



Child-friendly Standards and Guidelines for the Recovery and Integration of Trafficked Children

Objectives of the guidelines

- To respond to the specific needs of child survivors of trafficking to recover and reintegrate effectively by building on broad international guidelines and national care standards in various countries and adapting them to the cultural context of Asia; and
- To remind States of their obligations under international human rights standards while drawing on practical examples from within the region to show what is and is not acceptable.

Target users

- These guidelines are intended for care providers or caregivers – anyone directly or indirectly involved in caring for child victims of trafficking, including State caregivers and authorities, shelter managers and staff, practitioners, social workers, child care services, medical and legal professionals, as well as staff of NGOs and IGOs involved in the recovery process.

Main features of the guidelines

- Explanation to care providers of what must, must not and be done at every stage of recovery and integration.
- Examples of how to implement rights-based strategies in relevant Asian countries and what the impact of not applying these standards is on children.
- Good and bad practices that show real life experiences of trafficked children and lessons learned of care providing agencies in Asian countries.

Rights-based recovery and integration

- All children have the rights to care and assistance appropriate to their age and developmental needs as well as rights to participate in decisions about their future.
- Child victims of trafficking are in special need of protection when they approach or enter a care-giving facility. It is the main duty of care providers to protect

and care for the children.

- Effective recovery and integration means, at a minimum, that children must prefer the recovery process to the situation of exploitation.
- If children's voices are heard, if they are given rights, responsibilities and choices, they become active agents in the process of their own development and change.

Twelve guiding principles

1. Each child is an individual and the recovery and integration process should be an individual one, promoting the best interests of each child. The guidelines are not blanket rules for all shelters to follow blindly in relation to every single case. Application of the guidelines should always consider what is in the individual child's best interests.
2. While respecting differences between individual children, each child should not suffer discrimination on the basis of age, sex, nationality, race, language, religion or ethnic or social origin, birth or other status.
3. No trafficked child should be held in detention at any time. Where laws permit detention of children, these should not be enforced in the case of trafficked children. Trafficked children are unlikely to recover effectively if they feel imprisoned in a care facility and may feel like they are being punished. Accommodation facilities should not resemble jails.
4. Each child's right to privacy and confidentiality should be respected and protected at all times. Name, address or other information that could lead to the identification of a child or their family should not be disclosed to the public or the media.
5. Each child should be protected from all forms of neglect, physical and psychological abuse (including verbal abuse) at all times. This extends to protection from traffickers, community, family, media and staff and individuals working or visiting the care giving facility.

6. The views of each child will be considered and actively sought. Child participation should be promoted throughout every stage of recovery and integration.
7. Each child should be made aware of their rights as well as their responsibilities. School age and adolescent children must be informed about the recovery and integration process, such as their entitlements while in a care home, services available and prospects for a family reunion.
8. Each child should be treated with respect, affection and dignity. Self-reliance and resilience of the child should be promoted in line with their age and maturity. Care providers should use an empowering approach that enables children, especially adolescents, to make their own decisions.
9. Family and community-type arrangements for a child should be favoured over institutional settings. Due consideration for the child's welfare and safety is essential.
10. No child should be separated from their family unless there is a risk they may be neglected, abused or re-trafficked. There are ways to help children and their families solve their problems, especially if the child wishes to return to the family.
11. Care providers should form networks to ensure that each child has appropriate physical and emotional care in a setting that encourages their development.
12. Care providers should be trained and experienced in caring for children and should have the relevant professional qualifications according to their job descriptions.

Different stages of recovery and integration

1. Intake and assessments: When a child enters a care giving facility, care providers must work with each individual child to assess their needs and meet the child's most immediate needs.
2. Interim care and support (Healing and strengthening): A period of time in a care giving facility that is often needed for children to recover and ascertain their next steps as well as giving time to contact and prepare a

family and/or community for the child's return. The goal is for sustainable long-term integration of the child into a family or community as soon as possible.

3. Integration and continuing care: This may be when the child is back with his or her family, with another family (such as extended or foster care) or living semi-independently with others working or studying. This is sometimes called a 'durable solution' for the child.

Services and rights throughout recovery and integration:

Safe and adequate accommodation, legal support, physical health care, counselling and psychosocial support, education, vocational training and job placement, life skills, recreation, culture and religion, nutrition, access to family, access to the community, child protection and staffing, discipline, case management and child participation.

State responsibilities

- Provide an adequate legal framework for child protection.
- Ensure care providers have adequate funds and resources to bring these guidelines into practice.
- Maintain a system of accreditation for State and non-State organisations providing accommodation, health, legal and psychosocial support to child victims of trafficking.
- Facilitate networking and information exchange between service providers in the country and across borders.
- Maintain and publish updated, accurate statistics on child trafficking based on the information from caregivers.
- Consult child victims currently and formerly in care about application of these standards.
- At national level, ensure that a respected independent body has the ability and authority to conduct unannounced visits to care giving facilities and to interview children.
- At regional level, establish a regional task force consisting of government, non-government and child protection specialists to monitor compliance with these guidelines.