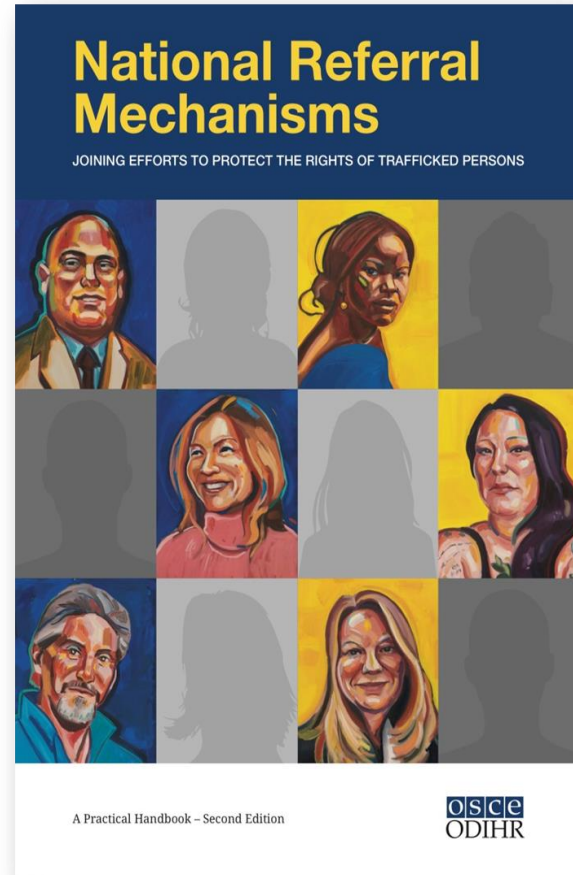


# NATIONAL REFERRAL MECHANISMS

JOINING EFFORTS TO PROTECT THE  
RIGHTS OF TRAFFICKED PERSONS

A Practical Handbook – Second Edition

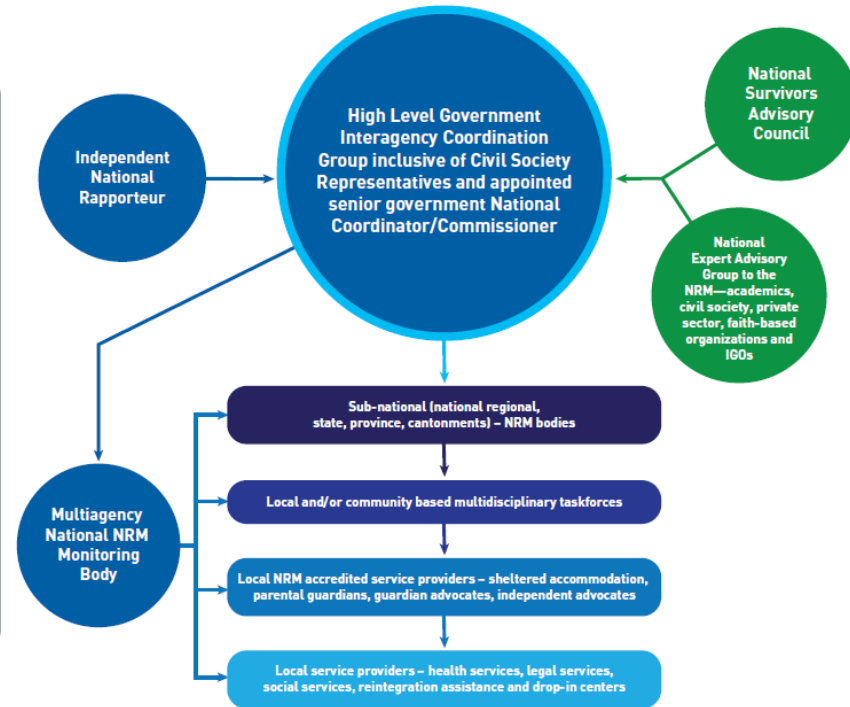
**OSCE** ODIHR



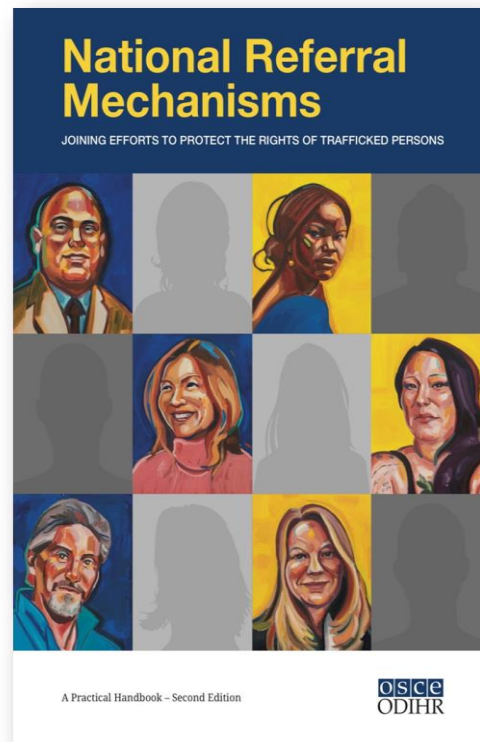
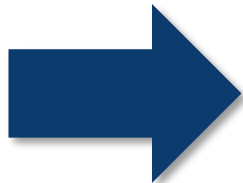
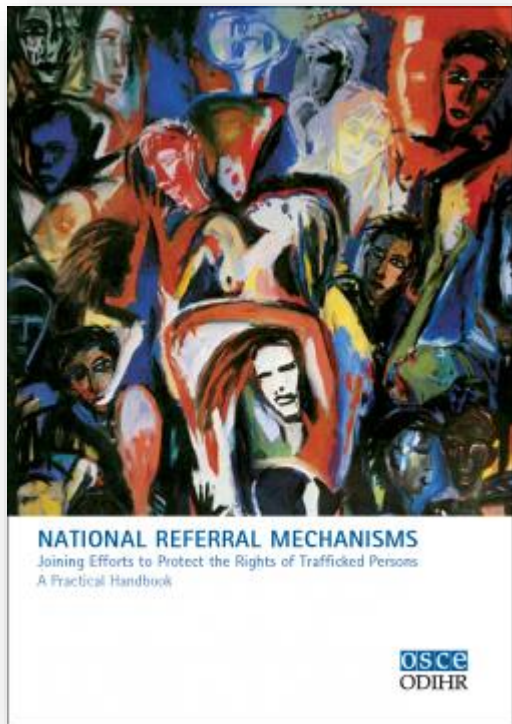
# What is an NRM?

A National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is a **co-operative, national framework** through which governments fulfil their obligations to protect and promote the **human rights of victims of trafficking**.

It enables the **co-ordination** of their efforts in a **strategic partnership** with **civil society organisations, the private sector, survivor leaders** and other actors working in the field.



# NRM Handbook: 2004 and 2022

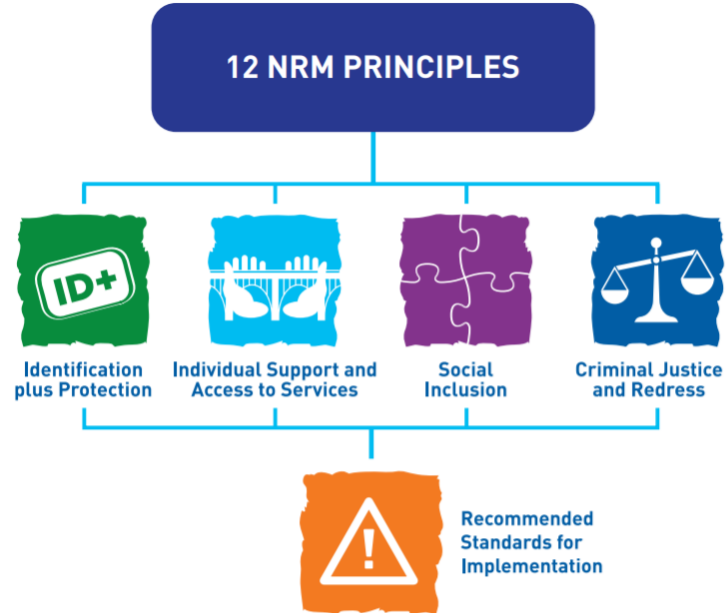
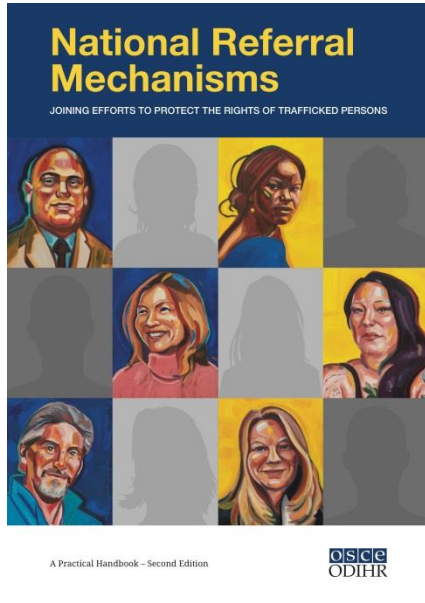


# The role of Survivors and Survivor Leaders is at the heart of NRMs

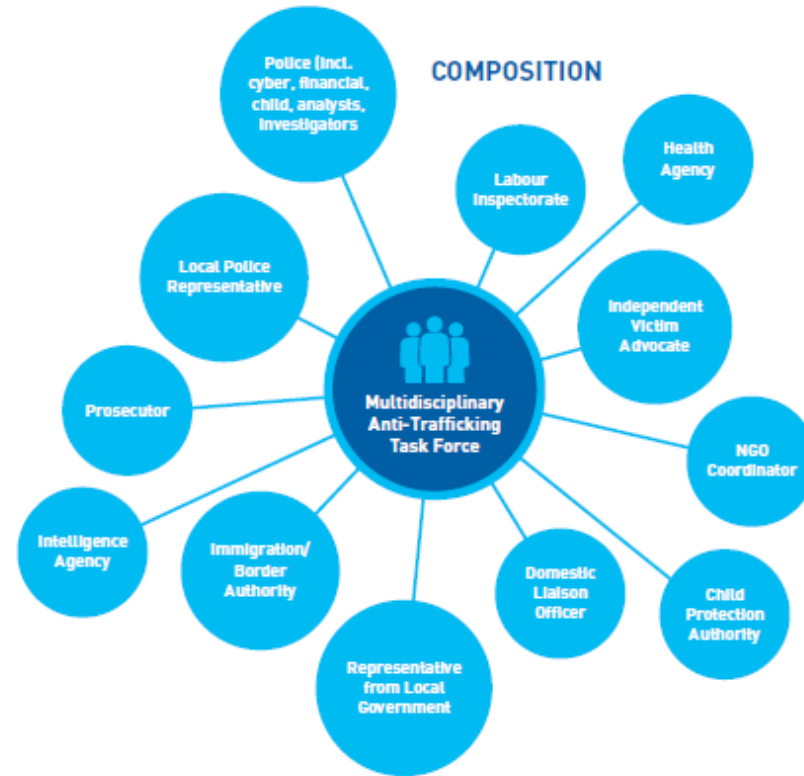
*“Survivor-Leaders are highly active in international efforts to combat trafficking. They have lived experienced, knowledge and insight into the methods and activities of traffickers, together with an unrivalled understanding of survivors’ individual needs, and the specific risks that they face.”*



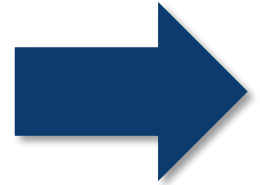
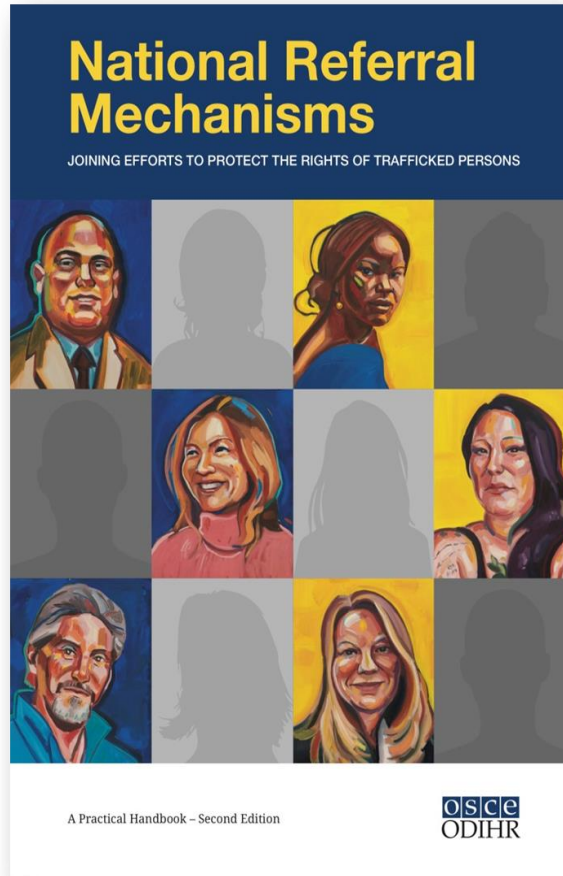
# What does the updated Handbook provide?



**Multi-disciplinary  
and multi-agency  
partnership** is the  
key to effective  
NRM



# Inside the updated NRM Handbook



## NRM Preparatory Guide:

### Ethical working methods

- Understanding 'vulnerability' and related needs and risks
- Advocates for adults and Guardian Advocates for Children
- Multi-agency, multi-disciplinary partnership
- NRM procedures and services for children
- Age dispute and age estimation assessment
- Effective professional communications and conduct
- Communications with children ; The Lundy Model
- Pastoral support and supervision for professionals

## NRM Protocol:

### Safe and effective Procedures

- Confidentiality and informed consent
- Data protection and information sharing
- Working with survivors who have disabilities
- Tailoring services for survivors
- Assessment and safety planning for adults and children
- Interpreters and cultural mediators
- Early access to healthcare services
- Early access to free legal advice and representation
- Prioritising practical, financial and material needs



# The Four NRM Pillars



**PILLAR ONE:**  
Identification + Protection

"As a victim of trafficking, you learn to be very scared. My trafficker told me, 'there is another girl who didn't listen to me - she is in a wheelchair now.' He threatened to kill members of my family and convinced me that if I told my story, no one would ever believe me. So many victims are afraid of what the authorities will do to them, they don't know that they have any rights, and they don't know where to turn.

We need a system that reaches out to help victims, rather than expecting them to simply come forward; clear, accessible information and guidance must be provided for all people who are in potential at-risk groups; early signs of human trafficking must be recognized and urgent action taken to prevent it; adults and children who have already been trafficked need swift initial identification and immediate protection."

— Judith Olah, Anti-trafficking activist and survivor leader



**PILLAR TWO:**  
Individual Support and Access to Services

"After escaping human trafficking I was pushed straight into criminal justice and immigration procedures. However, I was still homeless and hungry, I felt entirely alone, and unsafe, I was not physically or mentally ready to talk about what had happened to me, or even to fully understand it myself. I was in desperate need of rest and recovery.

Much later, an NGO assigned me a social worker who changed everything. She took time to learn about my personal background, my culture, and the context of my trafficking. She always looked pleased to see me; even a smile was a gift at that time. She explained everything carefully and prepared me for what would happen next. We focused on the things I needed: food, clothing, transport, accommodation. Then counselling, language classes and other activities helped me to move forward with my life. Survivors need to have this support in place from the beginning. I know it would have better equipped me for the pursuit of justice against my traffickers."

— Shandra Woworuntu, Chair of ISAC, Founder and CEO of Mentari Human Trafficking Survivor Empowerment Program Inc. and survivor leader



**PILLAR THREE:**  
Social Inclusion

"Meaningful work and my family have always been the core themes of my life. After working in the hospitality industry for many years, I was falsely promised a job, exploited through use of debt bondage and trafficked for labour exploitation. The most terrible thing for me and the victims I was trapped with, were the vicious threats made to our families.

Unlike the others, I could speak the language and eventually I was able to get us help. We had a positive experience with the authorities because they were directly linked to organizations that gave us food, housing, everything we needed, and they treated us with respect and dignity. I got the services that I needed at the time that I needed them. Most significantly, I was able reunite with my family, which means everything to me. Know that most victims are not assisted in this way and can remain in danger for a lifetime. If we are to combat human trafficking we must offer linked support with services to all victims, without any conditions attached."

— Ronny Marty, Member of ISAC, Independent Anti-Labor Trafficking Consultant, CEO of MPSC and survivor leader



**PILLAR FOUR:**  
Access to Criminal Justice and Redress

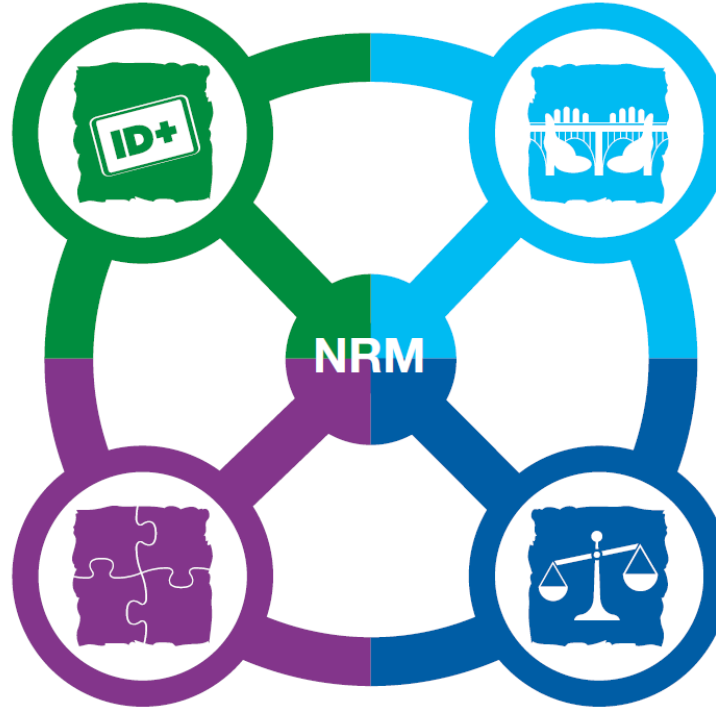
"Criminal justice systems place victims of trafficking under a microscope that doesn't apply to others. It can feel like a blaming culture that puts them on trial. Investigative interviews are intensive and re-traumatizing; you are expected to keep repeating your story to detectives, victim services, recovery centres: repeat, repeat, repeat.

Training across criminal justice systems and victim support should be survivor-led, survivor-focused and delivered by people with frontline experience. The police can better identify victims if they take someone like me with them; a survivor leader who has a strong, cultural understanding and can assist with building trust. Judges at first years on the bench; they need updated guidance to secure strong convictions; anti-trafficking laws must be consistently reviewed and updated. Trauma-informed courts are essential; special protection measures must be automatic, and innovative methods, such as the use of therapy dogs, can lend calm and confidence to victims who are giving distressing evidence."

— Bridget Perrier, Co-Founder and First Nations Educator at Sastrade101 and survivor leader

# The Four NRM Pillars

**Pillar One:  
Identification plus Protection**

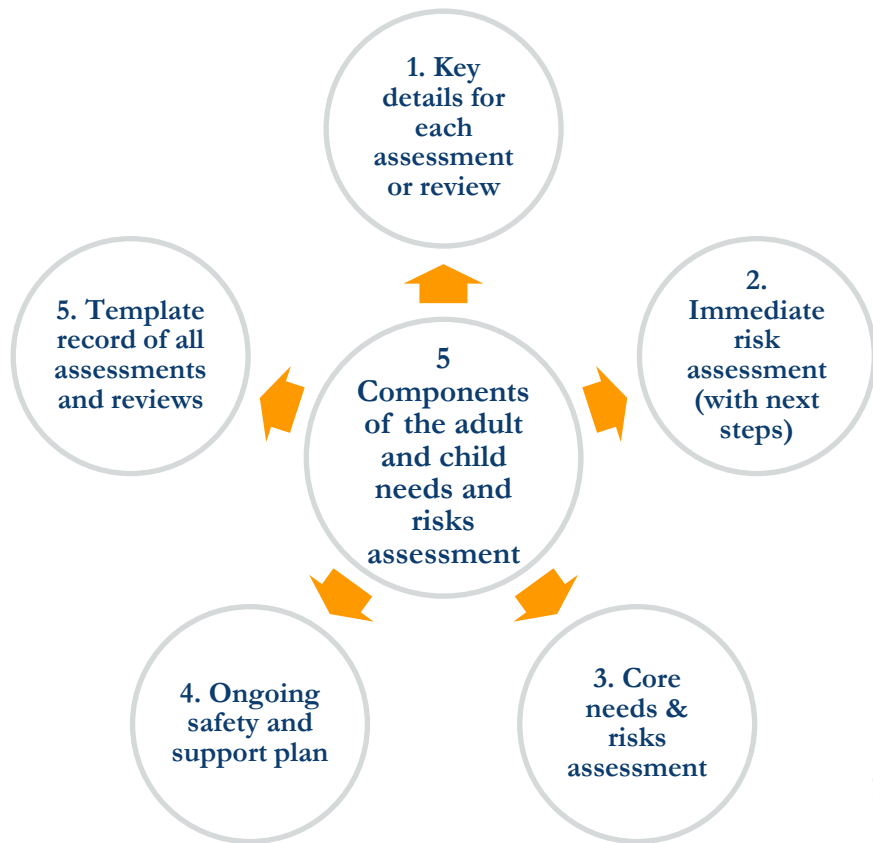


**Pillar Two:  
Individual Support and  
Access to Services**

**Pillar Three:  
Social Inclusion**

**Pillar Four:  
Access to Criminal Justice  
and Redress**

# The Adult and Children Assessment Guides



# Promising Practices from across the OSCE

