

Integrating mental health and psychosocial assistance into IOM activities has been one of the key focuses of IOM Migration Health Services (MHS), and I am pleased to note the advances made in this area as a result of this project. However, this is just the first step of a longer process, as minimum standards must be established in other health-related fields as well, in order to ensure that the care offered to trafficked persons is truly comprehensive and beneficial.

This Manual has been put together by a team of international experts in the field of mental health and counter-trafficking, who deserve full praise for their dedication to the project. In the hope that you will find their work useful in your professional and training engagement, I invite you to consider their insights into the subject.

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FOREWORD

Danielle Grondin

Trafficking in human beings is increasingly appearing on the global agenda, as a multitude of international, governmental and non-governmental organisations are taking a role in the fight against this phenomenon. To date, however, much of the effort has focused on information exchange, criminal and judicial co-operation, and return and reintegration assistance, and not enough attention has been devoted to the many health and public health concerns related to trafficking.

Therefore, it was a special privilege that last year, the International Organization for Migration (IOM) could be a partner in realizing the initiative of the U.S. Ambassador to Hungary, Nancy G. Brinker, to organize a conference addressing the public health aspects of trafficking. The primary purpose of the Conference was to develop baseline standards in the health care assistance of trafficked persons and discuss their implementation with health officials from across the region. Among the issues highlighted, the psychological trauma suffered during the trafficking experience was an important and recurring theme.

In line with the conclusions and recommendations of this landmark event, IOM and a team of experts have conducted a one-year project, examining the mental health aspects of trafficking and developing minimum standards of psychosocial assistance. They visited shelters and held discussions with practitioners in countries of origin, transit and destination, in order to gain an overview of local practices and their needs for specialised trainings. Their observations and related recommendations form the basis of this Training Manual.

The following chapters will provide an overall framework of the trafficking process and examine the trafficked person's as well as the provider's perspective of the mental health issues associated with trafficking of people. Moreover, this Manual reviews the various assistance processes and structures currently in place and offers basic guidelines for their management, as well as innovative techniques of assessment and intervention. The final section will equip service providers with tips on how to avoid burnout and remain professionally effective.

In order to ensure that these baseline standards are implemented and well coordinated, IOM will organise a training of trainers' workshop for mental health specialists working with trafficked persons. In addition to reviewing the major themes covered in the Manual, the training will also assist participants in developing their own training programmes for other practitioners within their country. Therefore, the Manual has also been complemented by a number of teaching exercises and didactic techniques. Although initially the focus of the training will be Central, East and Southeast Europe, it is our hope that this programme will serve as a model that can be adapted to other regions as well.

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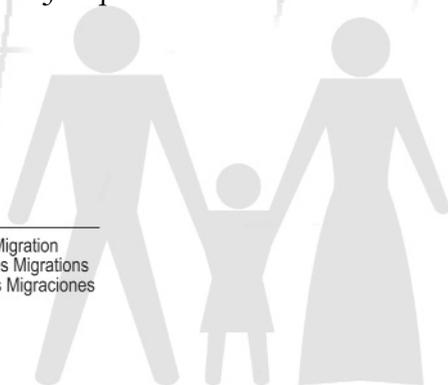
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