



Understanding Trauma

- Traumatic events refer to extreme stress:
 - that overwhelms a person's ability to cope
 - has profound short term and long term impacts on the individual's ability to function

- Emotional effects of trauma are persistent and devastating

- Victims of trafficking often suffer from (one or more of):
 - PTSD
 - anxiety
 - panic disorder
 - persistent depression
 - substance abuse
 - eating disorders



What Causes Trauma?

- Triggers for trauma exist through various stages of a victim being trafficked and rescued:
 - In the act of trafficking- being cheated, separated from their family and familiar surroundings
 - In course of exploitation/in the trade- physical abuse, lack of self esteem, commodi-fication, persistent ill treatment from persons exerting control, authority and dominance
 - Post rescue- dealing with procedural formalities at police station, courts and shelter homes



Context

- Victims of go through **severe physical and emotional abuse** ranging from beating, rape, sexual assault and other forms of abuse.
- After rescue, they are confronted with difficulties; **socially and emotionally.**
- The reactions to the traumatic experiences among the survivors include anger towards abusers, hopelessness, uncertainty, depression
- **Not sure** about reintegration ,experience stigma, health problems, re-experiences of the traumatic events, etc.



Victims may not Cooperate in Court

- Often victims are found to be hesitant in testifying during court proceedings or giving inconsistent statements. This could be on account of:
 - Lack of trust
 - Fear of people in a statutory role
 - Temporary memory loss caused by trauma
 - Brainwashing by traffickers/perpetrators/Stockholm syndrome
 - Fear of consequences/threats to themselves, their family
 - Fear of acceptance back into the community if truth is revealed



Victims may not Cooperate in Court

- Giving testimony – reliving the trauma
 - A perceptible shift in the victim's attitude is noticeable as the court date approaches
 - Shame, guilt, emotional turmoil at the prospect of recounting all that occurred
 - Impacts ability to verbalize their past experience
- Post trauma responses contribute to problems with functioning, including difficulties controlling emotions, concentrating, sudden outbursts of anger, self-mutilation, suicidal tendency, increased risk taking and alterations in consciousness



Enlisting Victim Cooperation in Court

- Supportive approach by people in authority
 - Non-threatening and non-judgmental approach by people in power
- Treating victims with dignity
- Being aware of what to expect in terms of procedure
- Counselling
- Appropriate procedure being followed during police investigation and court room trial



Psycho-Social Counselling

- Psychosocial supports enhance a person's ability **to cope** in their own context and achieve personal and social well-being.
- Provide them with positive human relationships, space for self reflection and participation,
- Provide them practical skills and tools to restore their sense of **self respect** and ability to overcome anxiety.
- **Reduce** the impact of **stress** .
- Support them to cope and enhance **capacity of reaction**