

Third Annual Expert Workshop
organized by
UN Fund for Victims of Torture

**TORTURE
VICTIMS IN THE
CONTEXT OF
MIGRATION:
Identification,
Redress and
Rehabilitation**



Photo by Georgi Licovski/EPA

Geneva, 26-27 April 2017



With over 35 years of experience worldwide, the **United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture** supports medical doctors, psychologists, social workers, lawyers and other practitioners with specialized skills and knowledge to better assist victims of torture. The Fund organizes yearly thematic expert workshops with the objective of sharing and consolidating this unique expertise for the benefit of all those involved in combatting the crime of torture.

On 26-27 April 2017, experts from selected projects supported by the Fund will meet in Geneva to discuss **redress and rehabilitation for victims of torture in the context of migration**. This year's theme arises from the significant number of people on the move around the world today, and the high proportion of these migrants and refugees who have suffered from torture in their country of origin, along the migratory route, or even in their destination country.

“ *Two-thirds of the nearly 50,000 victims supported by the UN Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture every year are migrants and refugees. This shocking figure highlights the need for specialized responses to protect and promote their human rights.* ”

*Gaby Oré Aguilar, Chairperson,
Board of Trustees, UN Voluntary
Fund for Victims of Torture*



Eva Abu Halaweh
Executive Director, Mizan
Law Group for Human Rights,
Jordan

Ms. Abu Halaweh is a lawyer and human rights activist who co-founded the Mizan Law Group for Human Rights (Mizan) in 1998. She coordinates several programmes for the legal protection of victims of human rights violations, including victims of torture, refugees and migrants, women victims of discrimination and violence, children and adolescents. Prior to establishing Mizan, she maintained a private practice and worked as a legal advisor at the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. She is a member of the UN Women Civil Society Advisory Group. Ms. Abu Halaweh was the recipient of the International Women of Courage Award in 2011, and the Franco-German Prize for Human Rights & the Rule of Law in 2016. With the support of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, Mizan is building capacity in Jordan to litigate and document cases of torture.

“ Migrants and refugees who have suffered torture are amongst the most vulnerable. They have left everything behind, they are lonely and have no family support, they face exploitation or torture during their journey, they are not aware of their legal status and they could face detention. ”



Alberto Barbieri
Director, Medici per i Diritti Umani, Italy

Mr. Barbieri is a physician who has been working in the humanitarian field and with migration issues for 22 years. He is the co-founder and General Coordinator of *Medici per i Diritti Umani* (MEDU). In 2015, Mr. Barbieri became the Director of the MEDU Psychè Centre (Rome) focused on providing care to torture survivors and conducting research and testimony against torture and other inhuman and degrading treatment. The Centre is particularly dedicated to migrants and refugees. It adopts a clinical and psychosocial approach, through a multidisciplinary team of physicians, psychologists, psychotherapists, mediators and social workers. With the support of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, MEDU works on the early identification and psychological assistance of torture survivors arriving in Sicily (Italy) through the migratory routes of Northern Africa.

“ Our experience shows that nine out of ten migrants arriving in Italy from sub-Saharan Africa have suffered torture and ill-treatment in their country of origin or along the migratory route. This is a tragedy that challenges the entire international community. ”



Ana Elena Barrios Juárez Badillo
Psychologist, *Fray Matias de*
***Cordova* Human Rights Centre,**
Mexico

Ms. Barrios is a psychologist with a specialization in intercultural psychology, social psychology and political violence. She has over 10 years of experience working with migrants in various contexts, including with migrant peasant and indigenous communities in Mexico, where she provided psychosocial assistance to the relatives of missing migrants. Ms. Barrios has also contributed to publications and practical guidelines on the provision of psychosocial services in the context of migration. She joined *Fray Matias de Cordova* Human Rights Centre, a grantee of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, to develop the psychosocial component of support to torture victims on the Mexico-Guatemala border.

“ In a system rooted in injustice and the exploitation of migrants, it renews my hope in humanity to witness the incredible capacity of those who – out of the deepest pain and struggle – are able to flourish and find strength, love, and dignity in life. ”



Eva Barnewitz
Clinical Psychologist, vivo
international, Germany

Ms. Barnewitz is a clinical psychologist with experience working with traumatized individuals. She works with vivo international's Centre of Excellence for Psychotraumatology, where she provides trauma therapy (known as Narrative Exposure Therapy) and psychological assistance for victims of torture. She is also a trainer for Narrative Exposure Therapy, both in Germany and internationally, and provides training on trauma-related issues to mental health, education, social and health professionals. Supported by the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, vivo international specializes in evidence-based, short-term treatment for multiple trauma patients, including children and refugees.

“ Torture victims in migration are likely to suffer from post-traumatic stress disorder and other psychological conditions. This leaves them unable to feel safe, reconcile their experiences into their life story and integrate into their new society. ”



Bernice Carrick
Lawyer, The Humanitarian
Group, Australia

Ms. Carrick is a lawyer and policy expert with The Humanitarian Group (formerly CASE for Refugees). For several years, she has provided legal advice and representation to asylum seekers in detention and community settings, as well as to people whose resettlement in Australia was facilitated by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. More recently, she has focused on policy and research into the intersection of immigration and discrimination law regimes in comparative jurisdictions. The UN Fund for Victims of Torture supports The Humanitarian Group to provide specialized legal services to refugees who are victims of torture, especially those who face detention and vulnerable circumstances in Australia.

“ People impacted by torture frequently experience incredible hardship through their migration journey. Upon arriving in a country with a reputation for respecting human rights and providing asylum, they often find that the physical obstacles to safety have been replaced by legal and political ones. ”



Chris Eades

**Human Rights Lawyer specializing in
torture and migration**

Mr. Eades is a USA-qualified attorney and UK-qualified barrister with over 20 years of experience in the human rights field. He began his career representing prisoners on death row in the southern United States. For the past 12 years, he has worked with torture survivors in the context of migration, providing legal representation and developing holistic responses for refugees and migrants, including unaccompanied minors and particularly vulnerable cases. He has worked with refugee organizations and torture survivors in Egypt, Indonesia, Libya, Thailand, the United States of America and the United Kingdom, including grantees of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture.

“ The rates of torture and ill-treatment among people on the move are alarmingly high. They may have been tortured in their countries of origin, only then to experience further torture in transit or host countries. ”



Mark Fish

Director, Room to Heal, United Kingdom
of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Mr. Fish is the Director and Founder of Room to Heal (RtH) and a senior counsellor at the Helen Bamber Foundation. He is a group psychotherapist with over 25 years of clinical experience in therapy and community building. In 2002, he worked in the conflict zone of Northern Uganda with internally displaced people fleeing civil war. Upon his return to the United Kingdom in 2007, he set up RtH, a community-based rehabilitation centre for migrants from around the world fleeing torture and organized violence. The UN Fund for Victims of Torture supports RtH to provide intensive therapeutic group work, holistic psychosocial support and practical assistance to torture survivors, particularly related to securing legal protection.

“ Finding a meaningful way to help people on the move who have survived torture and organized violence is important. It’s human rights in action. It says that human beings matter. ”



Christy Fujio

Technical Advisor for Access to Justice, Heartland Alliance International, United States of America

Ms. Fujio is a human rights lawyer with a decade of experience working with torture survivors in the United States of America, Middle East and Central Asia, to document and combat torture practices. Since 2013 she has been working with Syrian doctors and lawyers to document human rights violations, aiming to secure post-conflict justice and accountability. Her expertise includes asylum and refugee law, forensic medical documentation, immigration detention, sexual and gender-based violence, solitary confinement, torture and UN Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security. Ms. Fujio has published in leading journals and news outlets, and was the lead editor of Physician for Human Rights' updated manual on physical and psychological evaluations of torture and ill-treatment. Supported by the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, Heartland Alliance International is a Chicago-based human rights organization with torture treatment programmes around the world.

“ People on the move are generally dealing with the impact of multiple traumatic events and stressors. These relate to the reason for initial flight, the difficulty of caring for their family, obtaining food and shelter, and the challenge of accessing holistic medical and mental health services. ”



Kolbassia Haoussou

Coordinator of Survivors Speak OUT, Freedom from Torture,
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

Mr. Haoussou is the Co-founder and Coordinator of Survivors Speak OUT, a survivor-led activist network of torture survivors who are former clients of Freedom from Torture. Members of Survivors Speak OUT draw on their first-hand experiences of torture and seeking protection through asylum to influence decision-makers and raise public awareness about the challenges facing survivors trying to rebuild their lives in the United Kingdom. Mr. Haoussou has been a key speaker in numerous international events, including at the UN General Assembly and the Global Summit to End Sexual Violence in Conflict. Freedom from Torture has been supported by the UN Fund for Victims of Torture to provide treatment and rehabilitation of survivors of torture.

“ My motive is simple: who is better to speak on behalf of survivors of torture if not us? The motto was simple too: nothing about us without us. We want to tell our stories the way we want to, we also want to motivate other survivors and victims. ”



Suzanne Jabbour
Director, Restart Center for Rehabilitation of
Victims of Violence and Torture, Lebanon

Ms. Jabbour is a psychologist and an experienced project director of psychosocial rehabilitation programmes, in particular for the rehabilitation of refugees and children affected by armed conflict in Lebanon and abroad. She also served as a Member and Vice President of the UN Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture from 2011 to 2016 and as the President of the International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT) for four years. Since 1996, Restart Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence and Torture (RESTART) has provided specialized health and mental health services to torture and trauma survivors, including children. Since 2012, services have been extended to victims of human rights violations, including torture, fleeing from Syria. In 2016, with the support of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, RESTART provided rehabilitative services to more than 350 victims of torture fleeing from Syria, Iraq and other countries.

“ Torture’s effects are alone agonizing; what if they are coupled with the deprivation of origins, health and refuge? ”



Lucy Kiama
Country Director, HIAS Refugee Trust,
Kenya

Ms. Kiama works with HIAS Refugee Trust in Kenya, where she oversees the implementation of programmes for the most at-risk urban refugees through the provision of psychosocial assistance, resilience-building, protection services and resettlement to survivors of torture and gender-based violence. She has significant experience in human rights, migration and gender-based violence. Prior to joining HIAS Kenya in 2015, she was Executive Director of the Refugee Consortium of Kenya and worked for many years in programmes related to gender-based violence and human rights. She also serves as an Advisory Board member for the Forced Migration Review of Refugee Studies Centre at Oxford University (United Kingdom). HIAS Kenya is a grantee of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture.

“ Caring for survivors of torture who are forced migrants requires passion and dedication. Appropriate legislations and policies must be in place to support a multi-layered approach to manage their trauma, provide protection and build resilience. ”



Veronica Laveta
**Clinical Advisor for Mental Health, Center for
Victims of Torture, United States of America**

Ms. Laveta has over 16 years' experience as a psychotherapist with a speciality in trauma. Since 2014, she has worked at the Center for Victims of Torture (CVT), supervising field psychotherapists and providing clinical oversight to CVT's programmes in Iraq, Jordan, South Africa and Turkey. She has been working since 2006 with torture survivors in the context of migration in various contexts as a psychotherapist, trainer and advisor. She has conducted forensic mental health evaluations and worked on rehabilitation projects with torture survivors who were tortured in their country of origin, as well as en route to their host country. In addition to her clinical degree, she holds a Master's degree in Conflict Transformation with a focus on how trauma healing contributes to post conflict peacebuilding and reconciliation. The UN Fund for Victims of Torture supports CVT to provide comprehensive rehabilitative services in several countries.

“ The State entities who are either temporarily or permanently hosting people impacted by torture have an obligation to protect and prevent the perpetration of more abuse. There is both a moral and a legal imperative to intervene and protect the most vulnerable in our societies. ”



Yusrah Nagujja

Programme Manager, Mental Health and Psychosocial Wellbeing, Refugee Law Project, Uganda

Ms. Nagujja works with migrants at the Refugee Law Project (RLP), a community outreach project of Makerere University School of Law that uses a rights-based approach to empower torture survivors to recover and live again. Her work focuses on psychological and social rehabilitation for refugees who have experienced torture, including through the use of thematic support groups as a means of fostering social and psychological recovery through therapeutic activism and mutual support. RLP, a grantee of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, acts as a platform for torture victims by empowering them through legal, psychosocial and educational support.

“ Factors like the constant threat to life, harassment by law enforcement officials, illegal detention, xenophobia and a limited understanding of refugee issues exacerbate the effects of torture for torture victims on the move. ”



Jürgen Schurr
Head of Law and Policy, REDRESS,
United Kingdom of Great Britain
and Northern Ireland

Mr. Schurr is a legal expert with extensive experience in international human rights law. He joined REDRESS in 2006 as Project Coordinator on Universal Jurisdiction, having previously worked for various human rights organisations. In 2009 he joined the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda as Associate Legal Officer. He returned to REDRESS as Legal Advisor in 2010, with a focus on universal jurisdiction, and on litigation and advocacy before the African Commission on Human and Peoples' Rights. In November 2015, he took up his current position as Head of Law and Policy. Supported by the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, REDRESS provides highly specialized legal assistance to victims of torture, with a recent focus on victims from the Middle East and North Africa region.

“ Despite the acknowledgment that a large number of migrants have been subjected to torture, there is a failure to factor this into their treatment and to recognize their rights to rehabilitation and justice. ”



Bojana Trivuncic
Psychologist, International
Aid Network, Serbia

Ms. Trivuncic is a psychologist who has worked for the International Aid Network (IAN) as a psychotherapist, researcher and project manager since 2000. She provides psychological assistance, including psychotherapy and diagnosis, to torture victims among refugees from Croatia and Bosnia and Herzegovina. As programme manager, she is responsible for managing projects for the provision of comprehensive assistance to torture victims. She has also been engaged in scientific research projects related to the consequences of torture and trauma, both at IAN and at other human rights organizations. IAN is a grantee of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture and, in 2015, with the support of an emergency grant from the Fund, the organization was able to expand its services to victims of torture from countries in the Middle East.

“ Aid providers with emergency programmes often have difficulties in identifying torture victims among refugees and migrants, and in documenting their cases. But it is precisely the proper identification and documentation which is critical for victims to access adequate treatment and to support their asylum claim. ”



Xavier Vincent Pereira
**Director of Mental Health Services,
Health Equity Initiatives, Malaysia**

Mr. Pereira is a medical doctor, psychiatrist and psychotherapist. His work with asylum seekers and refugees began in 2007 with the establishment of Health Equity Initiatives (HEI), where he has been actively involved in the development of mental health and community-based services as a co-founder, board member, and director of mental health services. Together with a team of psychologists, counsellors, psychosocial support officers and community mental health workers, Mr. Pereira provides mental health care to people on the move. In addition, HEI facilitates medical treatment and physiotherapy for victims of torture. Mr. Pereira is also associate professor at the Taylor's University School of Medicine (Malaysia) and a certified Interpersonal Psychotherapist (IPT) who trains and supervises trainees in IPT. The UN Fund for Victims of Torture has supported HEI to provide holistic services to torture victims, mainly from the Asia and Middle East regions.

“ In a world where access to health care is predicated on citizenship status, it is important to intervene when the lack of legal status exacerbates illness, disability, and access to appropriate and timely care. ”



Rosa Cavalcanti Ribas Vieira
Coordinator, Instituto de Estudos da Religião,
Brazil

Ms. Vieira brings a robust experience in international migration and refugees to her role as migration project coordinator at the *Instituto de Estudos da Religião* (ISER). At ISER, she has coordinated the project “Migration Movements: A Challenge for the Recognition of Rights”, focused on the context and challenges of migration policies and human rights in Brazil, including migrants’ access to public services. She has also conducted research on Haitian migration to Brazil and worked closely with refugees from the Democratic Republic of Congo, Congo and Angola. As a grantee of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, ISER provides psychological assistance to torture victims who do not benefit from any state programme.

“ The building of walls and the intensification of border control often leads migrants and refugees, including those who have suffered torture, to take dangerous paths. This exposes them to many types of obstacles and risks. ”



Hamsa Vijayraghavan
Senior Legal Protection Officer,
The Ara Trust, India

Ms. Vijayraghavan is a lawyer with nearly ten years of experience in the field of refugee law and child protection. She has been working since 2014 with The Ara Trust (Ara), a New Delhi-based organization which pioneered the concept of legal representation for refugees during the asylum process in India. As a grantee of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, Ara ensures through its project that refugees who have faced torture are counselled about their legal rights in India and have access to support services. Ara's project also enables refugees who have faced torture to access expedited asylum processing by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. It also facilitates their immediate access to medical care, particularly psychosocial counselling and treatment.

“ Even in countries with no legal structure for the reception and treatment of refugees who have escaped torture, our work can help these people rebuild their lives to ensure that they are safer here than they were before they arrived. ”



Daniel Witko
Lawyer, Helsinki Foundation
for Human Rights, Poland

Mr. Witko is a legal aid lawyer at Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (HFHR) and a member of the Warsaw Advocacy Bar. He has been working in the field of migration and asylum law since 2012. He provides legal assistance to the most vulnerable individuals including asylum seekers, refugees and undocumented migrants. He also represents torture victims in domestic and international courts. He is also experienced in human rights advocacy, research, training and monitoring activities. As a grantee of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture, HFHR provides legal assistance to migrant and asylum seeker victims of torture in detention.

“ People on the move impacted by torture are doubly vulnerable. They not only have to face post-traumatic disorders but also the risks related to their escape, including the risk of discrimination. That is why assistance for them should always be a priority. ”

List of Participants

The 2017 Expert Workshop includes the following participants:

PRACTITIONERS FROM THE UN FUND FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE'S GRANTEES

Ms. Eva Abu Halaweh, Mizan Law Group for Human Rights (Jordan)
Mr. Alberto Barbieri, Medici per i Diritti Umani (Italy)
Ms. Ana Elena Barrios, Fray Matias de Cordova Human Rights Centre (Mexico)
Ms. Eva Barnewitz, vivo international (Germany)
Ms. Anette Carnemalm, Swedish Red Cross (Sweden)
Ms. Bernice Carrick, The Humanitarian Group (Australia)
Mr. Chris Eades, human rights lawyer
Mr. Mark Fish, Room to Heal (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Ms. Christy Fujio, Heartland Alliance International (United States of America)
Mr. Kolbassia Haoussou, Survivors Speak Out – Freedom from Torture (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Ms. Suzanne Jabbour, Restart Center for Rehabilitation of Victims of Violence and Torture (Lebanon)
Ms. Lucy Kiama, HIAS Refugee Trust (Kenya)
Ms. Veronica Laveta, Center for Victims of Torture (United States of America)
Ms. Yusrah Nagujja, Refugee Law Project (Uganda)
Mr. Jürgen Schurr, REDRESS (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Ms. Bojana Trivuncic, International Aid Network (Serbia)
Mr. Xavier Vincent Pereira, Health Equity Initiatives (Malaysia)
Ms. Rosa Vieira, Instituto de Estudos da Religião (Brazil)
Ms. Hamsa Vijayraghavan, The Ara Trust (India)
Mr. Daniel Witko, Helsinki Foundation for Human Rights (Poland)

Trustees of the UN Fund for Victims of Torture

Ms. Gaby Oré Aguilar (Chairperson)

Ms. Maria Cristina Nunes de Mendonca

Mr. Mikołaj Pietrzak

Ms. Anastasia Pinto

(Vacant position)

UN HUMAN RIGHTS MECHANISMS

Ms. Cecilia Jimenez-Damary, Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Internally Displaced Persons

Mr. Nils Melzer, Special Rapporteur on Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment

Mr. Jens Modvig, Chairperson, Committee against Torture (CAT)

Members of the Committee against Torture (CAT)

Unable to attend:

Chairperson, Committee on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of their Families (CMW)

Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights of Migrants

Chairperson, Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (SPT)

OFFICE OF THE UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS (OHCHR)

Ms. Kate Gilmore, Deputy High Commissioner for Human Rights

OHCHR staff working on related mandates

OTHER UN ENTITIES AND EXPERTS

Ms. Inmaculada Arnaez, European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex)

Mr. Asger Kjærum, International Rehabilitation Council for Torture Victims (IRCT)

Mr. Kerry Neal, UN International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF)

Mr. Gerald Staberock, World Organization against Torture (OMCT)

Ms. Kristina Touzenis, International Organization for Migration (IOM)

Mr. Pieter Ventevogel and Ms. Sarah Elliott, UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR)

Since 1981, the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture has directed over US\$ 168 million to more than 620 organizations globally, that in turn delivered essential services to torture victims. As the oldest and largest human rights fund with a distinct victim-focused mandate, it awards projects providing medical, psychological, humanitarian, social and legal rehabilitation services to around 50,000 torture victims and their family members each year in over 80 countries around the world.

United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture

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