

## Reintegration of Child Trafficking Victims: 5 Best Practices and Recommendations

The issue of trafficking in human beings is very complex. Fighting the trafficking and rescuing its victims is only one side of it. Reintegration of those who experienced human trafficking, various forms of abuse and exploitation is a long and complicated process raising many questions and constantly requiring a search for better practices and problem solutions on different levels. There are several publications available in the Child Protection Hub online library on this issue. Several of them are reviewed here, starting from the most recent one.

1. [\*Life Beyond Trafficking. The Re/integration of Trafficked Persons in the Balkans 2007-2014.\*](#) By the King Baudouin Foundation. 2014.

This publication summarizes and presents the process, results and challenges of Re/integration Programme (TVRP) which was launched in 2007 in seven Balkan countries involving fifteen NGOs, and gives recommendations and suggestions for a better practice assistance to trafficked victims. The TVRP is presented as a successful project based on interviews with its primary beneficiaries who were trafficking victims — mainly women and girls who experienced sexual exploitation (p. 12). Their testimonies may be read in the publication. The programme also addressed the secondary beneficiaries of it, i. e., family members of the trafficked victims (p. 16). However, the authors of the publication call TVRP successful because 60 percent of its participants can be called as reintegrated. At the same time they emphasize that more time is needed to understand whether it was 'successful' (p. 20). It also addresses issues of overlooked people groups such as children in the streets who might be potential trafficking victims, or men exposed exploitation, as well as the problems of providing service to those who are outside the legal frame of trafficking victims (p. 18). In addition, it emphasizes importance of a family to reintegration, and a good preparation of a social worker. It argues that the reintegration of trafficked victims should be a long-term process, the network of NGOs should be strengthened, and that the funding issues should be carefully addressed because continuity and success of such programmes requires secured funds (p. 46).

2. [\*\(Re\)Building the Future. Terre des Hommes Projects and Programmes Working in Asia. Supporting the Recovery& Reintegration of Trafficked Children. A Handbook for Project Staff and Front-line Workers.\*](#) By Terre des hommes. 2014.

This is a handbook prepared by the Terre des hommes in Asia with lots of methodological suggestions how to help to reintegrate trafficked children to society. This publication provides a useful glossary with most common definitions used working in

the area of reintegration of trafficked victims. Based on the analysis of Tdh work and experience, it examines the process of recovery and reintegration from its conceptualization to implementation. It suggests to approach the concept of reintegration as a circular three stages process: rescue, recovery and reintegration (p. 15). However, the publication mainly focuses on a social worker's preparation and their contact with a child who was exposed to various forms of abuse. According to the handbook, a child's well-being should be supported physically, emotionally and socially (p. 16). Emotional and social support are one of the biggest challenges of the social worker. He/she is suggested to empower a child, help to increase their self-esteem, encourage (p. 20-21), but at the same time be very sensitive, keep a balance and avoid doing harm to a child by providing service which does not correspond to the child's needs (p. 11). It also raises a concern whether it is ever possible to comprehend experience and needs of a child who has undergone various forms of abuse (p. 12). The handbook is full of useful tables such as factors influencing successful reintegration (p. 47), alternative care and living options (p. 40-42), and examples such as care plan development with a timescale and description (p. 34-35).

3. [\*\*Recovery and Reintegration of Children from the Effects of Sexual Exploitation and Related Trafficking\*\*](#) By OAK foundation. 2008.

This OAK Foundation report is based on consultancy experience, and is a compilation of views of correspondents, i. e., organizations who work in this area, and analysis of policy papers. It also suggests several measures which could be implemented for children's effective recovery, provides a guideline how to design and plan family and community strengthening (p. 18), gives a list of handbooks, guidelines and training books for those who are working in the area of human trafficking (p. 40-45). The authors of the publication claim that family plays a crucial role in a child's support, therefore, the key of successful reintegration of a child is an NGO's ability to know how to mobilize families and communities, which would be able to marginalize abusers and exploiters (p. iv). The report concludes that: some goals of policies cannot be achieved because of lack of clarification of definitions, objectives, and processes (p. 9); there is a lack of "specialized professional care", funding and access to it is one of the main obstacles to long-term projects and capacity building; and an evidence-based strategy is a good practice to learn and develop (p. 29). The authors also promote multi-agency work, multi-sectoral and holistic approach (p. v), urge the dialogue and communication of key players (p. 33).

4. [\*\*Good Practices on \(Re\)Integration of Victims of Trafficking in Human Beings in six European Countries\*\*](#). By Cristina Talens and Cecile Landman. 2003.

The focus of this report are services which were provided to women who were victims of trafficking by sixty NGOs and Inter-Governmental organizations (list with their contact

information is provided at the end of the report). They either assisted to women during the reintegration in a host country, or in the country of origin and provided possibilities to improve them (p. 1). However, many of these organizations worked not only with women, but with many different groups including men and children (p. 4). The report examines six countries in the European Union: Belgium, Germany, Italy, The Netherlands, Spain, and The United Kingdom. Based on surveying the organizations, the services discussed in this report are health, housing, education, vocational training, employment, and repatriation/reintegration. Discussing concrete examples in the countries the report also highlights instances of good practices there. Among the problems that women face after trafficking in a host society are stigmatization, discrimination, and lack of options for long-lasting self-sustainability (53-54). The limitation of the report is that it can only show the investigation in the European Union countries, but cannot explore how (re)integration of the women proceeds in their home countries in case of repatriation. The authors assume that after being repatriated the women do not seek for aid or help, but try to cope and search for solutions on their own (ibid). The criteria for good practice of social service, according to the authors, are long-term sustainability, accessibility for the victims, and sensitivity towards gender, strategies for their empowerment, human rights as a basis, respective attitude collaboration between non-governmental organizations and the government (p. 78).

5. [Child-Friendly Standards and Guidelines for the Recovery and Integration of Trafficked Children](#). By the International Labour Organisation. 2006.

These guidelines are based on experience with rescued trafficked children in Asia who are extremely vulnerable and fragile. It is supposed to assist care takers and suggests a framework for future work of care providers through different stages of a child's recovery and reintegration; and policies which should meet described standards in order to help the victims based on the first-hand experience of work with these children and witnessing the disadvantages of current practices and policies. The guidelines are composed in a practical manner giving concrete examples of good or bad practices from Asian countries such as Pakistan or Thailand in text boxes, and using different colours indicating, what a care giver should do, must do, and must never do. One of the problems addressed in these guidelines is a continuous violation of rescued children's rights even in the process of their recovery (p. 8); therefore, this handbook discusses not only methods of providing physical and psychological support, but also a legal one. The guidelines give twelve principles essential to child protection and the process of recovery (p. 18-20). Afterwards it explains how to act in the two stages of recovery: *intake and assessment*, and *interim care and support*. It also provides good and bad examples of a care provider's code of conduct in agreement with UNICEF, and emphasizes that it is possible to implement some changes without additional funds, just changing the

attitude. In addition, it strongly encourages a child's participation, and helps to deal with accepting a child's view and understanding when his/her participation is genuine or fake, and how to proceed further (p. 55).

*Review prepared by Simona Simkute, Child Protection Hub for South East Europe, 2015.*