

SECURITY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PROFESSIONALS WHO ATTEND TO

**victims of trafficking in hum_n
beings**



PHIT

Psychological Health
Impact of Trafficking
in Human Beings

Human trafficking for sexual exploitation is defined as the recruitment, transportation and/or receipt of people by means of force, threat, deception or the abuse of her vulnerability or state of necessity to exploit them sexually or for any other activity related to human trafficking. **This is a crime and a serious violation of human rights.**

RECOMMENDATIONS TO SAFELY ATTEND TO A VICTIM

- Find a **safe and comfortable space** where you can attend to the victim.
- Build **trust and confidentiality**, for example, by inviting professionals from **specialized NGOs** to be there during the intervention.
- Provide clear information on the victim's **rights**, potential **risks**, consequences on third persons and legal proceedings resulting from her collaboration.
- **Check and discard** the hypothesis that she could be associated in any way with the traffickers and exploiters (controllers, etc.).
- Offer **resources for shelter and protection** if the victim has provided sensitive information that could affect their safety. If they refuse, have them sign a waiver.
- Assess the level of risk perceived by the victim regarding their own safety for meeting with a professional. Ask the victim if they think they could have a problem or if they are being threatened. For example, you can ask them to **write down** if they are worried about reporting or talking about a specific subject.
- If the potential victim is accompanied by a third person who could interfere with the intervention (other victims, traffickers, family or other people belonging to the same community), it is important that the interview is **conducted individually** to avoid interference and risk of punishment (the victim might ignore the professionals or suffer threats or violent acts from the traffickers).
- Exemplify the situations of other victims, without **ever providing specific information** on the circumstances.
- In certain situations, for example when a professional attends to a victim (e.g., at medical centers, social services and police stations), the professional might detect some **signs of danger** towards the victim (e.g., a phone call or repeated calls, the victim seems uncomfortable, or when a third person appears). In such situations, change the subject and give alternatives (on health or training opportunities), offer a safe place, or end the interview by making a future appointment.

ASPECTS TO BE CONSIDERED WHEN ATTENDING TO A VICTIM

- Before attending to the victim, have **all the available information** on the victim (e.g., administrative and/or legal status, background, and previous behavioral and medical reports). This will help **understand** the situation, **identify** false information, and **contextualize/interpret** her report.
- When attending to the victim, offer a **safe, comfortable and calm place**, as well as some water and something to eat.
- Keep the number of interviews/statements to a **minimum** to reduce **revictimization**.
- **Assess** the general condition of the victim (physical, psychological and emotional). Identify their **urgent needs** and ask what they need.
- While attending to the victim, it is important to have the support of a **translator or a cultural mediator**, even if the victim knows how to speak the local language.
- Be aware of your **verbal and non-verbal communication**, do not question the victim's declaration, do not pressure her, **keep listening** at all times, and be aware that the victim is distrustful and scared.
- Use simple and clear vocabulary to inform the victim on:
 - The **confidentiality** of the interview and ask for honesty.
 - **Protective** and **assistance rights**.
 - The difficulties that may appear, without creating false expectations.
 - The different **options that the victim** has (file a complaint, ask for a residence permit, returning to their home country, other protection measures or relocation to other regions of the country).

PSYCHOLOGICAL FIRST AID TO HELP THE VICTIM THROUGH THE INTERVIEW

- Stop the interview and **reassure** her. Suggest slow and deep breaths.
- **Place her** in the present time.
- **Do not confront** or blame her for her situation.
- Ask her **how she feels**, if she wants to carry on or end the interview for now.
- Ask her if she wants to **keep talking** about the same subject or change it.
- Remind her that the purpose of the interview is to **collect information**.
- Thank her for her collaboration and emphasize that she has made a **huge effort**.

SAFETY MEASURES FOR PROFESSIONALS

- Use a **first name** (it can be your real name or a false one) and only provide a **work phone number**.
- Do not provide any information that could be used to identify the organization and its specific location, at least until the victim **joins** the support program.
- Do not conduct any interview, procedure or diligence on **your own**. There must always be at least two professionals.
- Before meeting a victim, always know **alternative routes** if it is necessary to leave due to signs of danger. At work, inform your colleagues about where you are going and when. Turn on the **GPS** on your mobile phone.
- In risky situations with third persons, **do not go between** the aggressor and the victim nor confront them. Run and **immediately alert** the emergency services.
- In case of assault, **protect your vital body parts** (head, neck and chest) with an object or with your hands and arms. Learn **self-defense** techniques.
- **Inform** the police of any **criminal activity** that has come to your knowledge and take note of any information that could facilitate the identification of the people involved, such as any details of the people and vehicles.
- **Daily activities** must be included in a written report for any potential subsequent legal checks.
- Never offer any favor or solution on demand that would involve **breaking any protocol, rule or law**.
- When summoned to appear in court, request **security measures**. Ask them to use professional association numbers and never your names.

TIPS FOR PROFESSIONALS

- **Identify** situations that could cause stress or discomfort.
- Use your **own skills and resources** to handle complex situations (optimism).
- Avoid any personalization while providing assistance and remember that this activity is **related to an organization**, not a lone person.
- Accept professional **constraints**.
- Remember to have **empathy** for the people you are attending to.
- Value the professional work that you are providing.
- Give and receive social and work support.
- Keep healthy habits and behavior.
- Have someone supervise your work. **Share** the most complex situations with your **work team**.
- Create a kind and mutually supportive work environment.
- When an intervention is **emotionally charged**, ensure you or another team member affected is listened to and supported.

NOTES

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