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REINTEGRATION OR REVICTIMIZATION?

*An Analysis of Reintegration Assistance Provided to Victims of
Human Trafficking*

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ABSTRACT

Human trafficking is a crime that extends beyond borders and jurisdictions. International legal standards exist to prevent, suppress, and reintegrate victims into their communities. Once repatriated, survivors of human trafficking require various physical, psychological, and social recovery services, commonly conceptualized as aftercare services. This study intends to examine the sustainability and function of culture and community in aftercare service provision. The study converges on specific reintegration principles utilized to guide and inform policy driving reintegration strategy. Moreover, the study reviews some of the challenges facing the successful reintegration of repatriated survivors of human trafficking.

The study was designed to examine a selection of the pre-existing literature and scholarly work surrounding aftercare services. The conceptual framework employed includes developmental theory, intersectionality, and a human-rights-based approach. Data collected from interviews with aftercare practitioners and specialists provide a deeper understanding of the processes, services, and communal elements salient to reintegration. Specifically, this study has reviewed the reintegration motions proposed in the International Organization for Migration's *Reintegration Handbook: Practical Guidance on the Design, Implementation, and Monitoring of Reintegration Assistance* (2019). The results present various principles commonly grounding reintegrative strategy, including albeit not limited to: self-sufficiency, economic empowerment, dignity, and sustainability. The defined principles are assessed on their ability to be implemented and interpreted in a diversity of contexts and cultures. The study further converges on the unparalleled importance of community in the reintegrative process. As such, this study attempts to appraise essential standards and indicators used to measure sustainability by stakeholders within the field of reintegration.

KEY WORDS: Human Trafficking, Reintegration Assistance, Aftercare, Contextualisation, Community, Sustainability

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

HRIA- Human Rights Impact Assessment

ICAT- Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons

IOM- International Organization for Migration

NGO- Non-Governmental Organization

OHCHR- Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

OMCTP- Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons

Reintegration Handbook- Reintegration Handbook: Practical Guidance on the Design, Implementation, and Monitoring of Reintegration Assistance, IOM 2019

The Palermo Protocol- The United Nations Trafficking Protocol in Persons, UN General Assembly 2000

UNHCR- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNODC- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

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1. INTRODUCTION

Trafficking in persons is one of the gravest forms of organized crimes, extending beyond boundaries and jurisdictions. At a global level, various institutions, and organizations, both national and international, are still attempting to assess the size and scale of the phenomenon of trafficking in human beings (IOM, 2015). It is estimated that approximately 79 percent of all detected trafficking victims are women and children (IOM, 2019). Even so, criminal justice data does not accurately represent the nature or the extent of the underlying activity (ibid, 2019). Moreover, several countries do not have specific legislation on human trafficking or do not criminalize certain vital elements of the definition agreed in the Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons (UN General Assembly, 2000) (hereinafter the Palermo Protocol). Likewise, countries with the relevant legislative framework vastly diverge in the resources available to enforce and target perpetrators (UNODC, 2008). The general guidance on protecting former victims of human trafficking has more recently come to emphasize reintegration. Subsequently, the process has become increasingly prominent in the migration governance agenda (IOM, 2015). The Palermo Protocol emphasizes the necessity to utilize a comprehensive approach to trafficking in persons that engages all phases of the crime and balances criminal justice concerns with the obligation to secure victims' rights and protection (UNODC (b), 2009). Combating and preventing human trafficking requires a holistic approach by all stakeholders and integrated action on prevention, protection, and reintegration assistance. Victims of human trafficking are at risk of, albeit not limited to:

“Low self-esteem, loss of self-confidence, anxiety, panic attacks, depression, hopelessness, post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), substance abuse disorder, suicidal ideations, attachment disorders, mistrust of adults, antisocial behaviors, difficulty relating to others, developmental delays, language and cognitive difficulties, deficits in verbal and memory skills, and poor academic performance.” (Twigg, 2017:206)

This paper is written on the premise that the foremost aim of reintegration assistance is to foster the sustainable reintegration of returnees, requiring a culturally contextualized approach. The current realm of reintegration policy is dictated by various multilateral organizations such as the International Organization for Migration (hereinafter IOM). The discourse within the area is vast, depending on the level and range of assistance required. Comparing multiple bodies of

work reveals the divergent constructions of reintegration which arguably reflect contrasting conceptions of justice and freedom. This study attempts to compile and compare various proposals and scholarly research found within international, normative reintegration discourse. The study will further be informed by interviews with aftercare practitioners and specialists.

1.1 Purpose and Research Questions

This study endeavors to review the normative concept of reintegration as: “*the process of inclusion and rebuilding of relationships within a community designed to reintegrate victims of trafficking into society*” (IOM, 2015:5). The study examines the claim that *economic empowerment, dignity, and self-sufficiency* are fundamental components to reintegration, further reviewing the function and promotion of community in the provision of aftercare services. Reintegration is commonly recognized as a phased process comprising various modes of service delivery, guided by rights and best practice principles. As such, this study attempts to appraise essential standards and indicators used to measure sustainability by stakeholders within the field of reintegration. Specifically, this paper seeks to review the reintegration motions IOM proposes in the *Reintegration Handbook: Practical Guidance on the Design, Implementation, and Monitoring of Reintegration Assistance* (IOM, 2019) (hereinafter the Reintegration Handbook). Additionally, this study reviews and attempts to identify: “*the local social arrangements, processes and cultural norms salient to the substantive achievement of reintegration*” (IOM, 2015:2). The reintegration motions will be analyzed in regards to their bearing across a wide array of contexts. The research questions are as follows:

- a) How are fundamental principles of reintegration framed in policy, scholarly research, and by aftercare practitioners and specialists?
- b) What function does the community have in achievement of reintegration, as identified in policy, scholarly research, and by aftercare practitioners and specialists?

1.2 Delimitations

Return migration and reintegration are two tightly coupled concepts. The terms have often been used interchangeably in literature, but it is necessary to distinguish between these concepts. This paper aims to concentrate on reintegration as a multifaceted process occurring between the victims of trafficking and the community to which they return. While reintegration occurs in various return contexts and levels within a society, this report will review reintegration

assistance on the community level. Moreover, reintegration efforts tend to be disaggregated into three distinct phases: “*crisis intervention, transition, and reintegration/social inclusion*” (Surtees, 2012:24). This study will focus on the last phase of reintegration efforts: reintegration/social inclusion. Reintegration efforts on the individual and structural level will be mentioned briefly as a means of describing victims' profiles and return contexts. However, they will not be elaborated beyond the level of description. This limitation has been put in place as the scope of the study would otherwise have become too expansive. The community-level focus has been selected as it is the most relevant when exploring social arrangements, processes, and cultural norms predominantly attained within a collective setting. Furthermore, this report does not address the host or transit countries' means of exercising their sovereign right to determine who can enter and remain on their territory.

Another limitation to the study is the vastness of the exploitation encompassed within the realm of human trafficking, including albeit not limited to: “*the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs*” (Palermo Protocol, Article 3a). This study does not examine specific forms of exploitation within the realm of human trafficking. The study will subsequently not address the specific, tailored conditions of reintegration assistance designated to survivors depending on the crime perpetrated. The primary source material does not distinguish a particular form of trafficking. Knowledge and research into specific national, regional, and international trafficking in persons contexts is a prerequisite for elaborating on anti-human trafficking strategies and critiquing evidence-based policies (UNODC (b), 2009). As such, the reintegration efforts considered solely offer a high-level framework from which specific reintegration efforts can be tailored depending on the form of exploitation the victim has endured.

Further limitations to the study's scope is the source material employed as the foundation for analysis. The primary source material is confined to chapter 1.2, 3.0, and 3.4 of the IOM publication the Reintegration Handbook (IOM, 2019:11-12, 99-102, 120-122): “*Understanding reintegration*”, “*Reintegration assistance at the community level*” and “*Social reintegration assistance at the community level*”. The primary source material has been elected as the yearly IOM publications delineate and summarize the prevailing discourse with an interdisciplinary, human-rights based approach (IOM, 2015). IOM is the leading inter-governmental agency with extensive knowledge of human trafficking and reintegration. IOM

has a documented record of expertise traversing context and time, further establishing the handbook as the suitable choice of primary source material.

1.3 Terminology

Through the use of relevant literature, the paper seeks to examine reintegration assistance designated to survivors of human trafficking. As this study employs distinct vernacular, this section aims to define terms central to human trafficking aftercare discourse.

1.3.1 Human Trafficking

The Palermo Protocol (UN General Assembly, 2000) defines the term *trafficking in persons* in Article 3(a) as follows:

“Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”

As exploitation has no common legal meaning, the Palermo Protocol (UN General Assembly, 2000) has since been rephrased with clarifications that further specify the extent of human trafficking to include: *“the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by any means, for forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs”* (Miller & Zivkovic, 2017:331). Trafficking in persons is a vast field. For this paper, the focus is set on the international framework surrounding the reintegration of trafficking victims. No specific geographical region will be specified.

1.3.2 Aftercare

Aftercare services are the interventions available to victims of human trafficking, various in scope and nature depending on the need and service provider (Macy & Johns, 2011). While a three-year time period is the customary framework of an aftercare program, each organization

outlines the aftercare process differently (Surtees, 2012). Subsequently, some organizations regard the aftercare process as complete at twelve months, while others utilize an extensive 36-month time frame (ibid). Furthermore, survivors operate within individual programs with varying time frames and rehabilitation periods (ibid). The specification is relevant as it will be employed as a blanket-term encompassing the provision of services offered after extraction from trafficking. The term aftercare will be employed interchangeably with the term reintegration.

1.3.3 Reintegration

Despite the polysemic concept of reintegration, the study defines it as:

“Reintegration is generally understood as a multidimensional process enabling individuals to re-establish the economic, social and psychosocial relationships needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity and achieve inclusion in civic life.” (IOM, 2015:11)

Reintegration back into a host society happens on several different levels: social, economic, and physiological. This study details reintegration efforts mainly focused on the physiological aspects of reintegration including, albeit not limited to: *“personal support networks and civil society structures as well as re-engagement with the values, ways of living, language, moral principles and traditions of the country of origin’s society”* (IOM, 2015:7).

1.3.4 Community

As the overarching purpose of the study relates to the community's function in the realization of reintegration, it is crucial to define whom the community includes. This study will utilize the following definition of community: *“A number of persons who regularly interact with one another, within a specific geographical territory, and who tend to share common values, beliefs, and attitudes”* (IOM, 2019:101). The interpretation of a community is context-specific and depends on cultural, social, political, and economic provisions and local migration trends (IOM, 2019). Moreover, programs and policies are often defined at regional, national, and international levels, but the community is where prevention and interventions often occur (MacQueen et al: 2001).

1.3.5 Return Migration

The paper includes the term as it is regarded as a precursor in the reintegration of trafficked victims. IOM (2015:7) details the process of return migration as follows:

“Return is the act or process of going back or being taken back to the point of departure. This could be within the territorial boundaries of a country, as in the case of a person who has been internally displaced returning home; or across international boundaries, between a host country and a country of origin.”

1.3.6 Procedural Provision of Assistance

The discourse within the protection practice field comprises a dualist conception of reintegration consisting of procedural and substantive elements. The procedural provision of assistance consists of program models and guidelines mandated by various policies, conventions, and laws.

2. BACKGROUND

The likelihood of revictimization in victims of human trafficking is drastically increased if sufficient reintegration efforts are not employed. This chapter endeavors to present a general framework of the current condition and stakeholders involved in the fight against trafficking and revictimization. Understanding the nature of human trafficking is inherent to better comprehend the efforts employed to avoid revictimization and a subsequent understanding of appropriate aftercare services.

2.1 Human Trafficking

Human trafficking is a crime that transcends borders and nations. Study proves that the crime of trafficking in persons is prevalent in 155 countries worldwide (UNODC (a), 2009). In terms of the various cases of trafficking, the most notable are sexual exploitation and forced labour (UNODC, 2016). Studies demonstrate how trafficking can have numerous other forms

including albeit not limited to: "*victims compelled to act as beggars, forced into sham marriages, benefit fraud, pornography production, organ removal*" (UNODC, 2016:1). The general understanding of trafficking is far from consummate; certain factors can make an individual, a social group, or a community exceedingly exposed to trafficking and associated exploitation. These factors include: "*poverty and inequality as well as human rights violations such as discrimination and gender-based violence*" (OHCHR, 2014:39), all of which contribute to producing economic deprivation and social conditions that enable traffickers and exploiters to operate. Trafficking tends to disproportionately impact groups that already lack influence and standing in society, such as women, minors, migrants, and the internally displaced (OHCHR, 2014). Although most nations have embraced a distinct offense on trafficking in persons, there is still a heterogeneity of interpretations and strategies to the Palermo Protocol and the boundaries of trafficking in persons employed by the member states of the United Nations (UNODC (b), 2009). Some solely recognize specific forms of exploitation or distinct classifications of victims or perpetrators, subsequently curtailing the victims' aftercare response (ibid).

There is a demand for more investigation and data collection on all forms of trafficking to produce relevant anti-trafficking policies (UNODC, 2016). Further research is linked with the monitoring of aftercare interventions related to reintegration, ensuring they have the desired impact. As previously detailed, the study area is vast, as it encompasses a wide array of various acts of curtailment of freedom.

2.2 Revictimization

The likelihood of revictimization is stated in Article 9(5) of the Palermo Protocol (UN General Assembly, 2000):

"States Parties shall adopt or strengthen legislative or other measures, such as educational, social or cultural measures, including through bilateral and multilateral cooperation, to discourage the demand that fosters all forms of exploitation of persons, especially women and children, that leads to trafficking."

The stigma associated with victims of trafficking has proved to cause significant repercussions on victims' lives. Apart from the individual's trauma, victims suffer the possibility of rejection by their family and community (UNODC, 2008). The long-term outcomes of human trafficking

for the individual are complex and depend on numerous factors and actors, with no guarantee of recovery (Macy, 2007). Moreover, victims endure the probability of revictimization as a further consequence of human trafficking (Meneses-Falcón & Uroz-Olivares, 2019). The prevention framework in the aftermath of human trafficking victimization is crucial to mitigate the negative aspects of the assault and reduce the likelihood of revictimization (Macy, 2007).

2.3 Reinclusion

Reinclusion is a relative concept, and as such, this study will include several indicators utilized to measure or assess the level of reinclusion of victims of human trafficking. IOM (2019) defines reinclusion by the relative inclusion level across four dimensions: economic, social, psycho-social, and community social links.

3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This section seeks to delineate the theoretical limitations employed. Moreover, this section will present a critical analysis of the appropriated source material.

3.1 Framing theory

A framing theory is necessary as it allows for greater generalization of the study's results (Teorell & Svensson, 2007). The framing theory relates the paper to meaningful discourse in the general field of study (ibid). Human rights is a developmental process closely tied to structural restraints such as particular cultures and political realities. As such, the analysis will employ the theory of intersectionality to navigate the dynamic dimensions of human rights. Developmental theory will be included as it is foundational to understanding the approach IOM garner when programming policy such as the Reintegration Handbook. Furthermore, the paper will adopt an intersectional perspective while identifying and navigating the postcolonial world's structural limitations. Intersectionality further lends itself to more significant insights on how to appropriately evaluate and contextualize reintegration efforts.

3.1.1 Development and Developmental Theory

This section seeks to expand on the relevance of development theory and its link to reintegration assistance. Furthermore, the chapter will examine the historical origins of developmental theory that drives policy and practice in bilateral and multilateral organizations such as the IOM. The early stages of developmental theory assumes that Western, ethnocentric discourse was the most efficacious (Desai & Potter, 2014). As such, the central principles of development theory and practice have required a distancing from a deterministic set of assumptions on which the initial development imperatives were grounded (ibid). Moreover, as colonialism is often recognized as a causal agent in contemporary poverty and inequality (ibid), it is vital to understand colonial and postcolonial development connections.

The development discourse examines an expansive field of signifiers and indicators that incorporates ethics and politics, amongst others, in a contemporary worldview (Northover, 2014). Moreover, the developmental theory is critical in expanding real freedoms (ibid). This freedom is, in part, classified by a capability approach to human development: "*where capabilities are more than skill sets /.../ agents have reason to value and, most critically, are free to choose*" (Northover, 2014:37). The developmental theory asserts that social opportunities in education and health facilitate economic participation (Elliot, 2014). Financial resources can generate individual wealth and public resources for social facilities; various resources can subsequently facilitate individual empowerment (ibid).

A growing movement in developmental studies is aligning towards decoupling economic growth from the notion of development (Thirlwall, 2014). The process of economic development must imply the advancement of living standards, but it is a more expansive theory than the growth of per capita income (ibid). Evolution is described as a fundamental condition for the economic and social development of nations. It is not a relative condition, as the aggregate measure does not indicate the physical, social, and economic circumstances in which the output is generated (ibid). In short, growth rates cannot be taken as indicators of the progress in communities' welfare as people's well-being is a more comprehensive notion than the level of income alone (ibid). If economic and social development is only defined by the improvement of a society's welfare, a more holistic concept of development is needed adopting inclusive economic variables and social objectives (Northover, 2014).

Sustainable human development and human rights will be negatively impacted by an oppressive environment where threat or disease prevails (Elliot, 2014). Sustainability is defined as: *“the continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time”* (SIDA, 2007:29). Development involves extending freedoms and liberties to be considered in their own right and as the primary vessel by which development goals will be obtained (Elliot, 2014). Developmental theory can improve concrete development by promoting social justice in states, regions, and communities (Lerner, 2015). The rise of justice is considered an integral part of reintegration interventions’ success and advancement (UNODC, 2009).

The Millennium Development Goals are significant indicators employed to assess the progress of specific development targets in the twenty-first century (Desai & Potter, 2014). They prove that although some progress has been made, much remains to be done in reducing gross levels of poverty and inequality (ibid). Problematizing poverty is relevant as trafficking disproportionately affects parts of a population living in poverty (UNODC, 2009).

3.1.3 Intersectionality, Cultural Bias and Human Trafficking

To fully consider the intersection of racism, ethnic prejudice, and sex trafficking, one must understand these constructs (Bryant-Davis & Tummala-Narra, 2017). An intersectional perspective problematizes the junction created by gender, race, ethnicity, and class, all of which affect an individual's position in society (De Los Reyes & Mulinari, 2005). Racially and ethnically marginalized persons are more exposed to human trafficking due to a more significant discrepancy in legal protection, stigma, and increased risk for poverty (Bryant-Davis & Tummala-Narra, 2017).

“Cultural oppression in the form of racism and ethnic bias continues to cause and exacerbate trauma globally” (Bryant-Davis & Tummala-Narra, 2017:152)

In addition to working through the repercussion of stereotypes or victim-blaming attitudes, cultural bias heightens the risk for human trafficking through the denial of resource access (Bryant-Davis & Tummala-Narra, 2017). Racially and ethnically marginalized persons endure lower-quality healthcare, more stringent diagnoses from mental health specialists, and faceless penalization for perpetrators (Farrell & Pfeffer, 2014). The absence of cultural consciousness

in aftercare interventions enhances the risk of victimization attributed to individual morality, cultural conditions, and belief systems rather than to systemic forces that shape victimization (ibid). Employing an intersectional lens on discrimination enables one to critically examine the structures perpetuating the expression of discrimination (Sifris, 2016). The debate relating to the cultural foundations of human rights, their intercultural transferability, and their significance and consequence to all peoples' actualities is continuous (Addo, 2010).

3.1.4 Human Rights-Based Approach

A rights-based approach employs a: “(...) *conceptual framework for the process of human development that is normatively based on international human rights standards and operationally directed to promoting and protecting human rights*” (UNICEF, 2016 para.1). Furthermore, a rights-based approach is a multidisciplinary tool available to evaluate programming processes critically (UNICEF, 2016). There is a common understanding amongst UN agencies and their partnering organizations that initiatives should be congruent with a human rights-based approach (hereinafter HRBA) (ibid). That includes a moral and legally driven rationale to strive for sustainable human development outcomes (ibid). In sum, the HRBA incorporates internationally realized human rights standards into development action (ibid). As such, a HRBA is a relevant perspective to employ when evaluating programs, such as the Reintegration Handbook, constructed by agencies within the UN network.

3.2 Study Limitations

Various factors limit the study. The research related to human trafficking is particularly comprehensive; subsequently, the study scope determines the literature review. Moreover, this study does not comprehensively assess the effect of reintegration on all the levels in which the process takes place: individual, collective, and structural. This limits the degree to which the results can be reproduced and applied in varying contexts. Moreover, as no specific geographical region of study has been selected, the paper's general applicability is somewhat limited. The study is further limited by the scope of trafficking, as trafficking in persons is a broad phenomenon. While a majority of trafficked persons are coerced into the sex trade (IOM, 2010), other trafficking situations comprise: “*domestic servitude, construction, labor in a prison-like factory or migrant agricultural work*” (IOM, 2010:1). Recognizing the sheer scope of human trafficking, the study attempts to draw widely applicable, broad conclusions from the existing literature and interviews.

Further limitations are related to the Western hegemony within the area of social sciences. North America and Europe account for three-quarters of the world's social science journals, exhibiting Western policy's global intellectual dominion (Ryen, 2011). The research field was thereby limited to the material in existence, further reproducing a Western hegemony.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a detailed overview of the various reintegration models reviewed, subsequently outlining the specific interventions carried out by multiple stakeholders. Moreover, this section will examine the discursive constructions of reintegration within the field of trafficking and protection drafted in the Reintegration Handbook.

4.1 Reintegration

The literature and scholarly articles on aftercare assistance is comparatively nascent. The quantity of publications has developed substantially since the year 2000 with an expansion in empirical work after the year 2010 (Scott et al., 2019). While research principally describes the hazards and outcomes associated with human trafficking, little study has examined the effectiveness of aftercare assistance for victims of human trafficking (IOM, 2019). Moreover, many countries do not collect raw data on human trafficking, let alone reintegration assistance (Harrison & Stephenson, 2010). Data promotes insight into the national circumstances and the relative adherence to international comparability criteria (ibid). If data is prevalent, the research is rarely disaggregated (ibid).

Very few governmental aftercare services exist for survivors consistent with specific rights such as self-determination and privacy rights (Miller & Zivkovic, 2017). In general, few aftercare services exist for returned trafficked persons consistent with rights (Miller & Zivkovic, 2017). The service and response strategies are often inadequate, doubling as trafficking prevention programs (ibid). The programs afford health and counseling services, trauma therapy, or job training (ibid). The response strategies offer short-term solutions, segregated from all other social services, resulting in stigma (ibid). The likelihood that a trafficked person may possess no recourse to any substantive benefits explains why victims

may not want to be found, particularly if being exposed results in extradition without payments, rehabilitation, or security (ibid).

A human-rights approach demands that care and support procurement be both informed and non-coercive (OHCHR, 2014). Consequently, victims of trafficking should obtain information on their rights and entitlements to make an informed decision about what to do (ibid). A beneficial model of intervention when working with trafficked victims focuses on the trauma from a gendered perspective, further incorporating the principle of citizenship, interculturality, and the restoration of the human rights that have been stolen from the victim (Meneses-Falcón & Uroz-Olivares, 2019). A gendered perspective subsequently increases the awareness of the needs of trafficking victims and the availability of information on the issue within the community (ibid). Victims of trafficking rarely have other dignified survival options as they are often ostracized, stigmatized, and deprived of the opportunity to mingle with mainstream society (UNODC, 2008). Since their very existence is not always recognized, they often live within relative risk of poverty, squalor, and exploitation (ibid). In many countries, victims of trafficking do not have the authorization to work under local immigration laws and are subsequently exploited in illegal industries (ICAT, 2016).

"Integration [and reintegration] are 'long-term and multidimensional stages of either integrating into a host country [or reintegrating into a home country setting], which are not achieved until the individual becomes an active member of the economic, cultural, civil and political life of a country and perceives that he or she has oriented and is accepted.'" (Zimmerman, Hossain & Watts, 2011:330)

In some countries, state-funded compensation schemes were drafted before introducing laws that criminalize trafficking (ICAT, 2016). As a result, the ensuing eligibility criteria may effectively exclude victims of trafficking from receiving compensation (ibid).

Previous study emphasizes the importance of aftercare services existing as a comprehensive continuum rather than a singular intervention (Heffernan & Blythe, 2014). It is critical to identify local responses to address mental health challenges among trafficking survivors, particularly when developing and mobilizing the community and social support at a policy level (Okech et al., 2018). Such efforts provide an essential standard to decrease stigma, revictimization, or re-trafficking (ibid). Research indicates that community focused reintegration services further influence mental health repercussions, such as post traumatic

stress disorder, through its impact on perceived social support (Okech et al., 2018). Moreover, the study emphasizes the relationships between coping, reintegration, and social support influence among survivors of trafficking (ibid). Further outlined are specific elements deemed essential to the practical provision of assistance. The functional components specified below are described as central components of reintegration assistance.

"Reintegration Assistance: The provision of comprehensive programs designed to reintegrate victims of trafficking into society, including through actively preventing stigmatization, job training, legal assistance and health care and by taking measures to co-operate with non-governmental organizations to provide for the social, medical and psychological care of the victims." (Bearup, 2016:167)

4.1.1 Trauma-Informed Approach and Culturally Sensitive Care

Research on aftercare services for survivors of human trafficking represents an insufficient understanding of survivors' needs, the evaluation of aftercare interventions, and the process of recovery piloted by the survivor in aftercare (Curran, Naidoo & Mchunu, 2017). As such, an emerging discourse with the field of aftercare is the concept of trauma-informed care. A trauma-informed approach includes: *"seeking meaningful input from a diverse community of survivors at each stage of a program or project"* (OMCTP, 2019:1). Trauma-informed strategies require identifying the signs of trauma and creating assistance methods to accommodate trauma survivors' specific needs (Scott et al, 2019). Assistance practices and organizations embrace trauma-informed strategies by emphasizing awareness of: *"victims' unique interests and strengths, emotional safety, freedom of choice, hope, resources, trustworthiness, and transparency"* (Scott et al, 2019:349). Further detailed in research is the concept of culturally sensitive care described as: *"the provision of care that is attentive to the various ways people from diverse backgrounds experience and express illness and how they respond to care"* (Hemmings et al., 2016:5). Research presents cultural differences in attitudes towards health, particularly mental health, and further relates how typically Western approaches may not always be suitable (Hemmings et al., 2016). It was further concluded that Western aftercare service does not always resonate with all cultural backgrounds (ibid).

4.1.2 Reintegration and Economic Empowerment

Economic empowerment relates to the: *"economic strengthening of individuals and communities"* (Surtees, 2012:11). Economic empowerment is frequently addressed within

aftercare discourse as a critical component to trafficked victims' successful reintegration (Surtees, 2012). However, the work is intricate, restrained by the impacts of trafficking and the complex socio-economic circumstances to which the survivors return (ibid). Fundamental characteristics of successful reintegration assistance are defined by a fair and sustainable standard of living, along with possibilities for economic growth (ibid). Reintegration programs typically invoke economic empowerment components either through: "*vocational training and job placement or through business training, planning and start-up support*" (Surtees, 2012:6). Moreover, economic opportunity enables social integration, including social connections, social context, and communal identity (Surtees, 2012). For many trafficked victims, economic opportunities, whether employment or other income-generating ventures, are their primary focus (ibid).

4.2 The Reintegration Handbook

Three separate bodies of text in the Reintegration Handbook will be examined. The texts have been selected as they, at a rudimentary level, describe the reintegration strategies IOM recommends at a communal level. Moreover, the bodies of work provide an overview of how reintegration assistance is defined and delimited. The literary portion of the material will be further engaged through a discourse analysis of the material (see [6.1](#)).

4.2.1 *Understanding Reintegration*

This chapter seeks to expand on the central themes and concepts delineated in chapter 1.2 of the Reintegration Handbook: "*Understanding Reintegration*" (IOM, 2019:11-13). The chapter promotes an understanding of reintegration as a multidimensional theory with: "*life, livelihood and dignity /.../ inclusion in civic life*" (IOM, 2019:11), as central components inherent to reintegration. Further interlinked with reintegration is the notion of sustainability (IOM, 2019). No universal definition is detailed; instead, the concept is conceptualized with IOM practice trends and existing literature (ibid). The structural restraints associated with the return community are identified as controlling forces that directly affect the sustainability of reintegration services (ibid).

Belonging, inter-linked with the returnees' psychosocial wellbeing, is another contributing indicator when evaluating reintegration (IOM, 2019). The returnee's role in engaging in social relationships within the community and economic self-sufficiency are additional determinants (ibid). IOM (2019) claims that reintegration support is successful if

there is a certain measure of reinclusion across: "*economic, social and psychosocial dimensions*" (IOM, 2019:12). At a communal level, this translates into the returnees' level of social links and a collective capacity to absorb the returnee (ibid). Further detailed is the influence of push-factors such as unstable or underdeveloped return environments that, if prevailing, make reintegration near-insurmountable (ibid). The chapter reflects a broader understanding of reintegration that attempts to be conscious of the demand for a multilateral approach to defining, programming, and evaluating reintegration (ibid).

4.2.2 Reintegration Assistance on the Community Level

This chapter will surmise the information detailed in chapter 3.0 of the Reintegration Handbook, "*Reintegration assistance on the community level*" (IOM, 2019:97-101). The chapter focuses on specific community-based initiatives prescribed when attempting to reintegrate (IOM, 2019). The initiatives described are detailed as notably successful when reintegrating a more significant number of returning victims as the actions address tension caused by the influx (ibid). Communities with robust social networks are predisposed to a successful reintegration process (ibid). In contrast, communities that do not have the previously mentioned prerequisites are more susceptible to reintegration becoming a detrimental process to the community in question (ibid). Moreover, acceptance into the community cannot be predestined (ibid). Listed are potential impediments to a successful reintegration: "*perceived or actual economic competition for jobs, strains on services and infrastructure in high return areas, and stigmatization of returnees*" (IOM, 2019:100). The impediments also deter a community from leveraging the returning victims' skills and experiences (ibid). The chapter details several specific intervention methods that can be employed to further reintegration efforts (IOM, 2019). Additional focus is set upon participatory ways that reduce tension and encourage participation between returning victims and the community, including (ibid):

- Addressing communal impediments to reintegration
- Promoting conversation, solidarity, and empowerment
- Strengthening the resilience of the returnees and the community
- Promoting long-term sustainability

4.2.3 Social Reintegration Assistance at the Community Level

This section will outline the data presented in chapter 3.4 of the Reintegration Handbook: "*Social reintegration assistance at the community level*" (IOM, 2019:120-124). The Handbook

defines social reintegration assistance as interventions focused on improving the accessibility to community services in a manner appropriate to: “*physical-, language- and other barriers*” (IOM, 2019:120). If these accommodations cannot be made, the returning victims are left vulnerable and at-risk for not reintegrating well (IOM, 2019). The chapter provides a brief overview of the community-provided services crucial to an individual’s reintegration (ibid). Mentioned services relate to: “*housing, education and training, justice, health and well-being, and other public infrastructure services*” (IOM, 2019:120). The underlying foundation and most significant challenge to providing individual and community-focused reintegration initiatives is the issue of accessibility (IOM, 2019).

Community-level social reintegration assistance is described as beneficial for return victims and the at-risk in the returning community (IOM, 2019). Moreover, the additional infrastructure provides further support to already sub-standard social services (ibid). The concept of ownership is introduced with critical stakeholders within the receiving community, engagement is crucial for community endorsement (ibid).

The chapter further assesses the intersection of community-provided services and the subsequent impact on an individual level (IOM, 2019). The provision of housing is described as a service intrinsic to social reintegration (ibid). The provision of said service often falls to landlords and other members within the community (ibid). As such, the returnees are left vulnerable to exploitative agreements and discriminatory treatment (ibid). A central aspect of social reintegration is engaging the community in solutions to land allocation (ibid).

The provision of safe and secure education and training facilities is critical for the returnee but can also be a source of marginalization (IOM, 2019). In a learning environment, barriers such as low literacy, expensive fees, learning levels, different styles of learning become especially apparent (ibid). Subsequent accommodations must be made to ensure that the learning environment is equipped to provide a safe learning experience (ibid). The concept of training is interlinked with the accompaniment of justice and rights (ibid). The chapter details how a process of sensitizing community members, local government, and the justice system to the plights of returning victims is a critical step in proper justice being delivered (ibid). Fear of repercussion, stigma, and marginalization are factors detailed as contributing to the justice system being undermined as a prominent partner in reintegration assistance (ibid). Health service providers are mentioned in the same category as the justice system, where stigma associated with health provision can prevent returnees from seeking assistance (ibid). Community efforts such as “mentoring approaches” are detailed under community interventions that reconnect the returnees with the community in question (IOM, 2019).

Utilizing community-level interventions can address tension and facilitate the opportunity for community engagement with returning victims (ibid).

4.3 Human Rights Impact Assessment

A human rights impact assessment scheme (hereinafter HRIA-scheme) allows for an expanded understanding of the impact of reintegration assistance as operationalized in implementation measures and operational indicators. Framework indicators illustrate the minimum measures demanded for protecting survivors of human trafficking, whereas implementation measures inform the actions required to implement said indicators (UNODC (b), 2009). Operational indicators address the evaluation and auditing of indicators and implementation measures (ibid). The following HRIA is based on the United Nations Office of Drugs and Crime’s (b, 2009) (hereinafter UNODC) indicators to address the protection of survivors through reintegration assistance, providing an understanding of the framework that informs policy such as the Reintegration Handbook.

4.3.1 Human Rights Impact Assessment - Reintegration Assistance

Protocol to Prevent, Suppress and Punish Trafficking in Persons, Especially Women and Children, Supplementing the United Nations Convention against Transnational Organized Crime (2000, Article 3)

Each State Party shall consider implementing measures to provide for the physical, psychological and social recovery of victims of trafficking in persons, including, in appropriate cases, in cooperation with non-governmental organizations, other relevant organizations and other elements of civil society, and, in particular, the provision of:

- (a) Appropriate housing;*
- (b) Counselling and information, in particular as regards their legal rights, in a language that the victims of trafficking in persons can understand;*
- (c) Medical, psychological and material assistance; and*
- (d) Employment, educational, and training opportunities.*

Framework Indicators (Minimum standard)

Ratification, amendment or augmentation of appropriate international legal standards ensuring the prevalence of protective services.

Implementation Measures

Assessment of the legal framework ensuring that a juridical framework exists to negate impunity.

Ensure that victims have appropriate access to protective measures including, albeit not limited, to services spanning; medical, psychosocial, and social support.

Ensure access to programs promoting sustainable, non-exploitative economic empowerment opportunities.

Establish an awareness of the existence of protective and assistive services, subsequently ensuring that a minimum standard is set for those services.

Advocate for the promotion of networks and social structures enabling the successful return of victims.

Operational Indicators

Existence of measurement tools and indicators to assess the prevalence, accessibility, sustainability, and successful outcomes of aftercare services.

Existence of evidence-based, best-practice policy designated towards the safe and gainful reintegration of victims.

Number of victims repatriated.

Number of victims obtaining gainful, non-exploitative employment.

Availability of trauma-informed and survivor-led programmes.

Funding allocated to aftercare services.

As aftercare service includes an extensive list of multilateral indicators, the assessment below will only comprise a limited number of indicators. The said indicators are iterations of the UNODC's (b, 2009) *Framework for Action Protection and Assistance Indicators*. Constructing an HRIA-scheme is relevant as it can instruct policy and provide a multilateral overview of the effect of said issue (Harrison & Stephenson, 2010), for example reintegration assistance. The constructed scheme further informs the reader of the theoretical framework guiding policy within the anti-trafficking field.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Material and Data Collection

One of the primary modes of research utilized in this study is a literature review. A literature review is defined as: "*a systematic, explicit, and reproducible method for identifying, evaluating, and interpreting the existing body of recorded work produced by researchers,*

scholars, and practitioners" (Reed & Padskocimaite, 2012:12). This method is employed as it results in a comprehensive understanding of the context and stakeholders engaged in the reintegration process. The literary review portion will be garnered through a desk-based approach of taking stock of critical standards and indicators to measure sustainability used by actors, mainly IOM, in the field of reintegration. Utilizing a desk-based approach is a critical tool to fulfilling the purpose and aim of the study. The study aims to describe the functions of community and fundamental tenets of reintegration policy and practice. The research questions will partly be informed by prior scholarly research within human trafficking and aftercare sector. Subsequently, garnering a desk-based approach is fundamental as it provides the study with a vast body of research that informs the research questions and serves as an evaluative tool in assessing the results provided by the complementary modes of analysis.

Discourse analysis will be appropriated on a sample of the primary source material. The method is a suitable qualitative research method developed from postmodern, postcolonial, and critical race theories to analyze an issue within a socially constructed reality (Reed & Padskocimaite, 2012). The technique is frequently used to define and delineate contentions and discursively fluid concepts within an area of study. The significance of textual analysis in social research should not be understated (Lewis-Beck, Bryman & Futing Liao, 2004). Utilizing discourse analysis reveals the underlying definitions and meanings concealed in the body of text. As one of the primary concerns with the study is to uncover the fundamental principles of reintegration detailed in the Reintegration Handbook, the method therefore directly correlates with the study's primary purpose. As the underlying principles are not apparent, textual analysis to reveal meaning and centrality is required. Discourse analysis further allows for the integration of critical perspectives on the social and historical constructs driving reintegration discourse (Lewis-Beck, Bryman & Futing Liao, 2004).

After discourse analysis, the primary source material was then be compared to supplementary source material relating to the reintegration of victims of human trafficking. The supplementary methodology employed was semi-structured interviews of nine aftercare practitioners and specialists. As the study's primary purpose pertains to the research being informed by aftercare practitioners and specialists, the interviews also serve to fulfil the aim of the study. The choice of several methodical approaches is motivated by the complex nature of the study. As the implementation of policy and strategy, as informed by the Reintegration Handbook, can vary, supplementary information is necessitated from practitioners implementing said strategy. The additional information gathered from the interviews serves to deepen and enrich the results with operative, professional insight.

5.1.1 Interview Technique and Questionnaire

The semi-structured interviews are a supplementary method to gather and further evaluate the pre-existing discourse on reintegration assistance. A semi-structured questionnaire was employed to provide flexibility and enable the interviews to go into unexplored areas, subsequently tending to generate comprehensive data (Smith & Osborn, 2008). The semi-structured interview design provides the participants with sufficient time and scope to communicate opinions and enables the researcher to respond to emerging concepts and themes (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The results obtained through semi-structured interviews allow comparability as the participants react to the corresponding general themes (ibid). The interview questionnaire was constructed following the central themes identified in the Reintegration Handbook through discourse analysis, consequently ensuring that the thesis research questions (see [1.1](#)) were addressed. The interview questions (see [Appendices](#)) were construed to accommodate a co-determined interaction through open-ended questions (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Subsequently, many of the interview questions were constructed with prompts framing the initial problem more explicitly (ibid). The research questions were ordered in a manner where general questions precede precise inquiries. In this way, the predetermined sequence allows the respondent to give their general views before funneling them into more specific, probing questions (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Conducted in the reverse sequence, the interview is more inclined to provide data biased in the interviewer's initial inquiries' direction (ibid).

All interviews were conducted digitally via Zoom at a predetermined time, as the informants were globally situated. The informants were directed to set aside 45 minutes to ensure that the interview questions could be answered in-depth. Prior to the interview, the informants were sent an interview consent form (see [Appendices](#)). The consent form detailed ethical procedures for academic research undertaken throughout the interview and the ensuing study. The form further detailed the confidential nature of the study and how the collected data would be handled. Informed consent, whereby the informant agrees to participate in a research study voluntarily was procured prior to the interviews. Informed consent emphasizes respect for all persons included in the research process (Allen, 2017), partly achieved through establishing trust with the interview subjects. Trust was further established through a thorough introduction of the study and a detailed outline of the interview process. The informants were informed of the semi-structured nature of the interview, wherein the emphasis was on the informants' experiences and perceptions (Yardley, 2008). The explicit focus on the informants'

experiences and perceptions further served to establish rapport with the subjects. Prior to the interview, all informants requested that their names and organizations be kept anonymous due to the sensitive nature of working within the anti-trafficking field. Before commencing the interview, the informants were explicitly informed of the voluntary nature of the study and were told of their right to end the interview or not answer a specific question upon request. Further detailed information pertained to the EU's General Data Protection Regulation (hereinafter GDPR) stipulating how data is stored. The informants were subsequently informed that the interview was to be recorded and transcribed. Sections of the transcript detailing specific names or revealing organizational information were redacted to fulfill the anonymity clause requested by the informants. The informants were given the option of requesting a copy of the transcript to ensure them of the confidential nature of the study.

5.1.2 Sampling Criteria

Sampling is central to the practice of proper qualitative interview methodology (Robinson, 2014). As such, the sampling criteria were appraised through four measures: "*Defining a sample universe, deciding on sample size, devising a sampling strategy and sourcing the samples*" (Robinson, 2014:26). Collectively, these criteria form a boundary defining the sample universe (Robinson, 2014). The sampling universe was primarily determined by factors related to the informant's particular competency within the field of aftercare. The informants were selected due to their knowledge and experience within the field human trafficking and reintegration, as well as their organizational involvement or proven experience within the field of research. The informants operate, indirectly through research or directly on the field, within the reintegration and anti-trafficking sector. The informants were selected from six different organizations, all operating internationally in diverse contexts ranging from South-East Asia, the Middle East, Europe, and Latin America. The informants were all contacted individually via email. The participants were further selected as they are all employed by organizations that work with a broad spectrum of services related to reintegration and aftercare. The organizations function within various fields, including the non-governmental sector, civil society, academia, and governmental units. The elected sampling universe allows for a comprehensive understanding of the research questions posed, as the selected universe includes aftercare professionals and specialists from several disciplines.

The informant's profession's range from the head of aftercare operations, aftercare practitioners, aftercare researchers, professors, and medical professionals. The informants have

various academic backgrounds, although all have documented experience working operatively or strategically within the field of reintegration and human trafficking. The sample universe is subsequently relatively homogenous as all the informants were selected due to a correlation of documented professional experience within the field of reintegration and human trafficking. Due to the specific competency requirements, the sample size was pragmatically kept to nine due to the scope and nature of the study. The sample size is regarded as permissible as: "*the intent is not to generalize to a population, but to develop an in-depth exploration of a central phenomenon*" (Creswell, 2012:206). The sampling strategy was goal-oriented, wherein informants were all selected due to their prior knowledge and a working competency within the human trafficking and aftercare sector.

5.2 Source Criticism

Qualitative research commonly applies four principles to determine a source's overall legitimacy: *authenticity*, *time*, *dependency*, and *tendency* (Leth & Thuren, 2011). This reflection's focal point will be upon the principles of authenticity and dependency. For the purpose of this study, the aforementioned criteria are understood as most relevant to establish the source materials correctness and yield valid results. The analysis will further examine the study's overall coherence and sensitivity to context in line with high-quality qualitative research procedure (Yardley, 2008).

A thorough review of pre-existing literature and scholarly research was conducted. The appropriated literature focuses principally on aftercare programs, the impact of human trafficking, and other academic work related to the study of reintegration. The source material was derived from Gothenburg University's online library, a credible database. Peer-reviewed literature was included, and no language restrictions were used. Editorials and opinion pieces were excluded from the review. Human trafficking was defined following the Palermo Protocol's official definition in Article 3(a):

"Trafficking in persons shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others

or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs.”

The data extraction was contained to relevant peer-reviewed literature by established and reputable researchers, authors, national and international organizations, and institutions within the field of human trafficking and aftercare. The source material's dependency is heightened by limiting the scope of material to peer-reviewed, cross-referenced articles and literature. Another critical aspect of a source's dependency is its ability to fit into the study context (Smith, 2008). As the study's primary motivation was to examine emerging patterns and themes, the interacting effect of context and new phenomena is critical to understand (Yardley, 2008). There are various methods in which a qualitative study can be shown to be sensitive to context. An essential aspect of any study is the existence of relevant theoretical and empirical literature (Yardley, 2008). Incorporating pre-existing literature ensures greater relevance and grounding of the context of the study and provides greater understanding and explanation that enables the interpretation of new findings (ibid).

The study's overall dependency is brought to question concerning the primary source, the Reintegration Handbook, authored by the internationally recognized governing body IOM. As such, the source's dependency can and should be brought to question (see [1.2](#) for further discussion). Recognizing that large monitoring bodies are largely dependent on third-party sources (IOM, 2019), the dependency of the material should always be critically analysed irrelevant of the publishing organ. The overall dependency is nevertheless seen as sufficient as the purpose of the study was to question, analyse and subsidize the information presented in the material. Due to the sheer scope of source material utilized, the sources ratify and present a nuanced view of the research area.

The sources' publication date was limited to the last 25 years to ensure the study's authenticity, as it is exceedingly difficult to ensure that the source material is not fabricated or otherwise compromised in older publications (Teorell & Svensson, 2007). Various methods can be employed to ensure the authenticity of utilized sources. This study validated the source material's authenticity through examination of the socio-political context of the source material (Teorell & Svensson, 2007). Recognizing that writing a literature review altogether void of bias is comparatively unavoidable, a certain measure of normative discourse is therefore permissible. Research emphasizes the cultural complexities of a globally situated study (Dalla & Kreimer, 2017). The vast majority of the sources were written and published in a Western context, giving reason to question the degree of ethnocentric bias in the references. The concern

with authenticity in qualitative research applies to all research independent of context; contemporary qualitative methodology offers methods for exploring local contexts (Ryen, 2011). To further ensure that the source material is as broad and inclusive as possible, the construction of the aim and research questions have been left open-ended to limit the influence of bias.

The study attempts to critically analyze the comparative filtering of opinions and facts expressed in the source material. When evaluating a reference based on its truth-content and the absence of tendency, the source-critical requirement is fulfilled (Teorell & Svensson, 2007). This was achieved with the immersion and familiarization of the source material through repeated review of the sources. The sources were cross-referenced to authenticate the accuracy and tendency of the source material. The tendency of information is seen as sufficient due to the sheer variation in sources and their relative contemporaneousness. The overall coherency of the survey, "*the extent to which it makes sense as a consistent whole*" (Yardley, 2008:248), was ensured by presenting the research in a transparent and concise manner. The study achieves coherency by presenting clear and coherent arguments and providing sufficient details as to the methodology utilized (Yardley, 2008). A reflexive approach is employed through transparently detailing features of the study that are subject to interpretation and influence of the researcher (ibid).

5.3 Data analysis

5.3.1 Human Rights Impact Assessment

A Human Rights Impact Assessment (hereinafter HRIA) scheme was constructed as a means of illustrating the multilateral impact of human trafficking and reintegration assistance. HRIA's demand a level of expertise within a particular research area to be effective (UNODC (b), 2009). Furthermore, HRIAs require a comprehension of: "*the absolute rights standards, how to assess legality, obligation, and proportionality of infringements of qualified rights*" (Harrison & Stephenson, 2010:23). The HRIA presented (see [4.3](#)) is based on a collection of previously compounded HRIAs.

Impact assessment is a broadly adopted tool for assessing the effectiveness of policies, practices, programs, and regulatory interventions across an extensive range of different disciplines (Harrison & Stephenson, 2010). The method indirectly contributes to realizing the study's aim as it informs the reader of the challenges and further identifies holistic indicators

required to properly address the issue. The HRIA framework delineating best practice indicators should be at the core of all reintegration initiatives, guiding policy and implementing principles (Harrison & Stephenson, 2010). As the purpose of this study pertains to identifying and describing the fundamental principles underlying reintegration policy, the method further lends itself to providing the study with clear indicators to identify the underlying tenets of reintegration. In addition, the HRIA indicators further ground the research in a judicial framework, familiarizing the reader with the overarching accountability structure associated with international jurisprudence.

5.3.2 Discourse Analysis

Human rights research encompasses a broad range of topics and approaches; thus, the analysis has been narrowed down to limit the scope of the study (Coomans, Grünfeld & Kamminga, 2010). The material selected for research should represent the corpus under investigation (Boréus & Bergström, 2017). Assessing relevant source material is challenging, as it can be achieved using various measures depending on criteria such as cause, contribution, or links to operations, products, or services (Harrison & Stephenson, 2010). The Reintegration Handbook was subsequently selected as the primary source of data to be analyzed by textual discourse analysis. The analysis was limited to chapters 1.2, 3.0, and 3.4 (IOM, 2019:11-12, 99-102 & 120-122): "*Understanding reintegration*", "*Reintegration assistance at the community level*" and "*Social reintegration assistance at the community level*". The Reintegration Handbook was elected as the primary source material as it covers a substantial collection of data and triangulates information gathered from a wide array of sources.

The Reintegration Handbook analysed is the latest publication IOM annually distributes on trafficking and reintegration. As such, IOM has a documented record of expertise traversing context and time, further establishing the manual as a suitable choice of primary source material. The primary source will subsequently be compared and cross-referenced to other bodies of work within the reintegration field, providing a high-level understanding of the research. Discourse analysis is considered a suitable tool to examine the primary source material as it allows for an analysis of the ideational and interpersonal aspects of a text (Boréus & Bergström, 2017). Moreover, the method recognizes the prevalence of commonalities, tension, and the construction of identities. Subsequently, the process deals with power issues by considering different orders, such as cultural hegemony, into the analysis (ibid). As such,

discourse analysis lends itself to answering the research questions related to the overarching framework surrounding reintegration efforts.

5.3.5 Thematic Interview Analysis

The interview material was analysed through qualitative thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a reflexive method used to analyse semi-structured interview material by listing emergent themes identified from the interview transcript (Bryman & Nilsson, 2018). The data was synthesized following Braun and Clarke's six stages of thematic analysis: data collection, transcription, code generation, theme generation, theme reviewal, theme naming, and a final report (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The method allows for interpretation of research questions that extend beyond the informant's personal experiences (Smith & Osborn, 2018). As such, the method is relevant for the set of interview questions utilized for this study. The analysis resulted in six themes and 19 sub-themes (see [Appendices](#) for [Thematic Analysis Table](#)).

The method presents clear advantages as it allows for an inductive development of codes resulting in data-driven themes and results (Smith & Osborn, 2018). The risks related with utilizing thematic analysis are largely associated with the lack of proper grounding in a theoretical framework as the collected data does not exist in a theoretical vacuum (Bryman & Nilsson, 2018). This risk was counteracted through utilizing the Reintegration Handbook and other relevant sources to drive the results discussion, clearly melding the results with other credible sources.

5.4 Ethical considerations

Various ethical considerations were established to ensure that counter-hegemonic discourse was included in the study. Promoting alternative discourse and partially deconstructing Western hegemony is an ethical consideration highly relevant to this study. As the study is primarily a literature review, the ethical considerations were relevant when selecting source material. Assessing the bias, perpetuated by the Western dichotomy of "us and them", was partially achieved through discourse analysis of the primary source material where bias was directly addressed. Consequently, the design, implementation, and analysis was conducted in a manner that could, by referral, be traced back to the primary source (ALLEA, 2017). Further ethical considerations were met by adopting the principle of full transparency, determining which opinions were the researcher's own and which opinions originated from the source material. Thus, a primary goal of ethical research is fulfilled - transparency.

Another ethical practice that was considered was the that of confidentiality. Confidentiality is an ethical practice intended to preserve human subjects' privacy while collecting, analyzing, and publishing data (Allen, 2017). Confidentiality relates to: "*separating or modifying any personal, identifying information provided by participants from the data*" (Allen, 2017:228). Confidentiality was achieved by redacting any organizational or personal information related to the interview informants in the interview transcriptions. Confidentiality was further ensured by conducting the interviews in a private environment wherein only the interviewer and informant were present.

6. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

6.1 Discourse analysis

The following section details the nodal points and signs derived from discourse analysis on chapters 1.2, 3.0, and 3.4 of the Reintegration Handbook (IOM, 2019). This section seeks to interlink prevalent and interrelated concepts central to the material. The identified nodal points are sustainability, dignity, psycho-social well-being, reintegration, and social reintegration. Nodal points, signs, and floating signifiers are all terminology central to discourse analysis; these terms credit concepts with meaning established within a framework of hegemony (Montessori, 2011). Nodal points are defined as: "*privileged signifiers that fix the meaning of a signifying chain*" (Montessori, 2011:172). For instance, sustainability may be considered a nodal point in the reintegration discourse. Following Laclau and Mouffe's Discourse Theory, signs unite various discourses in a chain of equivalence (Montessori, 2011). Subsequently, floating signifiers are signs where the meaning is non-fixed (ibid). When forming chains of equivalence, signs lose their heterogeneous attributes and are operationalized to display a particular discourse (ibid).

6.1.1 Understanding Reintegration

Detailed in chapter 1.2 of the Reintegration Handbook is discourse aligning reintegration assistance with the concept of sustainability.

*“Reintegration can be considered sustainable when returnees have reached levels of **economic self-sufficiency, social stability** within their communities, and **psychosocial well-being** that allow them to cope with **(re)migration drivers**. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions a matter of **choice**, rather than necessity.” (IOM, 2019:11)*

**Nodal point-
Sustainability**

Sign

Economic self-sufficiency, social stability, (re)migration drivers, choice

The primary consideration is thus not reintegration in itself but rather the sustainability of the intervention. Moreover, IOM concedes that there is no universal definition of sustainable reintegration (IOM, 2019). As displayed by the signs, reintegration is repeatedly described as contingent on the individual victim, the local community, and the structural restraints of the environment of return.

*“**Economic self-sufficiency** returnees are able to **provide for themselves and their families**, and develop a capacity to participate in and benefit from **local economic activities** in a dignified manner. It is equally crucial that the returnee feels a sense of belonging: that they enjoy strong social relationships and engage in the immediate community of return.”*

- IOM, 2019:12

**Floating signifier-
Dignity**

Elements

Economic self-sufficiency, provide for themselves and their families, local economic activities

The Reintegration Handbook interlinks concepts such as dignity and belonging with the notion of economic self-sufficiency and the ability to participate in local economic activities. Leaving question as to the definition of dignity and belonging and the subsequent framing of said concepts. IOM employs ambiguous terminology such as dignity, further framing the concept as a fundamental tenet of aftercare services. Dignity can, therefore, be viewed as a floating signifier, i.e., a concept open to interpretation (Boreus & Bergström, 2017). The Reintegration Handbook engages the notion of reintegration with the external provision of assistance:

*“A migrant’s psychosocial well-being rests on a minimum sense of safety and security and on availability of **basic services** (education, housing, water and sanitation, health care). The **returnee’s positive attitude** towards recreating a sustainable lifestyle in the place of return also forms a crucial cornerstone to all other reintegration efforts.”*

- IOM, 2019:12

Nodal point-
Psychosocial well-being

Sign

Sense of safety and security, basic services, returnees positive attitude

The basic premise of the chain of equivalence is that internal factors, such as the returnees’ positive attitude, sense of safety, and security, and external factors in the form of basic services influence the psychosocial experience of reintegration assistance.

6.1.2 Reintegration Assistance at the Community Level

Reintegration assistance is the central element of the examined text. The report presents five different service providers of aftercare services: policymakers, project management, local government, implementing partners, and service providers (IOM, 2019). Further detailed in chapter 3.0 of the Reintegration handbook: “*Reintegration assistance on the community level*” (IOM, 2019:97-101). The first chain of equivalence can be identified in the introductory paragraph of the text summarizing the potential effects community-focused reintegration interventions have on reintegrated victims:

*“Community-based reintegration assistance supports strong **community networks** and conditions for **sustainable reintegration**. It is implemented using a participatory approach involving returnees and their communities of return to address wider needs and concerns. **Community-based initiatives** can increase support for reintegration among **local actors**. These kinds of initiatives are particularly useful when there is a large number of returnees to a **specific community**, because **community-based integration** can address tensions between returnees and local communities, or serve as extra capacity when a community has been stretched to **accommodate returnees’ needs**.”*

- IOM, 2019:99

Nodal point- Reintegration

Sign

Community networks, sustainable reintegration, community-based initiatives, specific community, local actors, community-based integration, accommodate returnees’ needs

Reintegration is detailed as a nodal point as it can be observed in various parts of the text and is a central aspect of the aftercare discourse articulated in the Reintegration Handbook. The meaning of the signs mentioned above is more or less stable but receives new implications when tied to the concept of reintegration. The chain of equivalence displays the sheer variation of interventions that can be employed when utilizing community focused aftercare-services. Moreover, it leaves the question about the relation between the signs as they are all related, although not interchangeable, elements of the nodal point. It thereby redefines the term reintegration as a floating signifier.

6.1.3 Social Reintegration Assistance at the Community Level

The chapter aims to analyze chapter 3.4 of the Reintegration Handbook: “*Social reintegration assistance at the community level*” (IOM, 2019:120-124). The Reintegration Handbook presents a profoundly relational concept of reintegration, the influence of which is visible within aftercare policies aimed at the protection of victims of trafficking (Bearup, 2016; IOM, 2019). This is outlined at the start of chapter 3.4 in the Reintegration Handbook.

*“(...) services that are most important for sustainable reintegration at the individual level, including **housing, education and training, justice, health and well-being** and other **public infrastructure services** such as water and roads. Aside from supporting individual returnee access to these services, the **lead reintegration organization** can work towards making these services more available and accessible in **specific communities** of high returns.”*

- IOM, 2019:120

**Nodal point-
Social Reintegration**

Sign

Housing, education, training, justice, health, and well-being, public infrastructure services, lead reintegration organization, specific communities

Various elements have been introduced with the nodal point of social reintegration. The nodal point is subject to continuous struggle and remains ambiguous depending on individual elements. In human-rights discourse, signs such as justice occupy a central place in various discourses, ensuing ambivalence over the sign’s definition (Boreus & Bergström, 2017). Moreover, the Reintegration Handbook outline indicates a ubiquitous perception of the reintegration process and the demand for various intervention levels.

6.2 Interview Analysis

The following section presents the correlated interview results. The interview material was analysed through thematic analysis of the interview data. The analysis resulted in six themes and 29 sub-themes presented in the table below.

Theme	Reintegration	Empowerment	Dignity
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Sub-themes	Trauma-informed Survivor-led Agency Fluid concept of success Self-determination	Economic aspect Independence Skill acquisition Education Vocational training Decrease of stigmatization	Decreased vulnerability Honor Intrinsic to their being Self-determination Removal of shame Restoration
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Theme	Self-sufficiency	Community	Barriers
Sub-themes	Restored autonomy Interdependence Western concept Graduation from victimhood Economic empowerment	Support structure Lack of community Centered initiatives Downfall or success	Racism Lack of holistic service provision Internal and external stigma

The following chapters attempt to present and expand on the themes and sub-themes presented above. Due to the complex and interlinked nature of reintegration, several concepts will be reiterated across varying themes depending upon the context of the interview question or conversation.

6.2.1 Reintegration

Presented below is a multilateral understanding of reintegration assistance. The chapters provide an overview of the conceptual framework associated with reintegration, as defined by the informants. The concept of community will only briefly be lifted as chapter 6.2.5 recounts the role of community more in-depth.

Reintegration was repeatedly recounted as being a longitudinal process where the objective deviated depending on the survivor and the crime perpetrated. Several informants recounted six different domains of care that aftercare interventions need to target, including albeit not limited to:

"/.../ six domains of care are something that I feel have been really, really crucial to our service provision, their safety, so the six domains are: safety, legal protection, mental wellbeing, social support, economic empowerment, education, and then physical wellbeing."

- IP9

Numerous informants described the importance of returning to a safe environment and accepting community, further detailing the concept as crucial to the reintegration process and subsequently, describing the concept of community as a conduit of long-term, sustainable support. Various informants utilized the fluid concept of normality as a marker of successful reintegration. Several informants presented the aftercare process as a bridge-building procedure wherein the goal would be to re-enter society. All informants repeatedly emphasized the significance of a survivor-led and trauma-informed approach: *"It needs to be very much driven by the person's own agency and decisions and not by our own biases about what's good for them or what kind of decisions they should make,"* said IP3. Moreover, the informant presented a person's agency to be of the highest importance to a successful outcome. IP9 reiterated the importance of agency provided by a survivor-led reintegration process as critical to achieving cooperation from the survivor: *"A survivor will only make the necessary steps to move forward when they are concerned, or they are involved in their own treatment planning"*.

Several informants suggested that garnering a trauma-informed lens better informs and equips the survivor to function independently. IP4 surmised the benefits of a survivor-led approach as resilience, soft skills, and independence to better: *".../ experience failures, but having the inner resources and the access to external resources, you need to be able to pick yourself back up, move forward to your next lesson"*. Additional benefits of involving survivors in the reintegration was the empowering effect of self-dependency provided by the process. One informant recounted the creation of a network of survivors as the result of intentionally involving the survivors in the reintegration process.

"They go to the police station, and they talk about the rescues /.../ they go to the police and lead the rescues /.../ and go to police training and judges training and talk about their experiences /.../ you can't hold a candle against /.../ their experience. And it's /.../ an absolutely spectacular shift /.../ in how things have worked."

- IP9

Changing the narrative of reintegration from being one marked by external driving forces such as shelters, safe-houses, and social-workers to a narrative dominated by survivor leaders and advocates was presented as the aspiration of the reintegration process by several informants. The majority of the informants recounted several indicators of a successful reintegration process while simultaneously clarifying that the concept is highly individual. IP8 recounts: *"It's*

a /.../ moving goalpost /.../ it's for them to define themselves, and to say, when they've achieved a level of, you know, the quality of life, the success that they are looking for".

A theme that repeatedly emerged in connection with successful reintegration was the concept of contribution. A contributing survivor was identified as having the ability to provide beyond the survivor's own immediate needs to others in their environment and community. The concept further describes the survivor as a value-adding member of the community that has reached some level of independence.

“/.../ you will actually play a part of that community, you're not just somebody that they need to provide for or look after, but you can also be part of it and contribute into the society.”

- IP2

Numerous informants recommended caution in assuming that aftercare practitioners possess all the correct steps to a successful reintegration process. IP4 expands on the historically paternalistic factor to defining success wherein the survivors retain a victim mindset.

“I think too often, we in this space, come in thinking we have the answers, and we know best /.../ the sins of past paternalism, that keeps someone in a victim mindset that someone else has the answers, and someone else can define what success looks like for me.”

- IP4

6.2.2 Empowerment

All informants described the vital role economic empowerment retains in the sustainability of a reintegration intervention. Several informants discussed the agency provided by receiving employment, expanding on its role as agent of restoration. They further presented the workplace as a skill-acquisition center providing executive functioning competency, a professional identity, and strategies unavailable elsewhere. IP7 expands on the importance of involving the survivors' families in the economic empowerment process. Moreover, numerous informants described economic empowerment as a central component employed in the reintegration process to avoid revictimization. This, as the rescued survivors often are saddled with the responsibility of being the foremost breadwinner for families living in poverty, as

explained by IP4: *".../ economic opportunity seems to be this vital part of reintegration without which that cycle of re-trafficking is likely to occur"*.

Tightly coupled with the concept of economic empowerment is the process of survivors acquiring core capabilities, soft skills, education, and vocational training. Vocational training is described as a means of activating stakeholders at various levels, government, local communities, and families, in the process of recovery.

".../ as their skills evolve, as they recover, as they become more confident and empowered and have higher self esteem, then .../ the actual participation in society and within their families and communities also evolves and increases as well."

- IP8

IP5 expands on the importance of empowering with relevant skills that do not lead the survivors back into exploitative industries, further expanding on training that is heavily focused on the garments industry that is often exploitative in the South-East Asian context. Empowerment was furthermore angled in terms of the survivor's self-determination growing. Another prominent theme that emerged in correlation with empowerment was the concept of self-advocacy. IP3 and IP1 implied that the result of restoring power to the survivor would often result in the survivors becoming advocates for themselves.

".../ we want them to feel that they are able to be advocates for themselves .../ give them the confidence and the courage to be able to advocate for themselves and challenge people who stigmatise them."

- IP5

A consensus among the informants was that empowerment is a process that involves both the survivor's mental health and external factors such as the decrease of stigmatization. The majority of the informants reiterated the importance of economic components, repeatedly stating that this is a driving factor for survivors in the reintegration process: *".../ there is an economic component that is essential. If someone is not able to be economically self-sufficient, then all of their other decisions are driven actually, by that need,"* said IP3.

6.2.3 Dignity

A prominent theme that emerged with the concept of dignity was the prevalence of an honor and shame culture in many of the major trafficking destinations. Several informants tightly coupled the concept of dignity with the removal of shame. They further described the shame that the survivors have to suffer at the community's hands and from their families upon return. The underlying effects of a shame culture were described as highly damaging to the survivor's identity. The communal aspect of restoring dignity through bestowing the survivor with honor was therefore presented as highly significant:

"/.../ they have to fight against, like, the shame culture, yeah, they need to be ready by themselves, they need to be acceptable to themselves. And, then the next step is to educate the parents, the family, that they need to be part of the restoration process and give honor to the survivor."

- IP8

Dignity was presented as a mechanism that runs parallel to the restorative process of reintegration. Several informants utilized the concept of dignity interchangeably with the notion of self-determination. Various informants asserted the importance of survivors governing their own narrative, interlinking that with the conception of dignity. Another factor emphasized by numerous informants was the importance of financial independence and the dignity that materializes with no longer being exploited to achieve it. Various informants underlined the responsibility first responders, aftercare practitioners, and other reintegration agents have in treating the survivors with dignity intrinsic to their being: *"/.../ treating a client with the capacity to make decisions, the freedom to make choices and empower them to do that. I think that's dignity,"* said IP1.

IP2 presented the restoration of dignity as decreasing the survivor's vulnerability to revictimization and exploitation. Several informants expanded on various tools utilized with either the outspoken motive of restoring dignity or having dignity as the byproduct. Further presented in correlation with dignity was the acquisition of professional skills resulting in either employment or meaningful occupation of their time, IP4 stating that: *"dignity definitely grows with acquired skills"*.

6.2.4 Self-Sufficiency

Various informants interlinked the concept of self-sufficiency with the existence of a supportive community. IP9 described the loss of control that survivors experience when trafficked, subsequently presenting self-sufficiency as a restorative mechanism. Making informed decisions, gaining confidence, and creating space for survivors to express their truth was further equated with self-sufficiency. Although self-sufficiency was described as a process pertaining to the individual survivor, the vast majority of the informants underlined that the process transpires parallel to their existence in a larger community or family.

".../ the cultural environment, which is different from how we might do that in the West .../it's not necessarily being separate from their family or living independently, but having choice over what happens .../ including with their money, their families .../ their jobs."

- IP8

Restoring some form of autonomy to the survivor was presented as critical to the survivor's well-being in the reintegration process. Various informants emphasized the difference in self-sufficiency depending on the population in question, exemplified in the difference between adult self-sufficiency and that of minors. Several informants questioned the concept of self-sufficiency concerning its function in highly relational communities. Further, alluding to the paternalistic factor in assuming that the concept is fully transferable as defined in a Western context.

".../ I think self-sufficiency is a very Western concept .../ it basically implies that you want the person to be dependent only on themselves and not on their .../ community and on the people who are their family."

- IP5

The role of self-sufficiency was presented by IP4 as profoundly connected to the graduation from an identity marked by victimhood. The informant further connected the concept with that of rehabilitating survivors back to a position of agency. Several informants presented the lack of economic self-sufficiency as a contributing factor that initially led the survivor into trafficking and, if prevalent in the reintegration process, left the survivors vulnerable to

revictimization. IP4 further described the potential in employing tools that target economic self-sufficiency as a possible preventative measure against trafficking: *".../ economic self-sufficiency addresses what is a very real root cause to the vulnerability to trafficking"*.

6.2.5 Community

One of the most prominent themes of the interviews was that of community, described by several informants as the most crucial element to activate in the reintegration process. A wide array of different communities were detailed, ranging from traditional family structures to faith-based communities such as churches, mosques, and temples, as well as alternative communities existing in shelters and workplaces.

".../ there is a social support role, faith based communities, peer support groups, like within your village, or your neighbourhood /.../ social support has been something that's come out a lot with forced labour trafficking survivors as being integral to reintegration."

- IP1

Various informants described a lack of community-focused services, further expressing frustration in the lack of governmental support after leaving shelters: *"there's very little government and non-government support after they leave residential care,"* explained IP8. The majority of informants described the crucial role community plays in providing relationship, support, and acceptance to counteract the marginalization and isolation survivors often experience throughout the reintegration process, sometimes at the community or family members' hands. Several informants mentioned the added support structure community provided in the reintegration process: *"we know survivors need an enhanced support structure to be able to succeed /.../ not just connections, but people who are committed to their well being and ongoing journey,"* said IP3.

The community was often angled as either being the survivor's success or downfall. IP3 described the importance of survivors feeling connected to the community. IP8 outlines how the victims' very family can be negatively positioned towards the survivor: *"the biggest struggle is not necessarily some of their issues but the home environment and the family context is often still very dysfunctional and toxic"*. Dysfunctionality in communities was a prominent theme lifted by numerous informants. The dysfunctionality was primarily attributed to the

community's low socio-economic status resulting in communities becoming drivers of trafficking due to extreme poverty:

".../ if the family lives below the poverty line in extreme poverty, they will keep exploiting the children /.../ they think the work is a better situation than being here in the camp in the mud. So anything is better than nothing and this is how a lot of people give their children away and never see them anymore."

- IP6

In light of the community's central role in the reintegration process, several informants iterated the importance of communal efforts to realign communal opinions towards acceptance. Various informants described a greater need for awareness and understanding amongst the communities of return: *"The new community probably needs some level of understanding of those challenges, and a willingness to kind of meet on their journey, not just expect them to make the whole journey,"* explained IP3. Several informants subsequently presented reintegration into the community as the ambition or goal of a successful reintegration process: *"a successful reintegration is when you will be able to become a regular part of the society or the community,"* stated IP2.

IP5 challenged the conception of communal support structures solely being acquainted with shelters, further described as significant cost-bearers in the reintegration process. Several informants presented a need for a transformed narrative towards survivors in their community of return, changing the burden-narrative associated with survivors to one better portraying the: *"huge potential within this group of people, huge giftings,"* said IP3.

6.2.6 Barriers

The informants identified several barriers to the reintegration process. The barriers ranged from structural impediments to challenges on an interpersonal level. This chapter seeks to present the barriers as described by the informants.

The most prominent theme that emerged as a barrier to successful reintegration was the prevalence of poverty as described by IP9: *"a lot of the time, the family is extremely vulnerable, they're living in extreme poverty, which is what makes the children or I mean, makes these young girls vulnerable in the first place."* Several informants emphasized the importance of understanding the survivor's context of return. Various informants recounted the prevalence of

extreme poverty to be a potential impediment to reintegration as expectations remain on the survivor to be the foremost income producer.

"/.../ just because they exit the exploitative situation doesn't mean that somehow stops being a need /.../ they want to be reunited with their family but they have that sense of pressure or stress that they can't provide any more"

- IP8

IP5 reiterated how survivors are sometimes rejected upon return as they are perceived as a liability rather than a source of funds. Several informants raised the issue of impunity and how it enables traffickers to continually exploit and target vulnerable populations without the threat of conviction: *"And the more that they could operate with impunity, the more they will target vulnerable individuals and families into illegal and exploitative work,"* said IP1. The informant further related defective justice systems to a heightened risk of revictimization of the survivor. IP7 lifted the importance of strengthening justice systems to be a positive driver in the survivor's reintegration process. Several informants related the importance of trauma-informed first-responders and a trauma-informed justice system. Numerous informants emphasized the role of justice as a restorative agent in the reintegration process. The existence of a functioning justice system that can adequately convict perpetrators was subsequently described as crucial. All informants described stigma facing survivors externally from the community and internally from the survivor's family as a dominant barrier. Several informants reported a specific stigma facing those returning from situations of sexual exploitation. Survivors of such crimes were described as often having to endure negative societal attitudes related to the crime perpetrated.

"Societal attitudes about people who have come from a background, especially of sexual exploitation, are often looked down upon and prevented by others from actually reentering, entering society as a full and contributing person"

- IP3

Various informants described how stigma could drastically impede the survivor's chances of gaining employment. IP9 coupled stigma and shame further presenting the detrimental effects that stigma can have on the survivor's well-being and mental health throughout the reintegration process. IP7 presented the shame associated as primarily affecting female survivors: *"shame culture is so strong. So there's a lot of stigmatisation in this country. Especially for the the"*

survivor, the female children and women of sexual abuse".

Another issue raised by several informants was the effect Western NGOs have on the reintegration services and process. IP1 raised the issue of paternalism and how it, in some cases, can affect the provided services: *"I think with social services, like it's very easy to become paternalistic. With Western NGOs, and white saviorism, there's easily a way to become paternalistic"*. Various informants warned of the detrimental impact certain services, specifically shelters, can have on the survivor's identity, at worst fostering a sense of co-dependency upon the service providers.

"Weaning off any dependency on like case managers or social workers to help make decisions, but to have all the tools and resources to make future decisions around staying safe, around accessing equal protection."

- IP1

IP5 expanded on the impact of certain services central to the reintegration process and how they can, in some instances, lead to institutionalization. Subsequently, it is difficult for the survivor to reintegrate into society as they find it difficult to function outside of highly controlled environments. Several informants described the prevalence of well-funded organizations "throwing money" at the issue of reintegration, further expanding on the importance of holistically providing services that administer aid to the returning survivor. Various informants described the importance of self-awareness from the side of the care-providers; insight into personal and organizational biases was presented as critical.

"/.../ the factors that make people vulnerable to exploitation also can hinder their reintegration /.../ we have our own racist tropes and ideas that we put immediately onto a person like that prevent us from engaging them as another valued member of our community."

- IP3

7. DISCUSSION

This section seeks to analyse and discuss the results and relate them to the study's theoretical framework and relevant literature.

7.1 Delineating the Definition of Reintegration

Inter-Agency Coordination Group against Trafficking in Persons (2016) (hereinafter ICAT) describes reintegration as having occurred when a trafficked person is assumed to be economically and socially capable and independent. The Reintegration Handbook likewise interlinks reintegration with sustainability and economic self-sufficiency.

"Reintegration can be considered sustainable when returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers" (IOM, 2019:11)

The dilemma of associating self-sufficiency, economic or otherwise, with successful reintegration is problematic when applied to traditional collectivistic communities (Bearup, 2016). Due to cultural mediators such as adherence to a particular social role and conformity with traditional cultural ideals, self-sufficiency can be counter-intuitive to reintegration. If the Reintegration Handbook aspires to universality, it is supposed that the emphasis upon independence may be inapplicable to other traditional hierarchical cultures, and minors unable to live dependently in alternative care arrangements within their current circumstances. The formulation reflects on an intrinsically individualistic conception of reintegration that alludes to self-sufficiency as the precursor to a successful reintegration into society. Moreover, it represents a pattern of antagonism between two diverging notions of reintegration. The Reintegration Handbook's general concept of reintegration can be viewed as contributing to a hegemony where the prevailing understanding is not questioned. This is problematic as it is recognized that: *".../ the diversity of diversities, not only between, but within all human groups, and the fact that, among others, women, minorities, freethinkers and persons targeted because of their sexual orientation or gender identity have also been wrongfully subject to hegemony and abuse within groups" (OHCHR, 2018: paragraph 13).*

The absence of cultural consciousness in aftercare interventions is proven to enhance revictimization (Bryant-Davis & Tummala-Narra, 2017). Emphasizing successful reintegration

in terms of self-sufficiency can therefore be seen as potentially enhancing chances of revictimization if the term is not interchangeable with other contextualized notions of self-sufficiency. The conceptual challenge of defining successful reintegration often conceals the ethnocentric basis of the description. Recognizing this deficiency is crucial to cultivating an emphasis upon the local, social, and cultural arrangements pertinent to reintegration. A sentiment reiterated by several of the interview informants.

Community or communal elements were repeatedly ascribed as intrinsic and inseparable from the process of reintegration. The communal elements were, in seeming contrast, often coupled with the prevalence of agency. While being wholly planted in a community of return, the concept of agency was repeatedly presented as imperative, leaving question as to the terminology utilized concerning reintegration. Do definitions of reintegration that include the prevalence of individualistic terms such as self-sufficiency have to stand in contention with traditional collective assumptions of the concept? The Reintegration Handbook does promote a broader understanding of aftercare through engaging concepts such as inclusion, belonging, and communal barriers. This is reiterated in Zimmerman, Hossain, and Watts (2011) description of reintegration that appropriates similar terminology with the addition of terms denoting the active role the survivor has as the driver of their reintegration process. Applying a multidimensional approach to defining reintegration informs the services provided. Aligning reintegration with the additional concept of sustainability, as done in the Reintegration Handbook: "*Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than necessity*" (IOM, 2019:11), promotes a comprehensive understanding of reintegrative services.

Promoting a more comprehensive understanding of reintegrative services requires an understanding of the initial precursors of trafficking and an examination of the context of return. Problematizing poverty is relevant as trafficking disproportionately affects the parts of a population living in poverty (UNODC, 2009). A contextual approach to defining reintegration requires sensitivity towards the multidimensional effect barriers such as poverty on service delivery. This sentiment is reiterated by IP6, further stating that reintegration assistance is more sustainable when properly anchored in the context of return. Although, it is recognized that even if the intended reintegrative process is perfectly contextual, returnees still might not be able to make decisions out of choice rather than necessity. The line delineating reintegrative services and prevention services often cross, as the services have to work symbiotically to holistically support the returning survivors. Although one could argue that problematizing structural restraints such as poverty delves into the realm of trafficking prevention, the

intersection does inform the understanding of reintegration. Aftercare and reintegration cannot exist as independent of other anti-trafficking actions. Reconciling the prevalence of poverty in the reintegration process will not eliminate the impediment but rather lead to a more informed process and subsequently a cognizant definition of the reintegrative services required.

Recognizing the complexity and vast nature of reintegration and aftercare services raises query as to the relevance of a universal concept of reintegration. Depending on the crime perpetrated, the community of return, service-provider, and individual needs of the victim, reintegration services will appear vastly different. It is essential to recognize that the goal of reintegration services should be the inclusion of services based on evidence-based practice. Ensuring that reintegration services are disaggregated from trafficking prevention services is another essential prerequisite (Miller & Zivkovic, 2017). Preventing revictimization is another intrinsic aspect to delineating what reintegration services should incorporate. Acknowledging that there is no set format for reintegration services is vital to instead promote tailored programmatic approaches. Several informants presented successful reintegration as: *"It's a /.../ moving goalpost /.../it's for them to define themselves, and to say, when they've achieved a level of, you know, the quality of life, the success that they are looking for"*, explains IP8. Ultimately, this concludes that reintegration has to incorporate a considerable degree of agency and flexibility allotted to the survivor commanding the reintegrative process.

7.2 Intersectionality and Reintegration

Recognizing that human trafficking, and aftercare interventions, are not exempt from the influence of race-based and ethnicity-based oppression is imperative (Bryant-Davis & Tummala-Narra, 2017). The subsequent reintegration efforts must avoid reproducing this cycle of oppression by instead administering culturally sensitive and diverse interventions. The cultural strengths of survivors can improve the rehabilitation process after traumatic experiences such as human trafficking (Farrell & Pfeffer, 2014). Confronting the vastness of cultural diversity and reconciling it in policy and practice is crucial (White, 1999). Theories of culture and value do not solely pertain to national governments; neither should one assume that the issue is solely solved by giving local values precedence. Has the reintegration discourse reached a state of hegemony where the prevailing conceptions denoted in the Reintegration Handbook are not questioned or challenged? The disparity is construed as an indication of the underlying limitations inherent to policymaking (Bearup, 2016). There is little room for concentrating upon any socio-cultural processes implicated in the realization of reintegration.

Neither is due reflection afforded to the issue of how the prerequisite of assistance might augment or impair existing cultural norms and social relations.

The prevalence of the paternalistic and self-serving practice is difficult to avoid. Several informants described the importance of recognizing inherent bias and its impact on service provision. This extends beyond service providers. Employing a human rights-based approach demands that support and care procurement be informed (OHCHR, 2014), extending to service providers, researchers, practice, and policy related to community and culture. Recognizing the detrimental effect both paternal practices can have on the reintegration process and the community likewise means recognizing the detrimental effect uninformed communities and culture can have on the survivor.

One of the most significant barriers to successful reintegration was highlighted as communal attitudes and stigma. The Reintegration Handbook reiterated this sentiment stating that stigmatization is common and harmful to the process of reintegration (IOM, 2019). The vast majority of research in aftercare includes a section relating to the negative impact communal stigma has on survivors. The prevalence of intense stigma specifically directed towards survivors of sexual exploitation was further emphasized as detrimental by the majority of informants. They described cultural norms and barriers that predominantly left females receptive to marginalization, critique, guilt, and shame relating to the exploitation suffered. Recognizing the stigma and inherent bias prevalent across many cultures towards certain forms of trafficking is crucial to employ preventative action and policy. Race and ethnicity-based oppression knows no borders, reconciling it in policy and practice is therefore of utmost importance.

Examining the prevalence of internal barriers to reintegration concerning cultural norms underlines the importance of culturally sensitive and intersectional policy that drives reintegration services. The prevalence of stigmatization and the prejudicial construction of the survivor's identity is a call to action. The UNODC's framework for action, protection and assistance (b, 2009) advocates for implementing measures that support and mobilize collaborative networks around the aftercare intervention afforded to the survivor. The Reintegration Handbook further emphasizes the provision of safe and secure education, warning that it can potentially become a source of marginalization if not provided holistically (IOM, 2019). Raising awareness by actively engaging the community and survivors in a low barrier setting where they can confront and deconstruct stigma, subsequently recognizing similarities, is vital. Engaging the community is intrinsic as a supportive community is fundamental to a sustainable reintegration process, a sentiment echoed in research suggesting

a distinct link between the survivor's ability to cope and social support (Okech et al., 2018). The interview informants described a lack of community focus initiatives. Subsequently, several informants advocated for the benefits of a proactive approach to engaging the community. There is an apparent consensus surrounding the importance of community. Nonetheless, operationalizing communal implementation measures into substantive service delivery is still seemingly challenging for service providers.

An intersectional perspective recognizes the junction created by gender, race, ethnicity, and class (De Los Reyes & Mulinari, 2005). Employing an intersectional approach that translates into recognizing cultural norms and systems that are different from the ethnocentric conception of societal structure is critical to avoid ethnic bias that can exacerbate trauma (Bryant-Davis & Tummala-Narra, 2017). This is true in both the aftercare processes and extends to preventative measures to avoid re-trafficking (ibid). The honor and shame culture, highlighted by several informants, transcends that conjunction. The observed correlation between an honor and shame culture and the increased stigma might be explained through the lens of an intersectional perspective. When programming aftercare services and further reckoning with the reintegration process, the interference of culture cannot be ruled out. Navigating culture and community is intrinsic to the success of the survivor. Employing and recontextualizing terms in a culturally sensitive manner could be a bridge-building exercise that promotes culturally sensitive service provision.

Dignity was a concept identified as a floating signifier in the Reintegration Handbook, signifying that the term is open to interpretation. Several informants coupled the concept of dignity with that of honor. Interlinking concepts and recontextualizing them into the returning victim's specific context could be essential for successfully translating international standards of aftercare assistance. Recognizing that terminology is at the center of the procedural delivery of assistance is therefore critical. An intersectional perspective on empowerment could likewise lead to a greater realization of the concept in the reintegration process. The Reintegration Handbook interlinked the term with the concept of economic betterment of the survivor's financial circumstances. A further expansion on the concept outside the premise of economic empowerment can result in positive implications on the reintegrative process. Various informants warned of the troops that the concept carries, expanding on the theme of power being handed back to the survivor. The informants further describing the concept as somewhat archaic, as power already exists and can't be bestowed as such to a survivor, alluding to prior paternalistic notions of the term. An intersectional perspective recognizes the especially multifaceted effect of discrimination on the already marginalized. If bestowing power back to

a survivor is the prevailing notion surrounding empowerment, that bears reason to change and question the use of the term in the aftercare process.

7.3 Development, Justice, and Sustainability

Recognizing the inherent bias underlying developmental practice makes garnering a culturally sensitive lens imperative when implementing and evaluating aftercare services. Developmental theory asserts that the promotion of social justice is central to concrete development. The concept of reintegration cannot be decoupled from the concept of community as society is a conduit of justice and the ensuing development. The prevalence of impunity, wherein the traffickers can commit crimes without the threat of persecution, is highlighted in ICAT (2016) and by various informants as being a considerable structural impediment.

The UNODC (b, 2009) outlines the importance of a robust juridical framework to negate impunity as an implementation measure concerning aftercare and preventative services. The Reintegration Handbook briefly acknowledges the importance of justice linking it with sustainable reintegration practice (IOM, 2019). Justice is emphasized as an imperative issue as it ultimately affects the wider society as well as the individual survivor. Recognizing that justice is a central element to reintegration is a vital marker of tenable development, further reiterated by an informant describing the increased vulnerability to revictimization the survivor is receptive to if perpetrators aren't held accountable. Incorporating a normative standard of justice is crucial for the longevity and long-term sustainability of the survivor. Services aimed towards strengthening justice systems to better hold perpetrators accountable should undoubtedly be explored as a communal method of ensuring a safe and sustainable reintegration. Strengthened justice systems have the potential to contribute to wider systemic change directly supporting reintegration through decreasing the likelihood of revictimization. The Reintegration Handbook further alludes to markers of a sustainable reintegration process:

".../ services that are most important for sustainable reintegration at the individual level, including housing, education and training, justice, health and well-being and other public infrastructure services such as water and roads /.../ these services are more available and accessible in specific communities of high returns" (IOM, 2019:120).

The process of equating specific markers, such as the above mentioned, to reintegrative success is expected, although not always entirely beneficial. The attainment of reintegration is then at

the risk of being transformed into monitoring and evaluating development presumed relevant rather than assessing a broader conception of reintegration. Notably absent is substantial evaluation and academic study on trafficked victims and the ensuing reintegrative services provided or not provided (Gozdzik & Lowell, 2016).

7.4 Economic Empowerment and Sustainability

Economic empowerment is presented by the vast majority of the interview informants as intrinsic to sustainability. Sustainability is defined as:

"The continuation of benefits from a development intervention after major development assistance has been completed. The probability of continued long-term benefits. The resilience to risk of the net benefit flows over time." (SIDA, 2007:29)

The ultimate goal of aftercare service could be framed as reinclusion, that is, the relative inclusion level across four dimensions: economic, social, psycho-social, and community social links (IOM, 2019). When examining the themes incorporated in reinclusion, it is apparent that the concept garners a holistic, phased approach. Leading research repeatedly incorporates the concept of economic empowerment when problematizing sustainability. Reconceptualizing sustainable reintegration around the concept of development is described as untenable if not related to economic empowerment (Surtees, 2012). The paramount role that economic empowerment plays in sustainable reintegration cannot be underestimated. Decoupling development, sustainability, and reintegration is therefore a counterproductive task. Economic empowerment is detailed as a prevailing focus throughout the reintegration process, starting upon exiting a trafficking situation (Surtees, 2012). Research indicates that economic opportunity, whether employment or other income-generating ventures, is often a survivor's primary focus in reintegration (ibid). Further research indicates that economic empowerment reduces the risk of revictimization, subsequently breaking the cycle of exploitation contributing to the restoration, and rebuilding the survivor's identity (IOM, 2019). Several informants expanded on the function of employment and a safe workplace, presenting it as a conduit for rebuilding the survivor's identity and concept of self. Breaking the bond of dependency and reliance on external provision is a way of fully contracting and empowering survivors. Recognizing that victims of trafficking have previously lacked dignified survival options thus

depriving them of the opportunity to mingle with mainstream society, reiterates the importance of a holistic approach to economic empowerment and reintegration.

Various informants problematized the provision of economic empowerment services leading the survivors back into exploitive circumstances with substandard working conditions. Service providers need to be mindful not to contribute to a cycle of exploitation through economic empowerment opportunities. Greater cooperation between NGOs, governmental, and civil society stakeholders is imperative when developing sustainable employment opportunities. Research reiterated the importance of aftercare services existing on a continuum rather than singular interventions (Heffernan & Blythe, 2014). Anchoring economic empowerment initiatives within state-provided schemes could possibly be a feasible way to ensure greater longevity to the interventions. Governmental anchoring provides the additional benefit of ensuring that the services are contextualised and adapted to the context of return.

7.5 Trauma-Informed Care and Survivor-Lead Reintegration - A Symbolic Practice?

Trauma-informed principles were presented by informants as a commitment to empowerment, victim safety, and acknowledging the detrimental impact of recurrent traumatic circumstances. The interview informants and notable literature describe the importance of the said concept, emphasizing following trauma-informed procedures when attending to trafficked persons. Despite the proliferation of trauma-informed practice, the implementation quality may vary considerably and stray from research-based practices (Scott et al., 2019). There is a multifaceted discussion to be held surrounding trauma-informed and survivor-led care, often coupled together in aftercare discourse. Has trauma-informed care become a symbolic measure to satisfy research and policy demanding further agency allocated to the survivor? Subsequent queries arise concerning how trauma-informed care is evaluated and measured. What specific indicators are in place to evaluate programs' implementation of said values ensuring actual implementation and not symbolism? The questions and importance of evidence-based practice cannot be understated, specifically with services provided to survivors of intense trauma (Hemmings et al., 2016). Avoiding symbolism is subsequently not only a matter of policy but is also imperative to the survivor's well-being, leading back to the question of evaluation, and in extension, funds allocated to the longevity of aftercare services. Developing relevant and measurable outcome indicators is ultimately a question of resources and the relative buy-in from the international anti-trafficking community. If the international anti-trafficking

community is indeed committed to sustainable reintegration services, there needs to be an ensuing measurable increase in resources committed to the development of said indicators. The Reintegration Handbook claims that:

"Though these interventions look different in different contexts, working from needs' assessments and working with established networks can be a good way to identify initiatives and actions that have higher chances of relevance and impact." (IOM, 2019:100).

The Reintegration Handbook seeks to maintain the conception of reintegration as the procedural provision of assistance intended to support victims rights. However, when seeking to conceptualize the term, the Reintegration Handbook instead alludes to reintegration as a process actualized by external actors. Recognizing that the survivor is the best apt to navigate the intricacies of a culture different from the service provider is vital. A note of caution is due here since marginalized survivors often endure a lower-quality reintegration process with lower quality healthcare, impunity, and mistreatment from mental health specialists (Farrell & Pfeffer, 2014). Recognizing the prevalence of systemic forces that shape victimization is imperative (ibid), leaving question as to the feasibility of a survivor-led approach. Is it a naive notion that survivors can tackle deep-seated structural barriers, internal and external stigma, and simultaneously be left to their own mechanism in navigating the complex process that is reintegration? The tension between reconciling service providers, victims, policy, and culture cannot be discounted. It could be argued that even problematizing the concept of a potential dependency on external service providers perpetuates the prevalent norm of white-saviorism. It is vital to bear in mind the possible biases inherent and historically prevalent concerning service provision and Western care providers. Employing an intersectional lens on the subject enables one to critically examine the structures perpetuating the various expressions of discrimination (Sifris, 2016). As such, the subject must be interpreted with caution.

Problematizing the structures that enable successful reintegration and create barriers for the survivor might be an appropriate approach for the service providers. Realistically survivors faced with trauma from the crime perpetrated benefit from external service provision. Recognizing that a survivor-lead approach does not negate the role of external service providers is imperative. Instead, reconstructing the concept and acknowledging that a survivor-lead approach is a value-adding system to any service provider. This sentiment is echoed by IP9: *"A survivor will only make the necessary steps to move forward when they are concerned, or*

they are involved in their treatment planning". Whether entirely feasible to the advised level, a survivor-led approach yields exponential results only achievable by activating and liberating the survivors from chains of dependency. IP9 attests to the effect survivors themselves can have on structural barriers such as a dysfunctional policing system when provided with the tools to assert themselves as specialists. There needs to be a shift in the bounds of what service providers and scholarly research perceive as benefits of a survivor-led approach. Survivor-led practice is undoubtedly a long-term, sustainable practice that better informs and mobilizes other survivors to action. Structural barriers were repeatedly emphasized as hindrances to a survivor-led approach, stigma being one of the most prevalent. Not employing a survivor-led approach out of fear of stigmatization perpetuates a cycle of oppression, preventing survivors from becoming advocates.

A survivor-led approach is likewise a substantial means of operationalizing dignity. IP1 testifies to the link between agency, a survivor-led approach, and dignity: *".../ treating a client with the capacity to make decisions, the freedom to make choices and empower them to do that. I think that's dignity"*. Dignity is described as a tenet of reintegration strategy in the Reintegration Handbook, repeatedly interlinked with the ability to sustain a livelihood (IOM, 2019). Considering the vastness of the contexts in which survivors will be repatriated and reintegrated into, service providers have to face the possibility that the ability to sustain a livelihood will look vastly different. Offsetting the reintegration process by deliberately integrating the survivor's competencies can ensure a greater buy-in from the survivor when engaging the person's agency. Every possible concession must be made to support and encourage agency salient to reintegration. This must include: *"the provision of care that is attentive to the various ways people from diverse backgrounds experience and express illness and how they respond to care"* (Hemmings et al., 2016:5). Modern developmental theory expands on a capability approach to human development: *"where capabilities are more than skill sets /.../ agents have reason to value and, most critically, are free to choose"* (Northover, 2014:37). Incorporating agency in the process of reintegration, recognizing that victims are agents free to choose should be a fundamental tenet of aftercare service.

8. CONCLUSION

The study's general findings are limited to communal reintegration services and the implication of said services on the individual and community of return. This study converges on specific reintegration strategies being implemented through aftercare efforts apparent to victims of human trafficking. In addition to outlining defining strategies and concepts, the paper problematizes some of the implementation challenges. While some of the issues explored, both the challenges and the strategies to address them are specific to reintegration efforts, the concerns resonate and have significance for multiple stakeholders and contexts. As reintegration models and efforts are diverse, conclusions have been drawn from previous data acclimated to analyze and evaluate reintegration strategies advocated in the Reintegration Handbook. This research contributes to a necessary dialogue within the anti-trafficking community and the reintegration sector.

The study aimed to examine what social arrangements, processes, and cultural norms are associated with reintegration. The results identify the fundamental principles of reintegration as economic empowerment, dignity, self-sufficiency, and community. Dignity was presented as a mechanism that runs parallel to the restorative process of reintegration. Several interview informants utilized the concept of dignity interchangeably with the notion of economic empowerment and self-determination, a notion further reinforced in the Reintegration Handbook. Self-sufficiency was described as a process pertaining to the individual survivor, further emphasized as a development that transpires parallel to their existence in a larger community. The Reintegration Handbook maintained self-sufficiency as a central tenet of reintegration, further portrayed as a measuring criterion when evaluating the effectiveness of aftercare initiatives. The results present the various tenets of reintegration as intrinsically interlinked. Furthermore, substantiating them in policy is relayed as challenging depending on the context and community of return. Various challenges are presented as barriers to the realization of reintegration; these include but are not limited to structural impediments and barriers on an interpersonal level.

The results further detail the critical role community has in the successful reintegration of victims of human trafficking. The community was described as either the conduit for a healthy, sustainable reintegrative process or an actor contributing to a dysfunctional return to society. The informants relayed a wide array of different communities, ranging from traditional family structures to faith-based communities such as churches, mosques, and temples, as well

as alternative communities existing in shelters and workplaces, congruent with the Reintegration Handbook's definition of the term. In addition, the study highlights the need to engage the community in providing relationship, support, and acceptance to counteract the marginalization and isolation survivors often experience throughout the reintegration process. The study has additionally provided a deeper understanding of the range of services conducive to reintegration. These include but are not limited to: housing, education, training, public infrastructure services, community networks, community-based initiatives, and local actors (IOM, 2019; ICAT, 2016).

The study sought to answer the research questions through establishing an understanding of the framework driving reintegration policy. A desk-based approach to research has made it apparent that reintegration is a vital chain in averting the recurrence of trafficking. Discourse analysis of the Reintegration Handbook provided the study with the empirical framework required to delineate the guidance provided in leading reintegration strategy and policy. The ensuing interviews with a range of reintegration specialists and practitioners provided the study with operative, professional insight that deepened and enriched the study results. Intersectionality proved increasingly relevant to the study as it provided the tools to appraise the multilateral injustices undermining reintegration initiatives. The theory further provided a nuanced, gendered, and contextualized perspective (Bryant-Davis & Tummala-Narra, 2017) when evaluating and identifying best-practice principles related to structural injustices such as poverty. Employing intersectionality as a tool of analysis deepened the insights produced by the interview informants as it proved a multidimensional tool to assessing the discrimination facing victims of human trafficking. Garnering a human-rights based approach to the reintegration of victims of human trafficking dictates that the trafficked persons should be: "*at the centre of all efforts to prevent and combat trafficking and to protect, assist and provide redress to victims*" (UNODC (a), 2009:8). Employing a human-rights based approach provides the tools to critically evaluate central concepts, such as trauma-informed care, reflexively and with a victim-centric focus. Developmental theory provided insight into the mechanisms and agencies that informed the measures and policies employed in the Reintegration Handbook. The theory further provides the study with the historical and conceptual background to appreciate how IOM frames concepts central to reintegration, such as dignity, empowerment, community, and self-sufficiency. Establishing an HRIA framework has further provided the study with the tools to navigate and interpret the juridical framework reintegration initiatives operate within.

8.1 Recommendations

Providing appropriate culturally contextual reintegration assistance proved a significant challenge that warrants further examination and action. The tension between universalizing and relativizing principles in the context of reintegration will undoubtedly remain a complex issue. In addition to these critical research gaps, this paper calls for additional research into the cultural processes associated with the achievement of reintegration within social groups and institutions. Further research must be employed into the socio-economic root-causes that prevent and suppress the reintegration of trafficked victims. These include but are not limited to poverty, lack of protective legal frameworks, and the systemic prevalence of impunity. The results of this study validate the fundamental function of economic empowerment. The value of economic empowerment is evidenced by the rebuilding of a survivor's identity and concept of self through gainful employment resulting in the decreased risk of revictimization.

This paper is intended to offset a broader discussion on strengthening the long-term, sustainable reintegration of trafficked persons as part of their repatriation back into society. While the initial evidence is promising, further research should examine more indicators into specific programs effectiveness with a larger sample. Further research is needed on the efficacy of service delivery to continue to build better, more effective aftercare services. Future research on reintegration should incorporate further analysis and evaluation of the various approaches identified. The strategies and concepts require continuous evaluation to appraise their effectiveness and replicability. Additional research is needed into the long-term impact of these initiatives and if they result in tenable development. Subsequent evaluation should address the potential unforeseen or adverse outcomes of said approaches. Future research should moreover examine the development of specific human trafficking aftercare indicators for survive providers, including validated screening tools and subsequent evaluative measures. The evaluative association should subsequently comprise a diverse collection of stakeholders incorporating both rights-bearers' and rights-holders' appraisals. It is crucial to reconstruct the concept of trauma-informed and survivor-led aftercare, acknowledging that said approaches are value-adding systems to service providers. Thus, reconstructing the concepts emphasizes the importance of said practices being operationalized into reintegration initiatives.

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APPENDICES

IOM Reintegration Handbook

Understanding Reintegration

1.2 Understanding reintegration

Reintegration is generally understood as a multidimensional process enabling individuals to re-establish the economic, social and psychosocial relationships needed to maintain life, livelihood and dignity and achieve inclusion in civic life.¹⁰

The notions of return and reintegration are intimately interlinked with that of sustainability. While there is no universally agreed definition of sustainable reintegration, as part of its integrated approach to reintegration, IOM defines sustainable reintegration as follows:¹¹

“*Reintegration can be considered sustainable when returnees have reached levels of economic self-sufficiency, social stability within their communities, and psychosocial well-being that allow them to cope with (re)migration drivers. Having achieved sustainable reintegration, returnees are able to make further migration decisions a matter of choice, rather than necessity.*”

This definition is based on trends identified in existing literature, on IOM's practice, and on a review of complementary approaches outside the traditional scope of AVRR. It recognizes that returnees need to participate fully in the economic and social life of their return communities, and that developing a sense of psychosocial well-being after return is crucial to their sustainable reintegration. Consequently, sustainability of reintegration is not only dependent on the returning individual, but also on the local community and the structural situation the environment of return.

Economically self-sufficient returnees are able to provide for themselves and their families, and develop a capacity to participate in and benefit from local economic activities in a dignified manner. It is equally crucial that the returnee feels a sense of belonging; that they enjoy strong social relationships and engaged in the

¹⁰ IOM, *Glossary on Migration* 2019a.

¹¹ For more information see IOM's paper *Towards an Integrated Approach to Reintegration in the Context of Return* (2017).

immediate community of return. The migrant's return should have a positive influence on – or at least not worsen – conditions in the community of return (families and other actors). A migrant's psychosocial well-being rests on a minimum sense of safety and security and on availability of basic services (education, housing, water and sanitation, health care). The returnee's positive attitude towards recreating a sustainable lifestyle in the place of return also forms a crucial cornerstone to all other reintegration efforts.

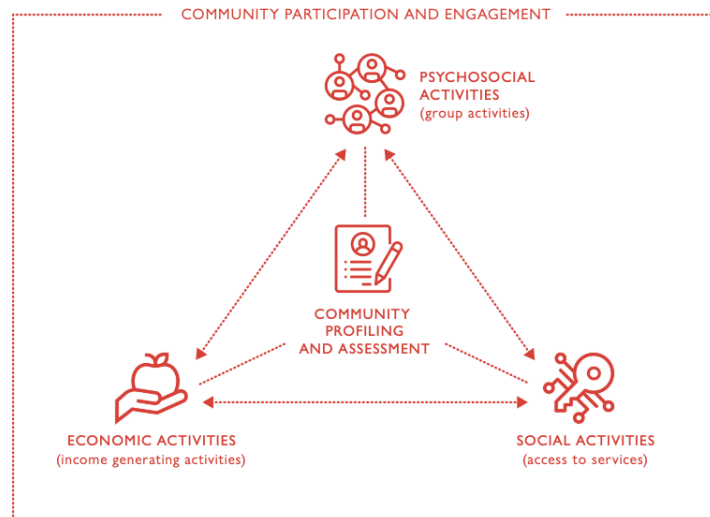
IOM asserts that reintegration support can only be successful if there is a level of re-inclusion across all economic, social and psychosocial dimensions. This can require different levels of interventions. At the individual level, the specific needs of beneficiaries (and when relevant, family members or households) should be covered and support for these provided upon return. At the community level, concerns of families and the non-migrant population in the community of return should be addressed by strengthening social links and increasing the absorption capacity of communities in regions with high levels of return. At the structural level, ensuring access to adequate local public services fosters an environment for re-establishing a dignified existence.

This definition also implies the absence of a direct correlation between successful reintegration and further migration after return. Further migration can still be a choice regardless of whether reintegration is successful, partially successful or unsuccessful. On the other hand, returnees are unlikely to reintegrate if they find themselves, for example, in situations where moving again or relying on a family member abroad is considered necessary for their physical or socioeconomic survival and well-being.¹²

The IOM definition reflects the broader understanding of the reintegration process and the need for various levels of intervention. IOM recognizes the misconception of directly comparing a returnee to members of the local population: if the community of origin cannot sustain stable livelihoods and already defies migratory pressures, it is much more unlikely that a returnee to this environment will be reintegrated in a way that is sustainable. Attaining sustainable livelihood levels comparable to the local community will not be possible if push factors remain strong, or if returnees' aspirations are not fulfilled. Especially in more unstable or underdeveloped environments, access to basic services and safety might be limited for all, providing little opportunities for sustainable reintegration. If such structural factors are not addressed, they will continue to result in migration as a coping mechanism for actual or perceived inadequate standards of living, insecurity and lack of opportunities.

Reintegration Assistance at the Community Level

REINTEGRATION ASSISTANCE AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL



- Policymakers • Project programme managers/developers • Case managers/other staff
- Local government (origin) • Implementing partners • Service providers

INTRODUCTION

Community-based reintegration assistance supports strong community networks and conditions for sustainable reintegration. It is implemented using a participatory approach involving returnees and their communities of return to address wider needs and concerns. Community-based initiatives can increase support for reintegration among local actors. These kinds of initiatives are particularly useful when there is a large number of returnees to a specific community, because community-based integration can address tensions between returnees and local communities, or serve as extra capacity when a community has been stretched to accommodate returnees' needs.

MODULE 3: REINTEGRATION ASSISTANCE AT THE COMMUNITY LEVEL

The situation in communities of return greatly influences the reintegration process. Communities with strong social networks and access to resources can provide support and protection to returnees and themselves benefit from the reintegration process. But when communities are unable to provide these networks and resources, the experience of return can constitute a risk factor for the community and the returnees.

Furthermore, returnees may not always be readily accepted into a community, even if it was their community of origin. Perceived or actual economic competition for jobs, strains on services and infrastructure in high-return areas, and stigmatization of returnees are all potential barriers to successful reintegration. These barriers also prevent communities from taking advantage of new skills or experiences the returnees can share with them. These strains and stresses on a community are more likely when there are larger numbers of migrants returning to a community in a short period of time.

Because working in all return communities is not usually feasible within the scope of a reintegration programme, assistance is best targeted to communities with a high concentration of returnees and where specific problems have been identified that could be addressed by the programme. These problems could be stigmatization, lack of jobs or strains on services. In addition to this, community-level interventions should be undertaken in locations where local authorities are motivated to support reintegration and there is a basic level of infrastructure and security.

Working with communities facing these challenges to better accept, support and include returnees is important for sustainable reintegration. To be successful, it is strongly recommended that community-level interventions involve and benefit both returnees and non-migrants. Though these interventions look different in different contexts, working from needs' assessments and working with established networks can be a good way to identify initiatives and actions that have higher chances of relevance and impact.

Reintegration interventions at the community level should be participatory: they should be designed and decided upon in partnership with community members, both returnees and non-migrants. This way, interventions can be appropriately matched to people's strengths, resources, needs and concerns. This fosters sustainability of reintegration. Participatory methods can also help reduce actual or potential tensions between returnees and community members, because they bring an understanding of wider needs and concerns beyond the individual returnees, and help address these.

In addition, community-level initiatives should:

- Focus on the short- and medium-term to address community barriers to reintegration;
- Foster dialogue, social cohesion and empowerment;
- Support the resilience of returnees and the community;
- Support the longer-term sustainability of intervention outcomes.

This Module covers how to understand community-level risk and protective factors and assist communities so that reintegration can be as supportive and beneficial as possible. It examines how to conduct comprehensive community needs assessments, develop collective and community economic projects, make services accessible and tailored to returnee and community needs and empower returnees to share their experiences and form community support networks.

Social Reintegration Assistance at the Community Level

3.4 Social reintegration assistance at the community level

Social reintegration assistance at the community level is focused on improving the accessibility and availability of social services in communities of return. This can benefit both returnees and community members. It is most appropriate when there are physical, language or other barriers hindering returnee access services in specific high-return communities, or the services in these communities cannot meet the specific needs and vulnerabilities of returnees and community members.

Module 2 provides an overview of services that are most important for sustainable reintegration at the individual level, including housing, education and training, justice, health and well-being and other public infrastructure services such as water and roads. Aside from supporting individual returnee access to these services, the lead reintegration organization can work towards making these services more available and accessible in specific communities of high returns. Note that supporting service provision, referral networks and accessibility beyond one community is covered in *Module 4*.

Community-level social reintegration assistance not only helps returnees access the services they need but can also benefit other community members who have similar needs or vulnerabilities. Particularly when strains on services are caused by large numbers of returnees, supporting service provision for high-return communities can also help alleviate tensions and potential conflict drivers that arise when large groups of returnees return to a single community.

Community profiles and specific assessments can identify problems of social service provision in target communities or tensions arising from constrained access. Community-based projects for social reintegration are most successful when projects are created in partnership with local stakeholders and when local leaders are willing to take ownership.

What follows are some considerations for strengthening social service accessibility and provision at the community level in the sectors most relevant for sustainable reintegration:

→ **Housing and accommodation.** Large numbers of returnees returning to a community can strain housing availability for all community members. Landlords can take advantage of returnees and enter into exploitative agreements. In these cases the lead reintegration organization can take a proactive approach to educate landlords and other relevant stakeholders (such as local authorities) on the barriers returnees are encountering when looking for housing and how to make housing more accessible to them. As described in [section 2.5.1](#), the lead reintegration organization can help returnees find housing by providing guarantees. This can also be an option at the collective level, if a group of returnees finds collective housing.

When there is an overall lack of suitable housing in the community, the lead reintegration organization can look into expanding housing availability for all community members, including returnees. The lead reintegration organization should work with local authorities to devise locally appropriate solutions, particularly on issues such as the allocation of land, to address the needs of all those requiring housing.

→ **Education and training.** Because educational and training environments should be secure and safe and provide protection from threats or harm for all, schools and other education facilities play an important role in promoting community well-being. Training teachers and educators to use positive disciplinary and conflict resolution techniques that promote tolerance and understanding of others could improve both social cohesion and community functioning, in addition to attitudes towards and acceptance of returnees.

Teachers and educators need to be aware of issues in learning environments that might be challenging to returnees (for instance, challenges to learning due to distressing past experiences and their effect on the capacity for concentration, the ability to take in new information and to engage socially in a learning environment). This might also mean helping educators learn to account for these issues for all, including non-migrants. In particular, schools and other educational or training facilities should be aware of barriers to education that can include:

- Learners not speaking or having low literacy in the language of instruction;
- Prohibitive school fees or other associated costs;
- School placements mismatched to a student's learning level;
- Arriving in the middle of the academic year or after a training programme has commenced;
- Adjustment to a different style of learning and education (for instance, because of cultural or pedagogical differences).

→ **Health and well-being.** Access to and provision of quality health services is often a primary concern for not only returnees but also communities. Projects can provide direct support for specific health needs by training of health-care providers, provision of equipment and materials for health services or rehabilitating infrastructure for health care in specific communities. By investing in quality health-care services, health outcomes can improve for all community members not, just for the returnees themselves. Furthermore, community-based assistance can improve the quality of information on health issues as well as services and equipment for provision of health care. Materials on available health services should contain information and messaging that reflects the common concerns and health-related needs of the general local population, in addition to the specific needs of returnees. This is particularly important when there are confirmed or suspected cases of infectious disease present within a community or population subgroup. These health promotion materials should be widely available in formats and languages returnees

and community members can understand, keeping in mind potential low levels of literacy that affect certain demographic groups more than others.

- **Public infrastructure and safety.** Access to services is typically dependent on good infrastructure and one's ability to physically reach a place of service. So the routes and transportation methods needed to attend schools, see doctors, process documents and meet all other elements of social stability must be affordable and accessible. Roads must also be secure and safe and not exacerbate any risks of violence, exploitation and abuse.

Community-level interventions to help reduce risks on daily journeys can include road construction or lighting and dedicated walkways along roads, promoting the use of reflective tape on clothing or bags, provision of torches or other equipment and use of or avoidance of identifiable uniforms. Community efforts can cover organized transportation, such as buses, walking as a group or a "mentoring approach", or using adults to escort children to schools. All of these can be facilitated by effective community organization.

Environmental factors are very important for community stability. Through exposure to environmental challenges such as natural hazards, climate change or environmental degradation, communities can face diverse threats ranging from threats to physical safety and health and lack of access to vital natural resources, such as drinking water. Community-level interventions can address these threats by ensuring that communities are safe, prepared and resilient to disasters. In addressing environmental challenges, there is also potential to provide "green jobs".

- **Justice and rights.** It can be difficult for returnees and community members to access justice systems or fulfill their rights, particularly if they lack the proper documentation for things like voting or filing claims or if they fear repercussions due to stigma or marginalization in the community. The lead reintegration organization can address these problems by sensitizing local government, courts, lawyers' associations, law enforcement and others to the barriers that returnees and other community members face. The lead reintegration organization can work to find solutions. In addition, bringing together community members, including returnees, with these stakeholders to discuss directly their obstacles can be beneficial to building trust and confidence.

Interview Guide



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The study attempts to examine the claim that empowerment, dignity, and self-sufficiency are fundamental tenets of reintegration. Moreover, this interview will question the promotion of community as a necessary agent to reintegration.

The interview comprises of 3 parts;

1. Introductory questions
2. Questions pertaining to specific reingrations concepts such as "Empowerment, Dignity and Self-sufficiency"
3. Questions relating reintegration to the community of return

The interview will take approximately 15-30 minutes. I don't anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, but you have the right to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time. The interview will be recorded and a transcript will be produced, your answers will be kept anonymous and will only be used for the purpose of this thesis. Do you have any questions before I begin to record this interview?

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

1. What position do you hold within your organization?
2. How long have you held this position?
3. In brief, what do your work assignments consist of?

EMPOWERMENT, DIGNITY AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

4. How would you define reintegration assistance?
 - a. *Prompt:* What are the central elements that reintegration assistance comprises?
5. In brief, what are central elements to the reintegration strategy you employ?
6. What function does the concept of self-sufficiency have in the reintegration process?
 - a. *Prompt:* What function do you see economic self-sufficiency playing? Would you define it as a central element to reintegration?
7. What function does the concept of dignity have in the reintegration process?
8. Empowerment is a concept associated with reintegration assistance, is this a term that you utilize in the context of reintegration?
 - a. *Prompt:* If so, how would you define empowerment?

- b. *Prompt:* How does it translate into the substantive reintegration assistance?
- 9. How would you define successful reintegration?
 - a. *Prompt:* What markers do you utilize to determine successful reintegration?
- 10. What are the greatest barriers to a successful reintegration?
- 11. What are the markers of a sustainable reintegration process?

COMMUNITY

- 12. What reintegration strategies do you employ on a communal level?
 - a. *Prompt:* Any specific models or interventions?
- 13. Would you expand on the function the local community comprises in reintegrating the survivor back into a local community?
- 14. What local social arrangements, processes and cultural norms are salient to the achievement of reintegration?
 - a. *Prompt:* What local social arrangements, processes and cultural norms are not salient to the achievement of reintegration?
- 15. What barriers does the local community present to the achievement of reintegration?
 - a. *Prompt:* Have you observed a tension between the local community and returning survivors?
- 16. What function does the local community have on the psycho-social wellbeing of the returning survivor?

CONCLUSION

- 17. In closing, is there anything else you would like to convey, add or clarify?

Thank you for partaking in this interview, your insight is very helpful!

Thematic Analysis Table

Theme	Reintegration	Empowerment	Dignity
Sub-Themes	Trauma-informed Survivor-led Agency Fluid concept of success Self-determination	Economic aspect Independence Skill acquisition Education Vocational training Decrease of stigmatization	Decreased vulnerability Honor Intrinsic to their being Self-determination Removal of shame Restoration

Theme	Self-sufficiency	Community	Barriers
Sub-Themes	Restored autonomy Interdependence Western concept Graduation from victimhood Economic empowerment	Support structure Lack of community Centered initiatives Downfall or success	Racism Lack of holistic - service provision Internal and external stigma

Interview Consent Form



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Interview Consent Form

Research project title: REINTEGRATION OR REVICTIMIZATION?- *An analysis of reintegration assistance provided to victims of human trafficking*

Research investigator: Sarah Lowry

Research participants name:

The interview will take approximately 45 minutes. I don't anticipate that there are any risks associated with your participation, but you have the right to stop the interview or withdraw from the research at any time.

Thank you for agreeing to be interviewed as part of the above research project. Ethical procedures for academic research undertaken from Swedish institutions require that interviewees explicitly agree to being interviewed and how the information contained in their interview will be used. This consent form is necessary for us to ensure that you understand the purpose of your involvement and that you agree to the conditions of your participation. Would you therefore read the accompanying information sheet and then sign this form to certify that you approve the following:

- The interview will be recorded and a transcript will be produced
- You will be sent the transcript and given the opportunity to correct any factual errors the transcript of the interview will be analysed by *Sarah Lowry* as research investigator
- Access to the interview transcript will be limited to *Sarah Lowry* and academic colleagues and researchers with whom she might collaborate as part of the research process
- Any summary interview content, or direct quotations from the interview, that are made available through academic publication or other academic outlets will be anonymized so that you cannot be identified, and care will be taken to ensure that other information in the interview that could identify yourself is not revealed
- The actual recording will be erased

All or part of the content of your interview may be used;

- In my academic paper
- In an archive of the project as noted above

By signing this form I agree that;

1. I am voluntarily taking part in this project. I understand that I don't have to take part, and I can stop the interview at any time;
2. The transcribed interview or extracts from it may be used as described above;
3. I have read the information sheet;
4. I don't expect to receive any benefit or payment for my participation;
5. I can request a copy of the transcript of my interview and may make edits I feel necessary to ensure the effectiveness of any agreement made about confidentiality;
6. I have been able to ask any questions I might have, and I understand that I am free to contact the researcher with any questions I may have in the future.

Printed Name

Participants Signature Date

Researchers Signature Date