannot safely return home or integrate in their current country location (Guideline 9.3).

 **UN Convention on the Rights of the Child** (1989) calls on states to ensure that child victims of exploitation receive appropriate treatment for recovery and social reintegration (Article 39).

Regional law and guidance



ASEAN Convention Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (ACTIP) (2015) calls on ASEAN Member States to implement measures to allow victims to stay temporarily or permanently (Article 14(4)); make a "best effort" to assist in victim reintegration (Article 14(11)); and provide for repatriation / safe return (Article 15).



ASEAN Plan of Action Against Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children (2012) calls for member states to ensure appropriate care, protection and support of trafficking victims.



ACWC Gender-Sensitive Guidelines (2016) call on states to establish protection and assistance for the physical, psychological and social recovery of trafficking victims.



ACWC Guidelines and Procedures to Address the Needs of Victims of Trafficking in Persons, especially women and children (2018) establish measures for the safe, voluntary, timely and supported return, recovery and reintegration of trafficking victims, including through risk assessments, cooperative mechanisms and appropriate long-term support for recovery and reintegration, with Member States ensuring every stage of the reintegration process is conducted in a gender-appropriate, age-appropriate and culturally-sensitive manner (Area 6).



Council of Europe (CoE) Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings (2005) establishes measures to protect the rights of victims, including: protection of private life (Article 11); assistance in physical, psychological and social recovery (Article 12); recovery & reflection period (Article 13); residence permits (Article 14); and safe return including reintegration (Article 16).



European Union Directive 2011/36/EU (2011), while not referring specifically to reintegration, provides detailed measures on victim protection and support (Article 11) including for children (Articles 13, 14, 15, 16).

Issues and challenges in the recovery and reintegration of trafficking victims

Issues and challenges faced in recovery and reintegration center around two main themes:

- Trafficking victim experiences during recovery and reintegration
- Structural and institutional challenges during victim recovery and reintegration



Trafficking victim experiences during recovery and reintegration



Structural and institutional challenges during victim recovery and reintegration

- Feelings and reactions during recovery and reintegration
- Coping with trafficking, pre-trafficking vulnerabilities and reintegration challenges
- Role of family in victim reintegration
- Role of community in victim reintegration
- Sources of resilience and support

- Long-term process with crisis and set-backs
- Availability, accessibility and appropriateness of reintegration services
- Access to information about reintegration services
- Insufficient knowledge, skills and sensitivity of practitioners
- Importance of case management and victim participation
- Insufficient coordination and referral
- Vicarious trauma and burnout among practitioners

Recovery and reintegration is a complex process that may take place over months and years. Some issues and challenges are a function of victims' experiences, needs and decisions. Others arise from structural and institutional issues in the reintegration framework. Understanding the different and sometimes competing factors that trafficking victims face is key in ensuring their recovery and reintegration. Issues and challenges also vary given victims' different ages, genders, economic status, education, family backgrounds, experiences, motivations and goals. These also change over the course of reintegration and in response to the different situations victims face over time in their lives, families and communities.



Trafficking victim experiences during recovery and reintegration



Feelings and reactions during recovery and reintegration

Successful reintegration is characterized by feelings of well-being, independence, confidence and positive social relationships. Generally, victims' emotions and reactions improve as they recover and move on with their lives. However, for some victims, crises emerge over time. Overall, trafficking victims have both positive and negative emotions and reactions over the course of recovery and reintegration.

Trafficking victims also may experience contradictory and conflicting emotions. A victim may, for example, be relieved and happy to be home with their family but, at the same time, struggle to manage their anger and frustration at what has happened to them or the challenges of reintegration.

Relief, hope, gratitude. Trafficking victims are relieved when trafficking ends and they are able to return to "normal life". Many trafficked persons are happy and grateful to be reunited with their families and hopeful about the future. Many are also grateful for support and comfort during reintegration and benefit from not being alone.

Self-confidence and well-being. Victims often develop a sense of mental well-being and confidence over the course of reintegration. They are able to reestablish feelings of safety and stability, come to terms with or accept painful and traumatic experiences and trust and connect with others. They are confident and independent and able to make decisions about their future.

As they recover from trafficking, some victims struggle with the identity of being a trafficking victim. Many do not want to be seen only in the context of their exploitation. And, for many victims, this identity does not align with how they see themselves or their experience.



When I arrived [home], I was thrilled to see my mother and my little sister. But at the same time, I was afraid to face my family, neighbours and friends. Because the pimps and their lackeys hadn't been caught, my safety wasn't assured at all. (Child trafficking victim)ⁱⁱ



[Important] for me [is] the support that you give me, the love you give me, the respect you give me and sometimes a nice word, a pretty action that you say: look, that person I can count on... The support of [saying] we are not alone. (Trafficking victim)ⁱⁱⁱ



I felt so eager to see my mother...As soon as she arrived, I ran to hug her tightly in tears. How happy I was then. (Child trafficking victim)^{iv}



I want to tell other women to respect themselves and not let others look down on them. Whatever you do, think of yourselves. You can make your own decisions. (Trafficking victim)^v



You should also know that life will not take everything from you. If you believe in yourself and try your best, you will be happy and successful. What we can get back is much more than what we have lost. Believe this, because my experience and achievement prove it. (Child trafficking victim)^{vi}

Fears about safety. Many victims are afraid for their safety and that of their families, as traffickers often come from their home communities or know where they live. Many victims are insufficiently protected from their traffickers by authorities during reintegration.

Some victims face risks within their families, including domestic violence and abuse. Victims may also be harassed and assaulted by community members (for example, because of their involvement in prostitution while trafficked or because they are unprotected in the community as unmarried women or single mothers). Trafficked children are often bullied and even assaulted by peers at school and in the community.

Stress, shock, trauma and agitation. Many trafficking victims are shocked and traumatized after trafficking. Trauma has profound and long-lasting physical and psychological effects that influence how victims cope after trafficking and interact with others during reintegration, whether family, community members or reintegration practitioners.

Victims are often stressed, agitated, depressed and hopeless as a result of trafficking. Pre-existing problems (for example, economic problems and debt, family conflict, health issues and family needs) can also affect mental well-being. Issues that cause stress and agitation may also arise over reintegration, including tension in the family and community as well as difficulty in finding or keeping a job or caring for one's dependents.

Shame, blame, embarrassment. Many victims are ashamed of having been trafficked and what they were forced to do while exploited (for example, prostitution, irregular migration, irregular work, criminal activities). Victims may also feel ashamed of needing assistance to recover and reintegrate after trafficking.

Victims also often face blame from family members – for “failed migration”, having returned without money, being in debt, having been arrested or deported, because of acts committed while trafficked or being unable to earn money once home.



My school friends and my mother commit physical violence against me. My school friends try to fight me and I fight them back. My mother beat me because I am very active and resist doing things, against her will. I feel emotionally hurt by my mother. (Child trafficking victim)^{vii}



...she was raped by her neighbours. They said, "you can sleep with [foreigners], will you refuse us?" (Trafficking victim)^{viii}



Many women find it difficult to begin a new life... It is hard for them to recover physically and psychologically at least in the first period. (Trafficking victim)^{ix}



I was furious when talking and no matter how much they told me to relax I was not able to control my anger. I was crying and all. It hurt so much. (Trafficking victim)^x



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. [...] after that negative experience I feel that I get irritated easily. (Trafficking victim)^{xi}



I faced some bad rumours from [a few people] as they said how I, a trafficking victim, could get such valuable support. (Trafficking victim)^{xii}

Victims (and sometimes their families) also face stigma and discrimination in their communities and may be socially excluded. In some cases, negative reactions from community members prevent victims from being able to find work, integrate into community life or access services for themselves or their dependents.



Returnees seem to often be affected by stigma with all their surroundings. They generally walk the streets wondering who knows where they've been and what they've done...Families of the victims also have been known to be ashamed of [them] and rejected upon return. (Practitioner)^{xiii}

Suspicion and lack of trust. Trafficking compromises victims' trust in others, even those seeking to assist them. Some victims do not trust that assistance is free and worry about the "obligation" and "debt" that receiving reintegration assistance entails. Some trafficked persons are concerned about the conditions of assistance including being unable to pay back business loans or training costs.



At first I didn't believe it. In general, I can say that I didn't believe that today somebody can provide free and unselfish assistance". (Trafficking victim)^{xiv}

In some cases, suspicion and lack of trust about assistance leads victims to decline services. In other cases, victims accept reintegration assistance only after some time or in response to an urgent need or crisis in their recovery and reintegration. Building trust often takes time and tangible demonstrations that practitioners are trustworthy and that assistance is genuine and well-intentioned.



I was told that I could stay there with my children for some time. We would be treated and fed. I didn't believe it at first. Nowadays it is a rare thing to have something for free. I thought they would ask for something later... I thought that they would probably want to remove some of my organs. It was strange for me to have free assistance as it was the first time in my life". (Trafficking victim)^{xv}

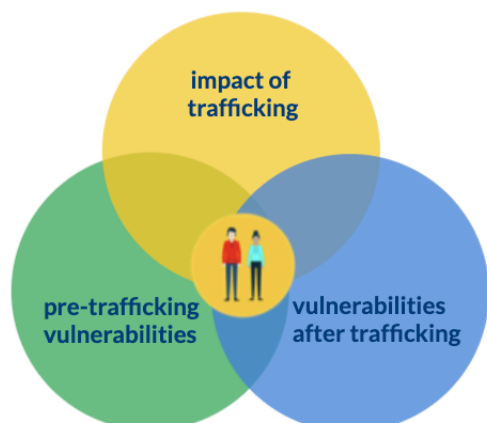


Victims express a wide range of emotions and reactions over the course of reintegration, some that may seem contradictory. Practitioners, especially social workers and psychologists, play an important role in helping victims to process these emotions and reactions as they recover and reintegrate and rebuild relationships with family and community members. Building trust and overcoming suspicion plays an important role in victims' willingness to accept reintegration assistance.



Coping with trafficking, pre-trafficking vulnerabilities and reintegration challenges

Trafficking negatively impacts victims' physical, psychological, social and economic well-being. Much reintegration support directly targets these impacts, both in the immediate and the long-term (for example, to address chronic injuries or illness as well as trauma resulting from trafficking, to overcome economic issues and to resolve family tensions).



In addition, many trafficking victims faced problems in their lives before trafficking, which often contributed to their vulnerability to trafficking and remain a challenge during reintegration. Many victims had economic problems prior to trafficking, which have generally been exacerbated by trafficking. For example, migration debt, going unpaid and the cost of returning home add to pre-existing economic challenges. Some victims suffered abuse prior to trafficking and are forced by circumstance to return to live in abusive family situations. Other victims' family members had health issues before trafficking, which have often gone untreated or continue also after trafficking.

Other issues may emerge in victims' lives and relationships during recovery and reintegration which also require intervention (for example, a divorce or remarriage, having children, a job loss, caring for aging parents). Some problems may be so acute that victims may be at risk of re-trafficking or other forms of exploitation and abuse.



The most important thing is that I have to be healthy first so that I can continue my work and earn money. But the [recovery] process takes a long time. (Trafficking victim)^{xvi}



Recovery and reintegration involves addressing the impact of trafficking as well as pre-trafficking vulnerabilities and problems that emerge in victims' lives during reintegration. It is important that practitioners understand and take these intersecting vulnerabilities and needs into account in designing and implementing a reintegration plan with each trafficking victim.

What vulnerabilities and assistance needs exist pre-trafficking, because of trafficking and/or during reintegration?		
	Vulnerabilities and needs	Reintegration services needed
Before Trafficking		
Because of Trafficking		
During Reintegration		



Role of family in victim reintegration

Almost all victims rely on family members for support during recovery and reintegration. Whether a victim's family is supportive or unsupportive impacts reintegration outcomes. Many victims return to a safe, supportive and protective environment and rely on family members for support and assistance. Others return to unhealthy and unsupportive and, in some cases, abusive settings.

Even in positive family settings, reintegration can be complicated. Initial feelings of relief and happiness often give way over time to different tensions and day-to-day challenges, including financial problems, interpersonal conflict, shame and blame and damaged family relationships.



[Some victims] are returned to the family which has a lot of problems, meaning dysfunction of family, very poor family...which was kind of originally pushing factor for the [individual] to become victim of trafficking. (Practitioner)^{xvii}

Trafficking also takes a toll on family members who are hurt by what their family member suffered, the victim's absence and the damage this separation and suffering causes to their relationships. Many family members have also faced economic difficulties in the victim's absence, an absence which is not always fully explained to them (such as in cases when victims are afraid to disclose the full extent of their 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? (Son of trafficking victim)^{xviii}

Family members are affected by the difficult or erratic behaviors that victims may display once home and as they struggle to move on from trafficking. Victims' family members also often have their own assistance needs during reintegration, especially dependent children and parents.



Unsupportive and unhealthy family environments have a detrimental effect on reintegration success. It is important to understand the family environment to which victims return and how this may impact victims' recovery and reintegration, including the need to support family members alongside victims. It is also important to take into account the impact that trafficking has had on family members and the range of issues that may arise over the course of reintegration.



Role of community in victim reintegration

Many victims return home to a supportive community environment. They receive reassurance, encouragement, sympathy, support, kindness and overall acceptance from friends, neighbors, peers and community members. Other trafficking victims, however, are judged, criticized and looked down on, often due to their "failed" migration and not returning with money.



[My neighbors 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. (Trafficking victim)^{xix}

They may also be discriminated against for "unacceptable" behavior while trafficked (for example, involvement in prostitution, becoming pregnant while trafficked, being arrested) or for "problematic" behavior once home (for example, being agitated and angry, stressed and depressed or simply acting differently from before). Community members



People's nosiness and discrimination scare me. If I return to my hometown, I only stay for a few hours or a day... At home, I don't dare to go out and see any other people. (Child trafficking victim)^{xx}

may also be jealous or resentful when victims receive support and assistance that they themselves may need and want. Victims may face different reactions from different community members. Some friends and neighbors may be a source of support or comfort, while others gossip, criticize and discriminate.



While the community can be a source of support during reintegration, an unsupportive and unhealthy community environment undermines reintegration. It is important to understand the community environment victims return to, how this may impact the victim's recovery and reintegration and what reintegration practitioners can do to navigate these challenges.



Sources of resilience and support

Trafficking victims have many vulnerabilities as a result of trafficking as well as those that existed in their lives before trafficking. However, they also have substantial reserves of strength and resilience that they leverage in their recovery and reintegration. Sources of resilience include life skills, education, professional training, self-confidence and self-esteem.

Some trafficking victims may not want or need reintegration assistance; they can cope on their own or with the support of those around them. They may have existing sources of support that they can also rely on including supportive family members, a strong social network and/or other forms of self-support, such as a job, professional training or personal coping skills.

Some victims may need support during reintegration but prefer to receive assistance outside of the trafficking-specific framework (for example, from the social protection or child protection framework). Victims may face any number of challenges over the course of reintegration and they may not have the reserves to overcome these on their own.

Moreover, resilience is not evenly spread and victims may be resilient in some ways but not in others. Being able to access support at a later stage or in response to a crisis or set-back is often important for many victims' sustainable reintegration.



She had some [small] medical needs and we covered these. But she had a profession. She's a hairdresser... she has a family; she's integrated in the family. She had a good job in a good beauty salon... So of course we can help her in the future but I am not sure that she needs what we have. (Practitioner)^{xxi}



We've had [trafficking victims] who have had more life experience that kind of gives them the ability to cope... they don't get so emotional so fast, they understand that... this is not the end, that things can get better. (Practitioner)^{xxii}



[One trafficking victim we assisted] comes from what seems like a culture that puts a high emphasis on pride, so I think that the fact that she has gone through all of this, but she can get through, they won't keep her down, is one of the biggest things that's helping her. (Practitioner)^{xxiii}



Practitioners can support victims in identifying sources of resilience and support to contribute to their recovery and reintegration. They can also be available to victims should they need support at a later stage or in response to a crisis or problem they encounter during reintegration.



What reintegration support can victims receive outside of the anti-trafficking framework in your areas? What can you do to improve referral of victims to these services?

Guidance for Practitioners



Be sensitive to the range of emotions and reactions that trafficking victims experience during recovery and reintegration. These may include both positive feelings (relief, hope, gratitude, self-confidence and general well-being) as well as negative feelings (safety and security fears, shock and trauma, stress and agitation, shame, blame, embarrassment, suspicion and lack of trust). Recognize and reassure victims that these reactions are a natural part of recovery and reintegration.



Ensure that all trafficking victims are aware of reintegration services available to them, including in their home communities, and how to access this support. Provide victims with clear and comprehensive information about reintegration services, tailored to different trafficking victims and ensure that they understand this material. Tailor information to children according to their age and stage of development. Engage victims (children and adults) in developing assistance material to ensure that the information provided is clear and accessible to different victims.



Ensure that each victim's reintegration plan takes into account not only the impact of trafficking but also their pre-trafficking vulnerabilities and any problems that emerge in life after trafficking. Regularly review and revise their reintegration plan with the victim in response to successes and challenges they encounter during. Children should also be engaged in their reintegration planning and their views, thoughts and needs should be taken into account to ensure their best interests.



Assess each victim's family situation including what is needed to foster a supportive reintegration setting and to strengthen family support systems. Take the family environment into account in the development and implementation of the reintegration plan including family members' assistance needs. Ensure that the family has been prepared prior to the victim's return including providing family mediation and counseling. Provide reintegration services to victims' family members, as needed.



Take into account the community environment victims will reintegrate into and identify possible challenges they may face. Work with victims to prepare for and address potential barriers to reintegration, including specific issues that children may face. Consider how to enhance the supportiveness of the community setting. Ensure that victims have access to community-based services and support including protection options if they face harassment or assault in the community.



Be aware not only of victims' vulnerabilities but also their strengths and resilience and leverage this during recovery and reintegration. Support victims to identify sources of resilience in their families and communities while recognizing that this does not negate their need for assistance.



Access services either from anti-trafficking agencies or from other service providers. Recognize that not all victims want or need trafficking-specific reintegration services and many will reintegrate in communities where anti-trafficking services are not available. Refer victims for other forms of support and assistance as needed and appropriate.



Be aware that some victims may initially decline reintegration services and support. Be available if victims need reintegration services at a later stage or in response to a crisis encountered during reintegration. Ensure that victims understand what services are available and may be accessed at a later stage if they initially decline reintegration assistance.



Provide all trafficking victims with appropriate, high quality reintegration services, in line with their self-identified and individual needs, regardless of age, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, ethnic or social origin, disability or other characteristics. Ensure that reintegration services are trauma-informed, victim-sensitive, child-friendly, gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate.



Structural and institutional challenges during recovery and reintegration

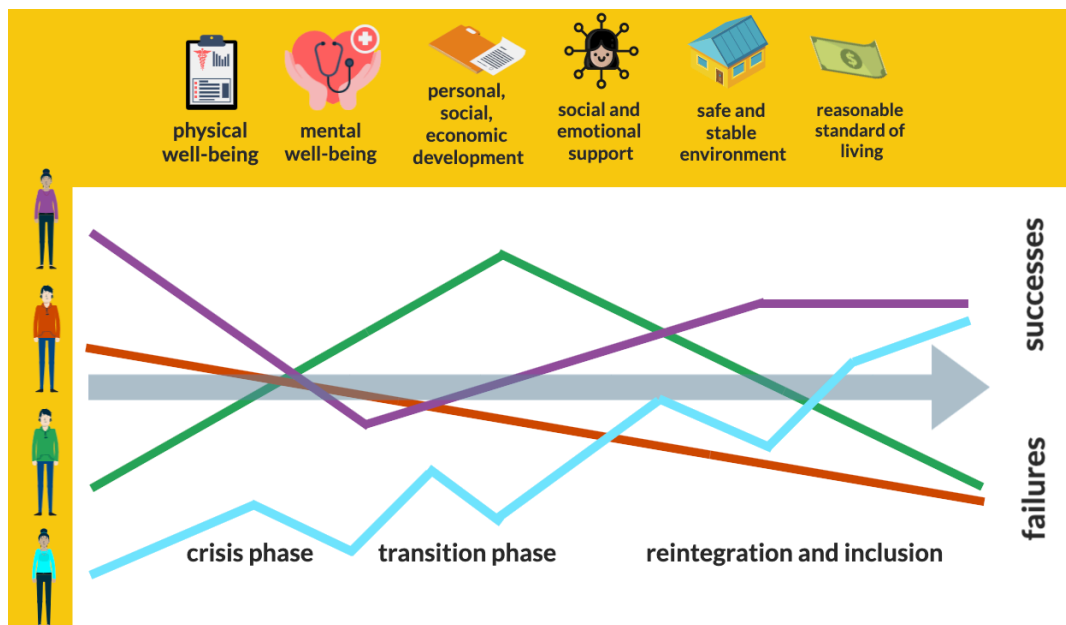


Long-term process, with crises and setbacks

In most cases, victims return to the same social and economic situation that contributed to their vulnerability to trafficking and which has been further exacerbated by trafficking. They also often face structural problems in their communities such as endemic unemployment, high costs of living, lack of state assistance, dependent family members and limited opportunities.

Recovery and reintegration takes a long time, often many years, during which time victims may face different problems, including with their living situations, physical and mental health, socioeconomic conditions, legal status and the needs of their family members. In addition, reintegration is a non-linear process and, over time, victims may face crises and setbacks that have the potential to derail reintegration successes.

Victims face different crises and setbacks during recovery and reintegration



Crises or setbacks may emerge at various stages of reintegration (during crisis, transition and inclusion), depending on the victim's individual, family and community situation. Some trafficking victims may face problems when they first arrive home but experience a general improvement in their lives over time. Others may face problems and challenges at a later stage or in response to specific life events during reintegration.



...you cannot predict when you will fall down. So you need support all the time. (Child trafficking victim)^{xiv}

Case management plays a critical role in anticipating and addressing issues and crises that emerge. Crises are particularly risky when individuals lack access to assistance or do not have support in their families or communities. On-going case management, including the option to receive services and support at a later phase of reintegration, plays an important role in victims' reintegration success, providing a safety net that many victims lack in their family or social environment or from the state.



There is no cookie-cutter approach to working with this population. Males, females, adults, children, sex trafficking, or labor trafficking. You just don't know how long you will be working with them. Just when you think they are moving forward, something happens with their case or with their family or they see something in the news that triggers the trauma experience and sets them back sometimes months in their progress. (Practitioner)^{xv}



Reintegration is a long-term, multi-year process with victims facing crises and problems at different stages of their lives after trafficking. Reintegration services need to be available to provide support in the long-term and in response to challenges and crises that emerge over time. Case management is key to successful reintegration outcomes.

**What are the causes of reintegration setbacks and crisis that you have identified?
What strategies have you identified to address these?**





Availability, accessibility and appropriateness of reintegration services

Not all victims receive reintegration services. Many are unidentified and unassisted and do not know that they have rights as trafficking victims including access to reintegration services. Others do not see themselves as trafficking victims (for example, because their trafficking does not differ from previous migration or work experiences, because they actively sought out these options or because they do not identify with vulnerability or victimhood). In addition, reintegration services are not always available, accessible or appropriate for victims' individual needs or family circumstances.

Not comprehensive or individually tailored.

Many trafficking victims do not receive a comprehensive package of reintegration services. Often they are “under-assisted”, receiving some forms of assistance, but not a full range of services tailored to their individual needs and situation over time.

For example, while basic medical care may be available, at least in the initial phases of reintegration, other forms of medical care (such as dental care, specialized medical treatments or prescription drugs) may not be covered through public healthcare and reintegration organizations may lack resources to provide this support. Similarly, vocational training programs do not always align with jobs that victims are interested in or translate into viable employment options in their home communities.

Some services may be available but limited in scope (for example, a limited number of counseling sessions or medical treatments). Specialized care for acute, complex or long-term needs are often beyond the resources of agencies providing reintegration services. Some victims require support that is entirely unavailable. For example, some victims have complex traumas and need on-going psychological support or have chronic health issues that require on-going or specialized medical care that is unavailable in their home communities.

Many trafficking victims are offered assistance that is not tailored to their individual needs. For example, while a sustainable livelihood is a high priority for most victims, available vocational trainings are often limited in choice and tend to focus on traditional and often gendered skills. Training and economic opportunities may be out of step with victims’ specific skills, interests, capacities or the economy in the community where they are reintegrating. Further, victims do not always receive sufficient support in finding suitable employment and/or setting up and running a business after completing training.

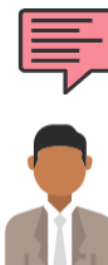
In some cases, assistance interferes with victims’ personal and family responsibilities. Some victims are unable to accept and receive services because they must prioritize earning money, paying back debts and caring for family members. Working hours, for example, may prevent a victim from being able to attend vocational training or counseling sessions. Victims’ assistance needs are often intertwined with their family members’ needs, who may also need services and support.



I did not receive any assistance yet except being sent back home. [The organization] provided assistance to those who came back before me but they do not provide any assistance now. They said that they now have a shortage of funds. (Trafficking victim)^{xxvi}



For now the only training provided is limited to handicraft trainings. Apart from that there is not much. The situation has changed now – now you need computer trainings, you need languages. (Trafficking victim)^{xxvii}



We can’t address issues of unemployment, life skills, or anything else until we address the trauma. How can we expect someone to get a job when they can’t even get out of bed or are afraid to leave the shelter? (Practitioner)^{xxviii}



[There was a lack of] mental help. At that time I had no one I could share this with, no one I could talk to. And I think that if I’d received psychological help back then, I wouldn’t feel so bad now. (Trafficking victim)^{xxix}



There was no training or capital that can teach us to sustain the economic empowerment. They just gave me some money to borrow and told me to discuss with my neighbor what we wanted to do with this money. The program did not really educate us. We trained ourselves and tried to sell anything that is valuable. (Trafficking victim)^{xxx}

Not available for some victims and more complex needs. Some types of trafficking victims are under-considered and underserved in the reintegration framework. For example, many countries have reintegration services for trafficked women and girls but not for men or even boys whose needs are less prioritized and who are often blamed for not being able to cope on their own.

Similarly, trafficked children, by virtue of their age, stage of development and trafficking experience, have specific and often specialized reintegration assistance needs. Yet, in many cases, reintegration services for children do not differ substantially from those provided to adults.

Other categories of victims who are under-considered in the design and implementation of reintegration services include people with mental and physical disabilities, victims of labor trafficking, those with serious mental illnesses, individuals with substance abuse and addiction and LGBTQI+ individuals (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning, intersex and self-identified sexual orientations and gender identities).

In addition, the reintegration needs of some trafficking victims are especially complex, requiring specialized services that are not always available.

Not community-based. Reintegration support is commonly offered through shelter programs, located in urban areas that may be far from victims' home communities. Requirements that victims stay in shelters away from their home communities, sometimes for long periods of time, may delay reintegration and prevent them from returning to their "normal" life and routine, reuniting with family, moving on from trafficking and regaining independence and autonomy. Victims may decline reintegration services offered in shelters, particularly those with rules and restrictions that limit freedom of movement or contact with family, or that use strict regimes of discipline and punishments.



Often boys will be blamed, isolated, marginalised and punished for expressing the problems they have...This is a particular barrier to providing services and there is a real need to understand the perspective of men and what help they need. (Practitioner)^{xxxi}



[The focus should not only be on] females, not just to those victims that were exploited only sexually...[we need to] think about other categories [of victims]...about other groups and other types of exploitation that need more focus and to have special assistance. (Practitioner)^{xxxii}



[People with serious mental illnesses] go largely undiagnosed and there is not a lot of capacity for working with them... there needs to be a short-term place where people can live and be supervised and have therapy every day but there is nothing like that here at all. (Practitioner)^{xxxiii}



...It takes a long time to heal the trauma and depression. [...] The psychologist said that deep depression is not easy [to heal]. It must be done step-by-step. (Trafficking victim)^{xxxiv}



We are trying to influence the way the system works and move away from shelter-based services being the only model. It means unless you go to a shelter you cannot access services. Unless someone is in danger of being re-trafficked or is in an incest situation we don't see any reason why someone has to be away from home and it actually slows down their recovery. (Practitioner)^{xxxv}



If I went to the shelter, I would get shelter, food, medical aid when it was needed, material help. But I declined to go to the shelter so I was left without any help. (Trafficking victim)^{xxxvi}

In countries where there is a lack of community-based support, declining shelter-based services often means victims are unassisted. Many victims are not referred for general assistance and social services, which may, in part, be due to the lack of social services generally.



When I lived in the shelter, I could go to school, but when I left the shelter for the community, I cannot go back to school. When I drop out of school, it is hard to find a job to do. (Child trafficking victim)^{xxxvii}

Most trafficked children are assisted in shelter programs, sometimes for long periods of time. This can be a source of stress and undermine their recovery and delay their reintegration. Trafficked children who are unable to return home (for example, because they are without a viable family environment or they lack documents to return home) typically stay in shelters for a long time, sometimes many years. Kinship care is not generally pursued and there are very few alternative placement options for children who cannot be reintegrated into their home environment.



Life staying in the shelter was happy and life living with my family is also happy in some ways. However, sometimes when I have heartache, I want to return to stay in the shelter again because there [they have] programs to release my stress, such as singing and dancing. (Child trafficking victim)^{xxxviii}

There is also limited support for trafficked children and youth in transitioning to independent life when unable to return to family or community. Moreover, many forms of assistance, like medical care, counseling, training and education are often only available to children while in a shelter. Outside of shelters, there is a general lack of medical care or counseling, which means that injuries and illnesses remain untreated, and few options for school reinsertion, which means that children cannot continue their education and ensure a sufficient level of literacy and numeracy.



I got an offer from the provincial [social welfare department] to attend a tailoring or electronics course in [a nearby] town or a tailoring course in [a shelter] but I decided to remain in the village to do farming because I am illiterate. (Trafficking victim)^{xxxix}



I asked to leave, but the duration of approving was so long. It was over a half year before I could leave... it was still difficult for me. It was not easy like what they said. It was difficult in my family. (Child trafficking victim)^{xi}

Not accessible. Some victims face administrative barriers in accessing services, including due to lack of documents, services being offered outside of the area where they are registered, bureaucratic procedures between agencies within or between countries, and lack of commitment or follow-up from practitioners.



If you just look at what domestic victims are eligible for on paper, it looks promising. However, trying to access those services is another story. (Practitioner)^{xii}

Some victims or their families are intimidated by practitioners or procedures and do not feel comfortable to request support. Victims also face practical barriers in accessing services (for example, being unable to take time off work to access reintegration support, not having funds to travel to receive services that are outside of the area or not having access to childcare to be able to attend reintegration programs).

There is often an uneven geographical distribution of reintegration services. When services are unavailable in the area where trafficking victims are reintegrating, they are commonly unassisted or, at best, under-assisted. Some forms of assistance (for example, drug or alcohol rehabilitation, psychological and psychiatric assistance) are not likely to be available outside the capital and large cities.



[The available services] are very much centre-based there are very few services in the community. (Practitioner)^{xiii}

Some forms of assistance may not be valued or prioritized by victims and, as such, not accessed or accepted. For example, there is stigma attached to mental health issues and psychological counseling in some settings, which may lead victims to decline this type of support.



When trafficked women return from [abroad] they are very keen to return to their village... They are desperate to get back to their communities but when they get there they don't have access to services. (Practitioner)^{xiii}

Assistance is “identifying”. Many trafficking victims keep their trafficking experience a secret or reveal only a portion of what has happened to them out of fear of blame, stigma and discrimination. Many victims, therefore, are concerned that receiving services will make them “identifiable” as a trafficking victim to people in their family, their community or to authorities.



...if I had the right to choose, I would choose just normal help, without the terms “trafficking” or “victim” being used. [...] If we get help, we just want help without using the word “trafficking” because it makes us feel like we have a defect and, in our hearts, we will never heal. (Trafficking victim)^{xiv}

To be identified as “trafficked” has potentially negative outcomes including stigma and discrimination (for example, as a “prostitute” or “failed migrant”). Victims may fear embarrassment and shame of being looked down on or envied because of the assistance received. Many victims prefer to receive assistance that is not trafficking-specific to avoid being identifiable.



For me it is very important that my secret is kept. I don't want rumors about me in my village... Many of the [victims] are reluctant to request help because they are afraid that their stories will get out. (Trafficking victim)^{xiv}

Not sufficiently sensitive. Reintegration services should be trauma-informed, victim-centered, gender sensitive, child friendly and culturally appropriate. In practice, though, service are also not always tailored to the cultural and social realities for trafficking victims. Age, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nationality and religion are not always considered in the design or implementation of reintegration services. For example, some reintegration services and programs demonstrate gender assumptions and biases, with women's assistance often residentially-based and focused on victims' psychological and emotional needs including life-skills, while male assistance focuses on re-fulfilling their roles as breadwinners, regardless of the severity of the abuse they may have suffered and its emotional consequences. In other cases, male victims are seen as less in need than female victims, leading to some needed services, like counseling, being unavailable to men. Services are often also not

sufficiently tailored to the specific needs of children (and children of different ages) nor are they trauma-informed in spite of trauma being a common experience among trafficking victims.



Carefully assess whether services are comprehensive, accessible and meet the needs of all victims. Consider what barriers specific populations of victims may face in trying to access reintegration services and work to address these. Ensure that reintegration services are trauma-informed, victim-centered, gender sensitive, child friendly and culturally appropriate.

What barriers do victims face in accessing reintegration services in the area where you work? What can you do to improve the availability, accessibility or appropriateness of reintegration services?





Access to information about reintegration services

Victims need to be actively engaged in making decisions about reintegration support and fully informed about available options in their post-trafficking lives. This requires that they receive full information about the various forms of assistance available at home and in destination countries, their options within these programs, who is eligible and how assistance can be accessed, either in the present or at a later stage. It also requires that victims consent to receive reintegration services and are aware that this consent can be withdrawn at any stage.

Some victims have a clear understanding of the reintegration services available to them and are fully engaged in the decision-making process. However, others have limited information about programs and organizations that might be able to provide assistance (trafficking and non-trafficking specific, state and non-state services).



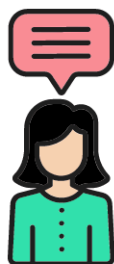
I got assistance from [the NGO]. I didn't ask for that because I didn't know anything about [that NGO]. But they contacted me and offered me assistance and I accepted. Assistance from [that NGO] lasted for two years. (Trafficking victim)^{xvi}

As a result some victims are limited to the services of one organization and its network rather than offered the full range of possible services. In some cases, information is not available or clearly conveyed. Information is also not always adapted to victims' different levels of education and literacy or, for children, to their age or stage of development. Victims also may find it difficult to understand information about reintegration services and need time to recover before they can consider and decide on reintegration options.



I spoke to [the director] on the phone. She explained to me about the assistance programme...to reintegrate into society. She explained everything about the assistance. It's true that I was scared at the beginning but I told myself to go and see how it could be. (Trafficking victim)^{xlvii}

Some victims do not receive any information about reintegration services and how to access these services. For example, victims who return home on their own may be unaware of reintegration services and go unassisted as a result. Many victims also often have limited information about general assistance options and how to access these.



... I didn't know where to go, what to ask, which doctor I need. (Trafficking victim)^{xlviii}



Information about reintegration services should be comprehensive and clearly conveyed to different victims, including children, in written and verbal format. It is useful to engage trafficking victims in determining what information is needed by victims and how it can best be shared with different profiles of trafficked persons during reintegration.



Insufficient knowledge, skills and sensitivity of practitioners

Successful reintegration is not only about *what* services are provided but also *how* they are provided and how victims experience and benefit from them. Reintegration services should be trauma-informed, victim-centered, gender sensitive, child-friendly and culturally appropriate. They should adhere to a minimum standard of care and be implemented according to professional codes of conduct and ethical principles. In practice, however, this is not always the case. And so, while many trafficking victims receive high quality services from qualified practitioners who are sensitive to their needs and trauma-informed in their approach, there are also substantial gaps in professional competencies and qualifications among reintegration practitioners, as well as issues of sensitivity, maltreatment and even abuse.



We conduct training that is compulsory for everyone including our drivers and administrative staff so that everyone understands the needs of a person who has survived; I think this is reducing the stigma. (Practitioner)^{xlix}



[The] staff is skillful and conscientious in teaching and explaining. They had good behavior and used good words and [were] gentle. (Trafficking victim)

Knowledge and skills of practitioners. Many reintegration practitioners have substantial skills and expertise in their specific field of work (for example, social work, psychology, medicine, vocational training, job placement, legal assistance) as well as in working with trafficking victims. Many others, though, have not been professionally educated or provided with the needed training and mentoring.

In addition, reintegration practitioners are not generally trained in trauma-informed care, an approach that recognizes the impact of traumatic experiences on victims and avoids further harm by ensuring that support is provided in a way that attends to the victim's need for safety, respect and acceptance. Similarly, many reintegration practitioners are not trained in child-friendly care and are not equipped to tailor support to children's age and stage of development. Child participation in the design and implementation of a reintegration plan is limited, with children's needs determined largely by practitioners, in consultation with their parents or guardians but seldom children themselves.

Practitioners themselves frequently point to a lack of professional training opportunities and on-the-job training to enhance their skills and knowledge in the reintegration field. Some practitioners work with trafficking victims among other populations and have not been trained specifically in trafficking in persons. They, therefore, do not always have the knowledge or capacity to support this population. Training in gender sensitivity, victim-centered practices and culturally appropriate care is also often limited or unavailable.

Sensitivity of practitioners. Some trafficking victims experience insensitive behavior from reintegration practitioners. Victims are also distressed when they feel that they are not believed or are blamed and stigmatized. Some practitioners treat trafficking victims as vulnerable persons and passive objects in need of "rescue" and "rehabilitation".

Some trafficking victims face discrimination from reintegration practitioners (for example, because they are trafficking



I think that improperly trained officials who work with the victims along their path of reintegration may be either unaware or forget about stigma and thus can essentially enhance this stigma by identifying them by their cases or situations. (Practitioner)ⁱⁱ



Not many people have the opportunity for specialist training here... Most people have on-the-job training and attend short courses. (Practitioner)ⁱⁱⁱ



There is a strong handful of staff that are well trained but I would still consider them to be in non-specialist roles. They can provide effective interventions but need continuing training, input, supervision and support. (Practitioner)ⁱⁱⁱ



[At] the Emergency Room...there were nurses basically talking within earshot of me about how "people like me do what we do and then are surprised when we get hurt". Their words reinforced in me the lie that I deserved what had happened to me. (Trafficking victim)^{iv}



I think that a lot of effort needs to be given in further developing awareness-raising and eliminating prejudice, not only in the general public but also among professionals who work with victims. (Practitioner)^{iv}



My advice is that the staff of organizations should be kinder, more protective and show us love. We don't have love and don't behave nicely so they should show us those emotions...If that doesn't happen, we start running away no matter if we will have benefits and assistance from that organization or not. (Trafficking victim)^{vi}

victims or due to their age, gender, nationality, ethnicity or sexual identity). This can lead to victims not receiving the services they need.

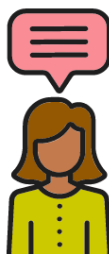
Some practitioners breach victims' privacy (for example, when practitioners disclose a victim's identity without their consent or discuss victim case information without the victim's consent and in spite of the need to limit information exchange to those bound by confidentiality agreements). Discriminatory behavior and breaches of confidentiality not only risk re-traumatizing trafficking victims, but also damage relationships of trust with reintegration practitioners, which are critical to successful reintegration outcomes.

Discrimination, maltreatment, abuse. Some trafficking victims face maltreatment at the hands of reintegration practitioners. In some instances, trafficking victims are subjected to verbal and physical abuse from reintegration practitioners. This most commonly occurs with child trafficking victims, particularly in shelter settings.

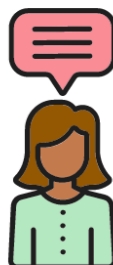
Such experiences deeply hurt, stress and re-traumatize trafficking victims, compromising their recovery and reintegration. These experiences also impact trust in other practitioners, which can translate into reluctance or refusal to seek out or accept assistance in the future, even at the risk of reintegration setbacks or failure. For trafficked children, the impact of maltreatment and abuse is necessarily amplified as they have less developed coping skills to manage and overcome these experiences and violations. It also reinforces fears about further harm and lack of trust in authorities.



When I came back, I tested positive for HIV at the local clinic. Then the whole village got to know it. My neighbours learnt about it. I had very many problems. (Trafficking victim)^{lvii}



...they differentiate and discriminate just because I am LGBTI and it is not just in hospital. I do not feel comfortable in public as a transgender person. (Child trafficking victim)^{lviii}



The lower caste children do not get to study. People discriminate on the basis of caste and they say that low caste cannot study or be educated. (Child trafficking victim)^{lix}



It is important that reintegration practitioners are educated and trained in reintegration support. Services should be victim-sensitive, trauma-informed, gender-sensitive, child friendly and culturally appropriate and adhere to professional codes of conduct, ethical principles and minimum standards of care. This applies to all practitioners working with trafficked persons, including volunteers and ancillary staff like drivers and administrative staff, and border and immigration officials involved in return processes.



Importance of case management and victim participation

Given the complexity of trafficking victims' needs and the ups and downs of life after trafficking, case management, including victim participation, is critically important to ensure reintegration success. And yet, case management is not always used in reintegration institutions or organizations.

Many victims are not engaged in the design and implementation of their reintegration



At first, [the practitioners said] that even if I came back home, they wouldn't leave me. They will call or visit me at home. But it has been a long time already since they never visited me... They never call me. (Child trafficking victim)^{lx}

plan and, instead, reintegration services are determined by practitioners with little to no discussion with victims. As a result, many victims receive ill-fitting services, which do not meet their needs or contribute to their reintegration. Communication between practitioners and victims is often limited.

Many victims interpret lack of communication as a lack of interest in and commitment to helping them. Lack of resources for travel or communication means victims in remote communities are less likely to receive adequate case management and follow-up. In addition, very few trafficking victims are consulted about the quality of services they receive during reintegration. There are few systematic mechanisms in place for feedback from trafficked persons.



I suggest that [the service provider] comes directly to the person and helps them personally. They must conduct a survey about their lives... [The service provider] must meet the victim and talk so they can see the capacities, so they know the need and what will be useful. (Trafficking victim)^{lxi}



I think that you need to maintain the contact with those who used to be identified and now are in reintegration for a longer time...Because whenever the monitoring drops...they are more likely to be involved in risky situations again, which can lead them to trafficking. (Practitioner)^{lxii}

Children require more intensive and longer case management, given their specific situations and vulnerabilities. Some types of assistance needed by children – particularly education – are longer-term, often a matter of several years. While some trafficked children have case managers who work with them over time, many children receive little to no case management. Often case managers develop reintegration plans in consultation with parents or guardians but not children themselves.



Case management is key to reintegration success. A case manager should be assigned to each victim to develop and monitor the implementation of their reintegration plan, in close collaboration with the victim. Meaningfully engaging victims in the design and monitoring of reintegration services ensures that programs are well designed and meet victims' needs, including changes over time. This requires taking into account language, literacy, education, culture and the risk of re-traumatization as well as how to encourage meaningful participation of trafficked children of different ages and stages of development.



Insufficient coordination and referral

Coordination and referrals between countries and within a country are critical to successful reintegration. When these systems work well, trafficked persons can make an informed choice about the range of reintegration services available from different organizations and institutions and make the most of these assistance opportunities to support their recovery and reintegration.

However, in practice, lack of cooperation between institutions and agencies undermines victim referrals and a continuum of care. Many practitioners do not know what services exist from country to country or within a country as well as who is eligible for them and how victims can access them.




As a service provider, I find it confusing trying to figure out what services are available for which clients...Most of my time is spent making calls or running around to agencies. We [service providers] need a road map that helps explain not only what services our clients are eligible for but how we go about accessing these services. (Practitioner)^{lxiii}

This means that in some cases, victims may be limited to the services of one organization and its network rather than offered the full range of available services and options. Lack of communication among practitioners further undermines referrals and options for reintegration support.



Cooperation and coordination between organizations from different fields of work is needed to maximize available resources and ensure victims can access a variety of services for their recovery and reintegration. In many situations, cooperation between agencies not only augments the assistance options for victims but also serves to avoid the duplication of services. Practitioners need information about available reintegration services to inform victims about options and effectively support referral.

What services are available in your area that can support the reintegration of trafficking victims? Please identify trafficking-specific services as well as other forms of services and assistance and where this can be accessed



Assistance needs (housing, medical, counseling, education, training, economic, administrative, legal, protection, return assistance, family needs)	Trafficking-specific services (specify organisation or institution and contact information)	General assistance (specify organisation or institution and contact information)



Vicarious trauma and burnout among practitioners

Reintegration practitioners are exposed to sensitive, emotionally distressing and traumatic information on an on-going basis as they work with trafficking victims to process and overcome traumatic events in their lives before and as a consequence of trafficking. They often work with limited resources and a large number of different victims who have many complex issues and needs, which may exacerbate their stress and anxiety. They may even suffer vicarious trauma (indirect exposure to trauma that results in similar feelings to those that victims experience) or burnout.

Reintegration practitioners benefit from professional supervision as well as team support in conducting their daily work. They may also need psychological support to manage the stress, anxiety and even trauma that may be triggered by their work. However, many reintegration practitioners do not have access to adequate professional supervision and support. They also generally do not have access to counseling or opportunities to learn about and implement self-care.



[Working] with this group of children is stressful, so often to hear of violence done to them. (Practitioner)^{lxiv}



[Service providers] need to... train their mind to cope with the pressure that comes [with this work]. (Practitioner)^{lxv}



[I found] the gravity and graphic nature of some of the cases... also in terms of how the girls have been really neglected... very difficult [to cope with] ... And seeing the direct implications in the lives of the girls..., and their struggle to recover, or maintain, or recreate some type of life balance. It's kind of ongoing. (Practitioner)^{lxvi}



Practitioners working on the recovery and reintegration of trafficking victims may suffer vicarious trauma and be at high risk of burnout. They often work with many victims and often with quite limited resources, which adds to frustration. Access to support and care is important to help them manage their stress. It is also important that practitioners have professional supervision, reasonable working hours and a manageable number of victims with whom they work.

**What can you do to prevent and address vicarious trauma and burnout?
What support can you access to help you deal with this?**



Guidance for Practitioners



Assign a case manager to work with each victim. Conduct a thorough needs assessment and prepare a reintegration plan in consultation with the victim. Conduct on-going case management to ensure that services are appropriate and meet each victim's self-articulated needs in line with minimum standards of care and in line with their age (adult or child). Adapt services and the reintegration plan in discussion with each trafficking victim as needed.



Provide a comprehensive package of high quality reintegration services, including housing, healthcare, psychological support, education and training, economic empowerment, legal and administrative assistance including residency, safety and security, support to the family and return. Ensure that reintegration services are victim-centered, trauma-informed, child-friendly, gender-sensitive and culturally appropriate. Ensure that services are provided by professionally-trained practitioners, including those with expertise in working with trafficked children and youth.



Build and maintain partnerships and trust among practitioners and agencies working on reintegration, at local and national levels, to ensure a continuum of support and care and comprehensive services. Partner with agencies offering trafficking-specific as well as general assistance. Ensure services meet the needs of all trafficking victims over the course of reintegration.



Engage trafficking victims (both adults and children) in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of reintegration services and programs. Be accountable to trafficking victims, including by providing feedback and complaint mechanisms and make changes accordingly.



Provide clear, comprehensive and accurate information about reintegration services. Ensure that trafficking victims are fully informed about available services including any rules and restrictions and their right to accept or decline some or all services including at a later stage of reintegration. Ensure that all assistance is voluntary. Give victims time to make informed decisions about assistance and continue to seek consent over time. When sharing information with children, it should be conveyed in a way that is suitable to their age, education and stage of development.



Offer community-based reintegration services and support so that victims can return home to their families. Ensure that trafficking victims who return to a community setting have access to comprehensive services to support their reintegration, either trafficking specific or through general services. Consider residential care as a temporary solution and only in some cases. Identify alternative care options in the case of children who cannot return to their families.



Establish and adhere to ethical guidelines for reintegration services and professional codes of conduct. Reintegration practitioners should adhere to principles of do no harm, informed consent, confidentiality, privacy, non-discrimination, safety and sensitivity and respect. Design and implement reintegration interventions in ways that support victim empowerment, autonomy and resilience.



Tailor reintegration services for children to their individual and specific needs and implement services in a child-friendly way. Underpin all reintegration work with child rights principles, child-specific protocols and child participation. Ensure all practitioners (including administrative and support staff) are professionally trained and sensitized in working with trafficked and/or vulnerable children and adhere to a child protection policy.



Recognize the risk of vicarious trauma and burnout in your reintegration work. Develop strategies to manage stress in your daily work and seek out support when needed.

Other Bali Process and NEXUS Institute resources on the recovery and reintegration of trafficking victims

Bali Process (2019) *Policy Brief on Returns and Reintegration*. Bangkok, Thailand: Bali Process Regional Support Office. Available at: <https://bit.ly/343ITW7>

Bali Process (2015) *Policy Guide on Protecting Victims of Trafficking*. Bangkok, Thailand: Bali Process Regional Support Office. Available at: <https://bit.ly/37LO6nZ>

NEXUS Institute and Bali Process (2021) *Special and Additional Measures for Child Trafficking Victims: A Practitioner Guide*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute and Bangkok: Regional Support Office of the Bali Process (RSO). Available at: <https://bit.ly/3fdGsom>

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NEXUS Institute (2020) *Trafficking Victim Protection Frameworks in Cambodia, Indonesia, Lao PDR, Thailand, and Viet Nam: A Resource for Practitioners*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute, Winrock International and USAID. Available at: <https://bit.ly/39Kav65>

NEXUS Institute (2017) *Moving On. Family and Community Reintegration Among Indonesian Trafficking Victims*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2K3kXuC>

NEXUS Institute (2017) *Our Lives. Vulnerability and Resilience Among Indonesian Trafficking Victims*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute. Available at: <https://bit.ly/37KOzVJ>

NEXUS Institute (2017) *Supporting the reintegration of trafficked persons. A guidebook for the Greater Mekong Sub-Region*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute, Bangkok: UN-ACT and World Vision. Available at: <https://bit.ly/3IL1vQz> (available in [Khmer](#), [Laotian](#), [Vietnamese](#), and [Thai](#))

NEXUS Institute (2016) *Going home. Challenges in the reintegration of trafficking victims in Indonesia*. Washington, DC: NEXUS Institute. Available at: <https://bit.ly/2JDadn6>

UNIAP and NEXUS Institute (2013) *After Trafficking. Experiences and Challenges in the (Re)integration of Trafficked Persons in the Greater Mekong Sub-region*. Bangkok: United Nations Inter-agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP) and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute. Available at: <https://bit.ly/37KMDwC>

UNIAP, World Vision, and NEXUS Institute (2012) *(Re)integration: Perspectives of Victim Service Agencies on Successes & Challenges in Trafficking Victim (Re)Integration in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute. Available at: <https://bit.ly/37Huako>

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- ⁱ This section is based on NEXUS Institute's work on reintegration including the following research and resources: Surtees, R. (2017) *Moving On. Family and Community Reintegration Among Indonesian Trafficking Victims*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute; Surtees, R. (2017) *Our Lives. Vulnerability and Resilience Among Indonesian Trafficking Victims*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute; Surtees, R., L.S. Johnson, T. Zulfahary and S.D. Caya (2016) *Going home. Challenges in the reintegration of trafficking victims in Indonesia*. Washington, DC: NEXUS Institute; Surtees, R. (2013) *After Trafficking. Experiences and Challenges in the (Re)integration of Trafficked Persons in the Greater Mekong Sub-region*. Bangkok: United Nations Inter-agency Project on Human Trafficking (UNIAP) and Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute; Surtees, R. (2009) *Re/integration of Trafficked Persons – Developing Monitoring and Evaluation Mechanisms*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute and Brussels: King Baudouin Foundation; Surtees, R. (2008) *Re/integration of trafficked persons: how can our work be more effective*. Washington, D.C.: NEXUS Institute and Brussels: King Baudouin Foundation. For additional resources on assistance and reintegration, please see: <https://nexusinstitute.net/publications/assistance-and-reintegration-of-trafficking-victims/>
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