

VICTIMOLOGY – PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

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I. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF VICTIMOLOGY

A. The Early Roots

The word “victim” has its roots in many ancient languages that covered a great distance from north-western Europe to the southern tip of Asia and yet had a similar linguistic pattern: *victima* in Latin; *vih*, *wéoh*, *wíg* in Old European; *wih*, *wíhi* in Old High German; *vé* in Old Norse; *weihs* in Gothic; and, *vinak ti* in Sanskrit (Webster’s 1971).

Victimology as an academic term contains two elements:

- One is the Latin word “Victima” which translates into “victim”.
- The other is the Greek word “logos” which means *a system of knowledge, the direction of something abstract, the direction of teaching, science, and a discipline.*

Although writings about the victim appeared in many early works by such criminologists as Beccaria (1764), Lombroso (1876), Ferri (1892), Garófalo (1885), Sutherland (1924), Hentig (1948), Nagel (1949), Ellenberger (1955), Wolfgang (1958) and Schafer (1968), the concept of a science to study victims and the word “victimology” had its origin with the early writings of Benjamin Mendelsohn (1937; 1940), these leading to his seminal work where he actually proposed the term “victimology” in his article “A New Branch of Bio-Psycho-Social Science, Victimology” (1956). It was in this article that he suggested the establishment of an international society of victimology which has come to fruition with the creation of the World Society of Victimology, the establishment of a number of victimological institutes (including the creation here in Japan of the Tokiwa International Victimology Institute); and, the establishment of international journals which are now also a part of this institute. Mendelsohn provided us with his victimology vision and blueprint; and, as his disciples we have followed his guidance. We now refer to Mendelsohn as “The Father of Victimology”.

B. Critical Dates in Victimology

- 1924 Edwin Sutherland includes a chapter on victims in his criminology textbook.
- 1937 Benjamin Mendelsohn publishes his writings on the rapist and his victim.
- 1941 Hans von Hentig publishes article on victim and criminal interactions.
- 1947 Benjamin Mendelsohn coins the term “victimology” in a French journal.
- 1948 Hans von Hentig publishes his book *The Criminal and His Victim*.
- 1949 Frederic Wertham first used the word “victimology” in a book *Show of Violence*.
- 1957 Margery Fry proposes victim compensation in the London Times.
- 1958 Marvin Wolfgang studies homicide victims; uses the term “victim precipitation”.
- 1963 New Zealand enacts the first Criminal Compensation Act.
- 1965 California is the first state in the USA to start Victim Compensation.
- 1966 Japan enacts Criminal Indemnity Law.
- 1966 USA starts to survey crime victims not reported to the police
- 1967 Canada creates a Criminal Compensation Injuries Act as does Cuba and Switzerland.
- 1968 Stephan Schafer writes the first victimology textbook *The Victim and His Criminal*.
- 1972 The first three victim assistance programmes are created in St. Louis, Missouri, San Francisco, California and in Washington, D. C.
- 1973 the first international symposium on victimology is held in Jerusalem, Israel.
- 1974 the first police-based victim advocate project is started in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, USA.
- 1975 The first “Victim Rights’ Week” is organized by the Philadelphia District Attorney,

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Pennsylvania, USA.

- 1976 John Dussich launches the National Organization of Victim Assistance (NOVA) in Fresno, California, USA.
- 1976 Emilio Viano launches the first scholarly journal devoted to victimology.
- 1976 James Rowland creates the first Victim Impact Statement in Fresno, California, USA.
- 1979 The World Society of Victimology is founded in Munster, Germany.
- 1980 Mothers Against Drunk Drivers (MADD) is founded by Candi Lightner after one of her twin daughters was killed by a drunk driver who was a repeat offender.
- 1981 President Ronald Reagan proclaims the first national Victims' Rights Week in April.
- 1982 the first Victim Impact Panel established by MADD to educate drunk drivers about how their victims suffered, started in Rutland, Massachusetts, USA.
- 1984 The Victims of Crime Act (VOCA) establishes the national Crime Victims Fund from federal crime fines to pay for state victim compensation and services.
- 1985 The United Nations unanimously adopts the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power.
- 1987 The US Department of Justice opens the National Victims Resource Centre in Rockville, Maryland.
- 1988 The first "Indian Nations: Justice for Victims of Crime" conference is held by the Office for Victims of Crime in Rapid City, South Dakota, USA.
- 1990 The European Forum for Victim Services was founded by all the national organizations in Europe working for victims of crime in consultative status with the Council of Europe and the UN.
- 1999 The United Nations and the US Office for Victims of Crime publish the Guide for Policymakers on the Implementation of the United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power and the Handbook on Justice for Victims: On the Use and Application of the United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power.
- 2002 On 11 April, 66 the Rome Statute was ratified & went into force on 1 July at which time the *International Criminal Court* became effective and it included the creation of a Victim and Witness Unit.
- 2003 On October 2nd the Tokiwa International Victimology Institute, in Mito Japan opened its doors to promote victim rights, to conduct seminars, courses, publish an international journal, and host annual symposia and lectures and research about victimology.
- 2004 The World Society of Victimology at its annual Executive Committee meeting in Orlando, Florida adopts a dramatic new strategic plan to commit itself to the ideals and promises of the UN Declaration (see Appendix A).
- 2005 Japan puts the UN Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power into their national legislation by adopting a new fundamental law for crime victims. To ensure that the principles would be initiated, the Prime Minister established a cabinet level committee. The new law includes services for victims, restitution from the offender, information about criminal justice and a right to formally participate in the criminal justice process.

Victim Assistance

Since the mid 1970s victim assistance programmes in America had to cope with the realization that this new field did not have a professional corps of people with special training in dealing with crime victims. Those who were working in the programmes were a mixture of medical doctors, ministers, psychiatrists, psychologists, social workers, nurses, on-the-job trained counsellors, persons outside the helping professions and volunteers with all levels of training. There were no international or national professional standards. There was no certificate or degree to prepare someone to do the work of helping victims recover. However, before formal victim assistance programmes evolved, there were some people trained to work with victim problems, especially people who had been helping child abuse and family violence victims. These were social workers. Today, the victim services scene has changed. There are a wide array of professionals and non-professionals working with victims. These would include: social workers, psychologists, psychiatrists, nurses, medical doctors, non-specific professionals (who received their formal degrees in other fields but were trained to help victims in the numerous training schools which are both part and independent of academic settings); and, volunteers (who also received their training in the numerous training schools which are both part and independent of academic settings, many of which are 40 hour training modules offered by the victim service agencies where they work). Today the field of victim assistance is the major career field in victimology for persons wanting to help victims of crime directly. The

single largest and oldest university offering a bachelor's degree in victimology and a victim services certificate is the California State University, Fresno. Worldwide, it can be estimated that there are about 20,000 victim service programmes now operating: reducing suffering and facilitating recovery.

II. KEY CONCEPTS IN VICTIMOLOGY

A. Concepts

1. "Victim" has its roots in the early religious notions of suffering, sacrifice and death. This concept of "victim" was well known in the ancient civilizations, especially in Babylonia, Palestine, Greece, and Rome. In each of these civilizations the law mandated that the victim should be recognized as a person who deserved to be made whole again by the offender.
2. "Crime victim" is a person who has been physically, financially or emotionally injured and/or had their property taken or damaged by someone committing a crime.
3. "Victimogenesis" refers to the origin or cause of a victimization; the constellation of variables which caused a victimization to occur.
4. "Victim Precipitation" a victimization where the victim causes, in part or totally, their own victimization.
5. "Vulnerability" is a physical, psychological, social, material or financial condition whereby a person or an object has a weakness which could render them a victim if another person or persons would recognize these weaknesses and take advantage of them.
6. "General Victim" is a person who has been physically, financially or emotionally injured and/or had their property taken or damaged by someone, an event, an organization or a natural phenomenon.
7. "Victimization" refers to an event where persons, communities and institutions are damaged or injured in a significant way. Those persons who are impacted by persons or events suffer a violation of rights or significant disruption of their well being.
8. "Victimology" is an academic scientific discipline which studies data that describes phenomena and causal relationships related to victimizations. This includes events leading to the victimization, the victim's experience, its aftermath and the actions taken by society in response to these victimizations. Therefore, victimology includes the study of the precursors, vulnerabilities, events, impacts, recoveries, and responses by people, organizations and cultures related to victimizations.
9. "Abuse of Power" is the violation of a national or international standard in the use of organized powerful forces such that persons are injured physically, mentally, emotionally, economically, or in their rights, as a direct and intentional result of the misapplication of these forces.
10. "Victim Assistance, Support or Services" are those activities which are applied in response to victimizations with the intention of relieving suffering and facilitating recovery. This includes offering information, assessments, individual interventions, case advocacy, system advocacy, public policy and programme development.
11. "Victim Recovery" is the resumption of the same or better level of functionality as was enjoyed prior to victimization. Persons who have been victimized vary in their level of mental health and well-being prior to their victimization. Consequently, victimization affects each person in a different way and causes differing degrees of injury or trauma. In their recovery it is necessary for victims to first try to regain their previous level of functioning plus learn from their misfortune and hopefully exceed their previous level of functionality. To be recovered suggests that a person has at least regained their prior level of well-being and at best, has exceeded it. This state may be measured by identifying their previous mental condition and determining if they have at least regained that prior status using the criteria of: trust in others, autonomy of self, individual initiative, competency in daily activities, self-identity, interpersonal intimacy, control over personal situations, successful relationships, safety in daily activities, acknowledgment of memory, trauma symptoms have become manageable, self esteem is restored, resourcefulness is achieved, and there is an improved ability to ward off potential threats.

12. "Child Abuse" is the intentional application of sexual, physical, emotional or psychological injury to a child to include neglect at the hands of her or his parents or care-provider within the confines of their family or place of care.
13. "Victim Offender Mediation" (VOM) is a formal process for face-to-face meetings in the presence of a trained mediator between a victim of a crime and his/her offender who committed that crime. This is also called victim-offender dialogue, victim-offender conferencing, victim-offender reconciliation, or restorative justice. Often the victim and the offender are joined by their respective families and community members or other persons related to the crime event. In these meetings, the offender and the victim talk to each other about the victimization, the effects it had on their lives, and their feelings about it. The aim is to create a mutually agreeable plan to repair any damage or injury that occurred as a result of the crime in the hopes of permanently eliminating the conflict that caused the crime in the first place.
14. "Restorative Justice" is a systematic formal legal response to crime victimization that emphasizes healing the injuries that resulted from the crime and affected the victims, offenders and communities. This process is a departure from the traditional retributive form of dealing with criminals and victims which traditionally have generally perpetuated the conflict which resulted in the original crime.
15. "Victim Trauma" includes emotional and physical experiences that produce pain and injuries. Emotional injury is a normal response to an extremely abnormal event. It results from the pairing of a painful or frightening emotional experience with a specific memory which emerge and have a long-lasting effect on the life of a person. The more direct the exposure to the traumatic event, the higher the risk for emotional harm and prolonged effects.
16. "Crisis Intervention" is the provision of emergency psychological care to traumatized victims so as to help them return to an adaptive level of functioning and to prevent or mitigate the negative impact of psychological and emotional trauma.
17. "Compensation" is a formal administrative procedure provided by law which provides only money to victims for "out of pocket" real expenses directly resulting from the victimization to be paid by the state after the victim is found to qualify according to specific criteria determined by the respective state or federal law.
18. "Restitution" is a formal judicial procedure used by a judge after guilt is determined as part of a sentence which can provide money and/or services to the victim for damages or suffering which resulted from the victimization to be paid or performed by the offender.
19. "Victim Survey" is a periodic data collection and analysis process conducted usually by a government entity within the general population to study information about crime victims regardless whether they reported their victimization to the police or not. It typically uses a face-to-face or telephone interview (or sent questionnaire) and covers demographics, attitudes about crime and details about the victimizations experienced over the previous six months.
20. "Victim Rights" are privileges and procedures required by written law which guarantee victims specific considerations and treatment by the criminal justice system, the government and the community at large.

B. Abuse of Power

1. Background

In spite of the legal sanctions which exist throughout the world to prevent the abuse of power (AOP), it continues to occur with growing frequency and relative impunity. There are essentially five considerations to abuse of power: the type of abuser; the specific abuser; the method used; the victims; and the extent of injury and damage. In each of these five considerations there are numerous examples ranging from the Government of South Africa's use of apartheid on Black South Africans causing extensive death and suffering, to the criminal organization known as the MAFIA which uses racketeering, coercion, intimidation, graft and corruption on innocent citizens causing extensive death, suffering and property loss. The most

recent example of AOP is the government of Yugoslavia (now dominated by ethnic Serbs) using extreme forms of aggression, against Croats, Bosnia Muslims, and most recently ethnic Kosovans with: mass killings; mass rapes; extensive destruction of property; buildings, and sacred cultural symbols, for the most part ignoring the protocols found in the Geneva Conventions for the conduct of warfare. This macro criminological/victimological phenomenon has been extensively reported on by the media and by scholars, but predominantly in narrative form. Thus far, very few attempts have been made to isolate the key variables, explain the dynamics of these events and measure their occurrences.

2. Theoretical Problem

Like all phenomena, these abuse of power events lend themselves to definitions, theoretical organization and measurement. The magnitude of these occurrences dramatically turn our heads away from the dispassionate evaluation of the facts. The drama of these events is so compelling, even trained theorists put aside their research tools and yield to the subjective descriptions which overwhelm those chronicling these massive abuses. In spite of the strong emotions, the magnitude of the problem calls for careful measurement, analysis and synthesis so that a degree of understanding can emerge. This proposal will consider using the social behavioural and conflict theories familiar to most criminologist who study macro criminological phenomena.

III. MEASURING VICTIMIZATION

A. **The Importance and Limitations of Descriptive Research**

Descriptive research is primarily concerned with generally characterizing a phenomenon to determine basic information about amount, frequencies and categories of a particular theme. Thus, one of the basic types of data in descriptive research is nominal level data or the counting of “apples and oranges”. The most important type of victimological descriptive research are victimization surveys. These surveys have thus far become the backbone of victimology information. Not only do these surveys give us the number and types of victims, they also give us trend information so that we can compare victims from one jurisdiction to another, from one type of victim to another, and we can measure the rate of victimization for a given population in a given time period. Another important measurement using survey research is the measurement of behaviours that exist as continua. These types of research give us information about the feelings, opinions and responses the victims have. Thus, they are very important in understanding the impact of victimization and the progress of recovery.

1. The Necessity of Evaluative Research

Another important type of research is the evaluative research used to measure the official government or organizational responses to victimization and the programmes used to help victims cope. These types of research are aimed at measuring the systemic aspects of the victim experience. This is usually focused on the “Twin Criteria of Success”: effectiveness, which evaluates the achievement of programme objectives; and, efficiency which evaluates the consumption of resources over the time needed to achieve objectives.

Another aspect of evaluative research is accountability, both economic and political. Economic accountability focuses on whether the existence of a particular programme in a given community is justified given the funds available and the value-system currently in existence. Political accountability focuses on whether the existence of a victim programme and its costs are supported by those in power. A large part of accountability has to do with community values, outcome expectations and official responsibilities. The measurement of these variables helps to socially contextualize a victim programme or response within the larger society or culture.

2. Explaining the Victimization with Causal Research

Perhaps the most challenging and difficult form of victimological research is causal research. This research attempts to explain why and how some variables are effected by other variables in those phenomena dealing with victims. For example, it might try to understand why some victims are severely traumatized by an event, while other victims are not seriously impacted by the same event. The usual method of this form of research is to first create hypotheses about the relationships between cause variables and effect variables. Then, to measure these variables and see if the data can support the hypotheses.

Ultimately, this process can lead to understanding not just one casual link, but many connected causal links, or a causal chain. A victimologist can then develop a theoretical statement with the new facts

uncovered using causal research. These theoretical statements help to understand complex social and psychological victim phenomenon.

Consequently persons working to prevent victimization could have empirically derived facts so as to reduce the vulnerability of potential victims. Crisis interveners could effectively reduce the suffering of victims immediately after the victimization and prevent the escalation of trauma. Advocates and therapists, basing their response on protocol analysis, could better know what works to facilitate victim recovery and reduce or eliminate long-term suffering and promote the return to stable and functional lives for those victimized.

IV. THE FUTURE OF VICTIMOLOGY

A. Promising Practices

As new programmes and new laws evolve some prove effective and others not. In the search for programmes and laws that fulfil the fundamental aims of the United National Declaration "... to be treated with compassion and respect for their dignity... to be provided with access to the mechanisms of justice and to prompt redress... to be informed of their rights... to be informed of their role and the scope, timing and progress of the proceedings and of the disposition of their cases... to be provided with proper assistance throughout the legal process... to have their privacy protected and insure their safety... to be considered for receipt of restitution... to be informed about receiving compensation..." These criteria determine the value of programmes and laws so that they can be evaluated and ultimately recommended as worthy of duplication. In each of the sub-categories of victim programmes, laws, practices and rights, specific examples have become known. Some of these are listed below (from the *New Directions from the Field: Victims' Rights and Services for the 21st Century*, U.S. Department of Justice, 1998).

1. Law Enforcement

- In San Diego, California there is a partnership between the police and the YWCA which resulted in a Community Domestic Violence Resource Network. This has resulted in a major resource for all the police agencies in the community for accurate information about the availability of shelters at any given time.
- In Provo, Utah victims participate in crime solving, called "victim-assisted" investigations.
- In Orange County, California a group of five victim advocates working together in a non-profit programme work with police and prosecutors to ensure comprehensive services for victims of gang violence.

2. Prosecution

- In Kenosha, Wisconsin, a programme established by the district attorney established special prosecution units for domestic violence and sensitive crimes.
- In Pinellas County, Florida, the state's attorney's office established a special prosecutor to be responsible for all elder exploitation and neglect cases. This includes police training, community outreach and education for other prosecutors.
- In Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, the Victim Services Unit located in the District Attorney's Office, employs Vietnamese and Cambodian victim-witness coordinators to assist victims from Southeast Asia throughout their case process, including translating information and helping victims with emergency medical and financial assistance.

3. Judiciary

- In Tucson, Arizona, the Municipal Court established a partnership with the police, victim advocates, prosecutors and health care professionals to form a Community Domestic Violence Awareness Centre.
- In New York State, the Permanent Judicial Commission on Justice for Children was established to provide assistance to children in the courts so as to provide a special space for child care so that those children whose parents are in court have a safe haven during their stay.

- In Santa Clara County, California, the courts have established local family violence councils to provide a comprehensive response to domestic violence.

4. Corrections

- In Texas, the Department of Criminal Justice started a victim-offender mediation/dialogue programme for victims of severe violence and their incarcerated offenders.
- In California one of the best known victim-offender programmes is the Impact of Crime on Victims (IOC) initiated by the California Youth Authority. This programme is aimed at providing 40 hours of education to inform offenders about how crimes affect victims and society.
- The US Federal Bureau of Prisons piloted victim awareness classes on drug and domestic violence crimes for offenders in halfway houses in Baltimore, Maryland, and Tampa, Florida.

B. Reality of Promising Practices

Although a wide variety of new programmes have been tried and dubbed as “promising” most of these have not been subjected to any form of empirical evaluation. Before these programme can be accepted as worthy of duplication, they must be carefully scrutinized over a sufficient time period.

IV. RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Internationally

Some of the main efforts that are being considered and implemented at the international levels are the following:

1. The World Society of Victimology has begun the process of lobbying to convert the United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power into a Convention with the same name. This would give the instrument more “muscle” to implement the principles embodied in the original declaration across the globe.
2. The World Society of Victimology continues to serve as one of the main international organizations to disseminate the message embodied in the UN Declaration through its members, its newsletter, its triennial symposia, and its two-week courses (see the WSV’s Strategic Plan).
3. The World Society of Victimology has launched a major campaign to create new responses on behalf of victims recently presented in Bangkok, Thailand earlier this year at the 11th UN Congress on Crime (see Appendix C).

B. Nationally

A number of countries have become leaders in the field of victimology and victim services. The most active and productive countries which have had a major international influence have been: The United States of America, Great Britain, The Netherlands, Canada and recently Japan.

Each of these countries have produced model programmes in the area of services, laws, training, education and research:

1. The USA’s Office of Victims of Crime is one of the few governmental agencies in the world which services people in all countries by producing documents, funding for research and hosts conferences in the areas of victimology and victim assistance. Perhaps one of the most dramatic aspects of the USA’s role in victim services is the large number of different types of victim service programmes throughout the country (roughly 20,000 separate programmes for victims of sexual assault, child abuse, elder abuse, domestic violence, etc. In response to the UN Declaration for Victims the USA established a special partnership with the United Nations, the USA produced the two follow-up documents to the 1985 Declaration referred to above: the Handbook on Justice for Victims, and the Guide for Policy Makers, both published in 1999 by the UN Office for Drug Control and Crime Prevention.
2. Great Britain was the origin of a number of significant and innovative practices in victim services, such as the concept of victim reparations all called compensation by Margery Fry in 1957; started one of the first victim support services in the world in Bristol; nationwide victim support services in

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all major cities controlled by a national office in London; home of the journal *International Review of Victimology* and has over the last ten years provided leadership within the European community in the area of victim services.

3. The Netherlands has sponsored a number of very significant activities which continue to reflect their government's support for the world victim rights activities. Set up by the Ministry of Justice in 1987, which provided the early funding for the International Crime Victim Surveys working group which lead to a series of publications about victimization in many countries across the globe. In 1997 the Dutch hosted the 9th World Society of Victimology International Symposium and the website that was created for that event continues today as the most active and useful resource for international victimological materials. In addition to the establishment of victim services throughout the nation, The Netherlands also produces very high quality research in various aspects of victimology. The most recent contribution is the creation of a new research institute dedicated to victimology called the International Victimology Institute Tillburg (INTERVICT).
4. Canada has also established a wide variety of sophisticated victim service programmes throughout their country; hosted the 10th WSV International Symposium on Victimology; is home to a number of leading Victimologists, especially Irvin Waller the prime mover of the UN Declaration and hosts the International Center for the Prevention of Crime in Montreal, established in 1997, which contributes to the promotion of victim-friendly programmes and activities available to interested persons around the world.
5. Japan entered the field of victimology early when Professor S. Nakata introduced Mendelsohn's concept of victimology in 1958 followed in 1966 with the publication of K. Miyazawa's dissertation on international victimology. One of Miyazawa's students, H. Morosawa established a degree programme for students interested in victimology at his university in Mito, Japan and in the last ten years this university has become internationally known for the innovations in victim services, victimological research, its hosting of WSV courses, and recently became the home of the new Tokiwa International Victimology Institute. Today this university now boasts a new Graduate School of Victimology supported by ten victimologists. The most dramatic recent event in Japan was the enactment of the new Fundamental Law for Victims of Crime.

APPENDIX A

Strategic Plan of the World Society of Victimology

The Challenge

The nature and extent of victimization is not adequately understood across the world. Millions of people throughout the world suffer harm as a result of crime, the abuse of power, terrorism and other stark misfortunes. Their rights and needs as victims of this harm have not been adequately recognized.

The UN General Assembly adopted the Declaration on Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power in 1985. This provides a universal benchmark by which progress can be assessed in meeting the needs of victims of crime and abuse of power.

Much progress has been made since 1985 primarily by governments in Western Europe, North America and elsewhere. They have implemented programmes and laws to give effect to those basic principles but even in affluent countries much work remains. Additional resources are needed everywhere especially for countries that are developing and in transition.

The convention on transnational organized crime includes a specific section to protect the rights of victims as does the optional protocol on trafficking. By June, 2005, 99 nations had already ratified the Statute of Rome that establishes a permanent International Criminal Court which gives effect to the principles in the Declaration.

The rights of the victims of crime and abuse of power are still not adequately recognized in any part of the world. Their families, witnesses and others, who aid them, are still unjustly subjected to loss, damage or injury. They too often suffer hardship when assisting in the prosecution of offenders. The recent UN Congress in Bangkok also drew attention to the victims of terrorism.

Victims of stark misfortunes such as natural disasters, accidents and diseases share similar trauma, loss and suffering. Services to meet the needs of victims have much in common between victims of crime, abuse of power and stark misfortunes.

Action must be taken to advance research, services and awareness for victims across the world. This requires persons committed to these ideals, better services, more research, innovative education and training and continued advocacy and rights. It requires a process of assessing progress and acting to make the necessary improvements.

Mission of the World Society of Victimology

Advancing research, services and awareness for victims.

Purposes

1. To Promote Research in Victimology and on Victim Needs

WSV organizes research workshops on victimological issues and victim needs at its international symposia, including national and international surveys on victims, analysis of the consequences of victimization and evaluations of the effectiveness of services and processes for victims. It fosters the publication of the proceedings from its international symposia. It makes available on its web site an international bibliography of documents on victimology and victim issues. Its research committee was created to advance victimological research throughout the world and encourage interdisciplinary and comparative work in this field. It is a partner with the Ministry of Justice of the Netherlands and the UN Office for Drug and Crime Prevention in the www.victimology.nl which provides extensive documentation on victim issues on the web.

Aims

- Foster more research on the implementation of the UN Declaration, including the extent to which countries have implemented the Declaration and the barriers that must be overcome for greater implementation.
- Create the capacity to evaluate practices for victims according to recognized international standards

- Foster research that compares the consequences and responses to victims of crime, abuse of power and other stark misfortunes.
- Be recognized internationally as the leader for advancing research on victim issues and theory.
- Foster research on the extent to which the ICC has implemented services that meet the legislated needs of victims.

2. To Provide Services for Victim Service Providers and Victimologists

WSV organizes workshops on services for victims at its international symposia. Its committee on victim services was established to provide a network of victim services around the globe and to develop a knowledge basis for training and technical assistance based on the International Declaration on the Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power.

Aims

- Support a database of victim service agencies across the world in order to facilitate the referral of victims for services in countries where needed.
- Encourage list-serves for service providers, in major languages in addition to English.
- Bring together information on model practices so that reforms can benefit from best practices.
- Assist the International Criminal Court with its mandate to assist, protect and respect rights for victims.
- Determine the potential WSV role to facilitate financial, political leadership and bring together crisis intervention and other services for victims in extraordinary crises such as catastrophic incidents.
- Encourage relevant institutions and agencies – e.g. Human Rights Commissions – to monitor the availability and standards of services for victims.

3. To Provide Education and Training

WSV organizes International Courses on Victimology and Victim Assistance. The two week course on victimology, victim assistance and criminal justice has been organized annually since 1984 in Dubrovnik. Similar courses on victimology and victim assistance have been organized for Asia in Mito, Japan since 1998, for Central America in San Salvador since 2001, for South America in Caracas since 2002, and a course was organized in South Africa in 2003. It worked with the UN to develop the Handbook on justice for victims on the use and application of the Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power. It has fostered the translation of this handbook into other languages including French and Spanish.

Aims

- Convince law schools and others involved in the training of criminal justice professionals to include courses on victimology, victim rights and issues, and convince those who certify qualifications, such as bar associations, law enforcement and judicial bodies to require this knowledge.
- Encourage university courses and degree programmes on victimology, including victim assistance, victim rights, crisis response, restorative justice and victimization prevention.
- Promote a system of credentials for victim service professionals (staff and volunteers) and establish international standards.
- Establish a programme to mentor and develop leaders able to influence action on behalf of victims.
- Establish international courses in regions where they do not yet exist.
- Encourage reciprocal training of victim service practitioners from different countries.
- Host an annual training course for international victim service providers.
- Develop standards for curricula and disseminate training materials.
- Develop a mechanism for authorizing the use of the WSV logo and mission statements for courses and other activities.

4. To Advance Advocacy and Rights

WSV played a leadership role in promoting the adoption by the UN General Assembly of the UN Declaration on Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power in 1985. It assisted the UN in developing the Guide for policy makers on the implementation of the United Nations Declaration of Basic Principles of Justice for Victims of Crime and Abuse of Power. It fostered the translation of the Guide into major world languages including French and Spanish. It continues to lobby governments on the importance of legislative and programme reforms to meet those basic principles, particularly through its UN Liaison Committee at the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice and at quinquennial UN Congresses on crime. It has encouraged the adoption of the UN norm based on the IBCR's Guidelines

on Child Victims and Witnesses. It has advocated project grants for pilot projects to implement the Declaration as provided by the UN Office on Drugs and Crime.

Aims

- Advocate increased funding for research and services for victims to accelerate implementation of the Declaration.
- Promote a convention on the implementation of the Declaration.
- Raise political and public awareness of victim issues and rights.
- Encourage organizations and others committed to reducing the number of victims of all types.
- Organize events to interest government officials in making greater progress in the implementation of the Declaration.
- Establish a WSV representative in each country to assist with information on victim issues and rights and advocate for improvements.
- Foster national societies for victimology to pursue national missions and activities similar to the WSV.
- Encourage mechanisms to provide an early warning system to prevent abuses of power and protect potential victims from stark misfortunes.

5. To Provide Member Opportunities

WSV has organized an International Symposium on Victimology every three years since 1979 in all major regions of the world (registration for members is reduced). It publishes a quarterly newsletter – The Victimologist – to keep its members up to date on: developments in different countries, workshops and conferences, and opportunities to participate in the WSV committees and activities. It maintains a contact list of members from over 60 countries. It enables individuals and national organizations to be members in an international non-governmental organization in consultative status with the United Nations and the Council of Europe devoted to victimological issues.

Aims

- Provide members with a certificate of their membership which also identifies the mission of the WSV and its consultative status with the UN and the Council of Europe.
- Provide a web page with information on WSV, including a members' only section with list-serv and occasional newflashes.
- Develop a house style that integrates the mission, including the logo, shirts and pins.
- Enrich the privileges in order to attract and retain the membership of the key academics, service providers and policy makers who are currently involved in Victimology.
- Provide free thematic brochures on victim issues.

6. Administration

WSV is currently organized under an elected Executive Committee with three co-opted members. The EC is supported by 14 standing committees which rely on volunteer and in-kind resources. The committees are designed to organize the main activities of the WSV. These include Membership, Budget, Policy and Programme, Public Relations, Publications, Research, Victim Services, Symposium, International Courses, UN Liaison, Strategic Planning, Awards, Regional Development and the International Advisory Board. Its expenditures are limited to publication of brochures, office support, publications and so on. The organization is currently registered as a not for profit entity in Monchengladbach, Germany. The current President is located in the USA. The Secretary General is in Canada. Other officers and executive board members are located in eight other countries.

Aims

- Engage more of its active members in committee work.
- Hire professional staff to support the implementation of the priorities from the strategic plan approved by the EC and coordinate day to day operations.
- Establish a permanent operating base to provide offices for these staff and administrative functions.
- Establish a technological system to support the WSV.
- Develop resources to achieve these objectives.

(Adopted by the EC in June 2005 Orlando Meeting)

APPENDIX B

World Society of Victimology
Recommendations to the 11th UN Crime Congress
Bangkok, Thailand
April, 2005

The WSV calls on Member States to take the following actions through the UN Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice Programme as well as through their national overseas development agencies:

1. Victim Assistance Programmes

Invest in projects to implement victim assistance and support, including services provided to women and children by non-governmental organizations, health and mental health, and police professionals.

2. Research and Surveys

Invest in research to assess the extent to which victims receive services and justice as well as surveys to measure the extent of victimization and its impact, including the international victim survey and a regular survey focused on domestic violence.

3. Education and Training

Develop standards for police, lawyers, health professionals and others as well as establish appropriate training and educational courses.

4. Legislation

Adopt legislation that puts the principles in the UN Victim Declaration into the language of Member States in a form that it provides a framework for the implementation of the Declaration.

5. Permanent Network for Victim Assistance and Justice

Establish a permanent network of centres concerned with research, training, education and action for victims.

6. Prevention

Implement national crime prevention programmes consistent with the UN Guidelines and the recommendations of the World Health Organization to significantly reduce violence and criminal victimization with a priority to violence within the family.

7. Convention

Establish the process to develop a draft convention for consideration by the UN Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice in 2006 to foster universal implementation of the UN Victim Declaration.

APPENDIX C

Five Global Challenges from the Field

(New Directions from the Field: Victims' Rights and Services for the 21st Century)

In the course of compiling the hundreds of recommendations from the field and in listening to the voices of victims, their advocates, and allied professionals who work with crime victims throughout the nation, certain key recommendations emerged. The following five global challenges for responding to victims of crime in the 21st century form the core of the hundreds of ideas and recommendations presented in this report.

- To enact and enforce consistent, fundamental rights for crime victims in federal, state, juvenile, military, and tribal justice systems, and administrative proceedings.
- To provide crime victims with access to comprehensive, quality services regardless of the nature of their victimization, age, race, religion, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, capability, or geographic location.
- To integrate crime victims' issues into all levels of the nation's educational system to ensure that justice and allied professionals and other service providers receive comprehensive training on victims' issues as part of their academic education and continuing training in the field.
- To support, improve, and replicate promising practices in victims' rights and services built upon sound research, advanced technology, and multidisciplinary partnerships.
- To ensure that the voices of crime victims play a central role in the nation's responses to violence and those victimized by crime.

New Directions provides recommendations that point specifically to the implementation of these five global challenges. Each section and chapter is based upon papers submitted by leading experts in the field as well as the input of victim advocates, justice system and allied professionals, crime victims, and others who participated in public hearings, working group meetings, and those who provided individual comments and review as the document progressed towards completion.

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