

**TRAUMA  
TREATMENT**  
INTERNATIONAL



**A different  
approach  
for victims of  
trauma**



## Thinking differently to tackle trauma

**At Trauma Treatment International, we're working for a world where everyone can get the support they need to stop past traumas from adversely defining their future.**

Millions of people globally are caught up in war. An estimated 40 million people live in slavery. In fact, traumatic events account for 50% of all mental health problems worldwide; and yet trauma treatment is rarely available. Most victims of trauma never get the help they need to recover.

Without support, the survivors of traumatic events can experience effects that last a lifetime. Not only that, the repercussions of trauma can harm the lives of those around them for generations to come.

Effective trauma treatment can stop this, but we need to find new ways to reach more people.

That's why we've set up Trauma Treatment International, an organisation working to improve access to trauma treatment for the survivors of torture, trafficking, slavery and war. Through our global network of specialists, we partner with organisations who are already supporting victims of trauma by building their skills in the most effective trauma treatments and assisting them to work more effectively to end trauma. This ensures victims get the best possible support to recover.

**Torture, slavery, trafficking and war destroy lives. Together we can rebuild them.**



# The challenge

**For those who survive traumatic experiences, the effects last long after the events have ended, often with far-reaching consequences.**

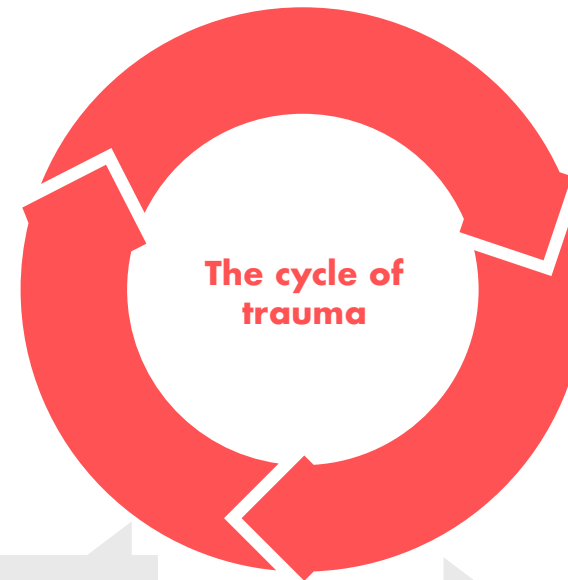
Most survivors of trauma receive no support at all to rebuild their lives. There are simply not enough professionals with the skills and knowledge to provide the mix of psychosocial and clinical support that people need to recover from trauma.

Trauma Treatment International has been set up to change this. We focus on improving access to psychological treatment and interventions that work with the memory of the trauma. However, for this to be effective, care must be holistic and ensure the other needs of victims are met - physical, social and practical.

**'Victims of trauma often tell us that the place they were imprisoned or the people who trafficked them have imprinted themselves irreparably on their body and mind. We believe that the right support can help change that.'**

Polly Rossdale  
Founder

**Psychological** effects include reliving traumatic experiences that can feel as real as the original incident itself. This triggers intense feelings of fear, helplessness, horror or shame. Psychologically traumatised people are also at higher risk of diabetes, cancer and a host of other illnesses, all ultimately contributing to a reduced quality of life and lower life expectancy.



Everyday tasks such as personal care, travel or work often seem impossible for people suffering the effects of trauma, causing long-lasting consequences such as economic hardship and other **practical** problems.

**Social** withdrawal caused by trauma has a determinant effect on family life and other relationships that can continue for generations to come. Trauma can impair parenting skills or damage once-loving partnerships. Trauma can perpetuate violence and decrease the ability to cope with future adverse events.

# Our approach



**We believe that the best way to achieve large-scale improvements in trauma treatment is to work in partnership with organisations that support traumatised communities already. We do this in two ways.**

## **1** Filling skills gaps in effective trauma treatment

- **Building skills:** We assess organisational needs and skills gaps, implement tailored and contextual training programmes and develop clinical supervision structures. We build on existing skills and local knowledge and use techniques proven to reduce traumatic stress across cultures.
- **Delivering treatment where skills are not available:** We prefer to co-develop and build skills, but when the need is urgent and our partner has requested it, we can provide direct, specialist psychological assistance to victims of trauma. However, we approach direct delivery as another way of skills-sharing too, meaning that we build in processes for mentoring and training. Working this way supports our aim to increase the availability of trauma-informed care by capacity-building with partner organisations.

### **Training professionals in Rwanda to help former combatants find hope**

*The training enabled RDRC staff to learn more skills, to help them deal with difficulties related to mental health and trauma which have become rampant in ex-combatant's lives, following the war and genocide.'*

- RDRC Commissioner, Brigadier General Peter Bagabo

In 2018, Trauma Treatment International partnered with the Rwandan Demobilisation and Rehabilitation Centre (RDRC) and professionals from VIVO International to support the delivery of their residential rehabilitative workshop for 350 former combatants who were identified to be suffering from a combination of PTSD and alcohol misuse.

A needs assessment was conducted, informing a bespoke curriculum delivered over 14 days, to train psychologists, psychiatrists and support staff at RDRC and the Caraes Ndera Psychiatric Hospital in new techniques and specialist interventions to more effectively treat and support the former combatants.

**These activities seek to ensure that effective care is delivered sustainably over the long-term by increasing the number of people equipped with trauma-informed skills; ultimately improving access to high quality treatment for those who need it most.**

## 2 Supporting organisations working with victims of trauma

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Trauma takes its toll. Staff who work with victims of trauma are themselves at risk of psychological distress, such as compassion fatigue, indirect trauma or burnout. Employers have a duty to proactively protect the mental health of their staff.

At Trauma Treatment International we work with organisations to build a more resilient workforce, better equipping staff and the organisations they work for to care for victims of trauma. This enables them to make a bigger impact in the communities where they work.

- **Strengthening resilience** – we conduct organisational assessments to identify and strengthen working practices that safeguard staff and the people they serve.
- **Preventing and effectively responding to stress** – we build preparedness by offering toolkits for trauma-informed responses to critical incidents. We also work with organisations to develop systems and strategies for staff care.
- **Building understanding of trauma** – we work with staff across organisations to build knowledge and understanding of trauma and recognise the different ways trauma can affect them and their beneficiaries.



**'It is essential that organisations offer staff and partners pre- and post-mission care in order to keep human rights workers both healthy and effective over time.'**

Chuck Lustig,  
Deputy Executive Director, Operations  
Human Rights Watch







## How we deliver



### Our people

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Improving access to effective trauma treatment is a shared endeavour between survivors, the organisations that support them and ourselves.

We could not do any of this without the unique network of **Trauma Specialist Associates** we are building. Our Associates have a range of different regional, thematic and therapeutic skills and work cross-culturally in the UK and in international settings. This means that we can adapt each programme to the local context and add real value to mental health and psychosocial programmes designed to support people with complex needs. **This global, mobile network enables an efficient and agile operating model that can respond on an international level without incurring the costs of a traditional organisational structure.**

Our Founders have decades of experience working in the UK and internationally in the field of trauma and torture rehabilitation. Our Board all have a long-standing commitment to bringing justice to and improving the lives of those who have experienced the worst forms of abuse and adversity. We respond to and learn from survivors and our partners who support them.

### Committed to evidence

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Although good techniques exist for treating the effects of trauma, there's still more we can learn. Current approaches are often driven by the skills and resources that are available rather than by evidence of effective practice. And, even when evidence is taken into account, this is often derived from research undertaken in high-income countries, with different cultural and societal considerations.

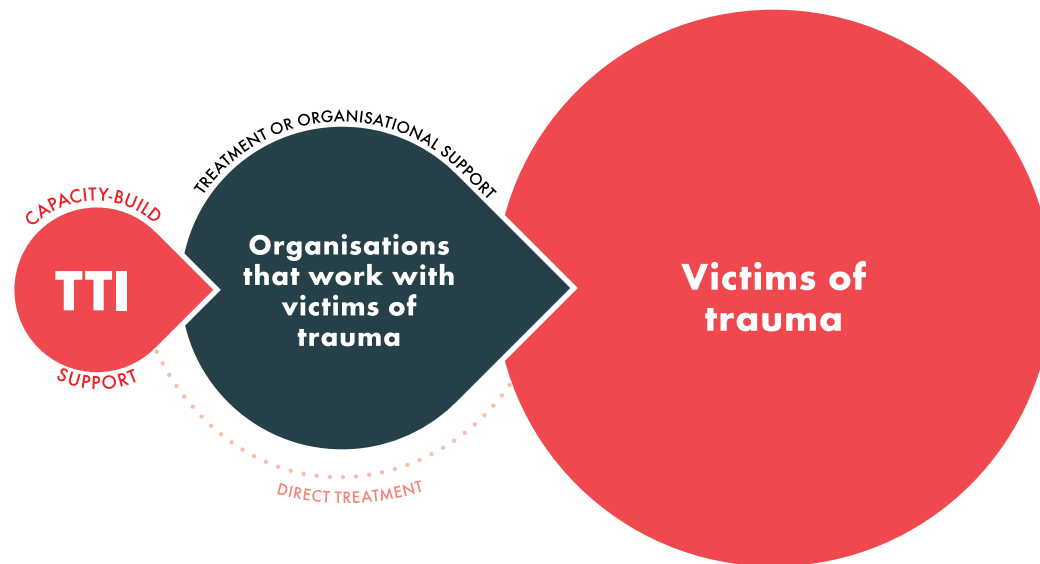
This is why, in all aspects of our work, we actively seek to document and share our learning and contribute to the evidence base around trauma treatment to ensure that even more victims of trafficking, torture, war and slavery receive the most effective psychological support they need to recover.

## Collaboration

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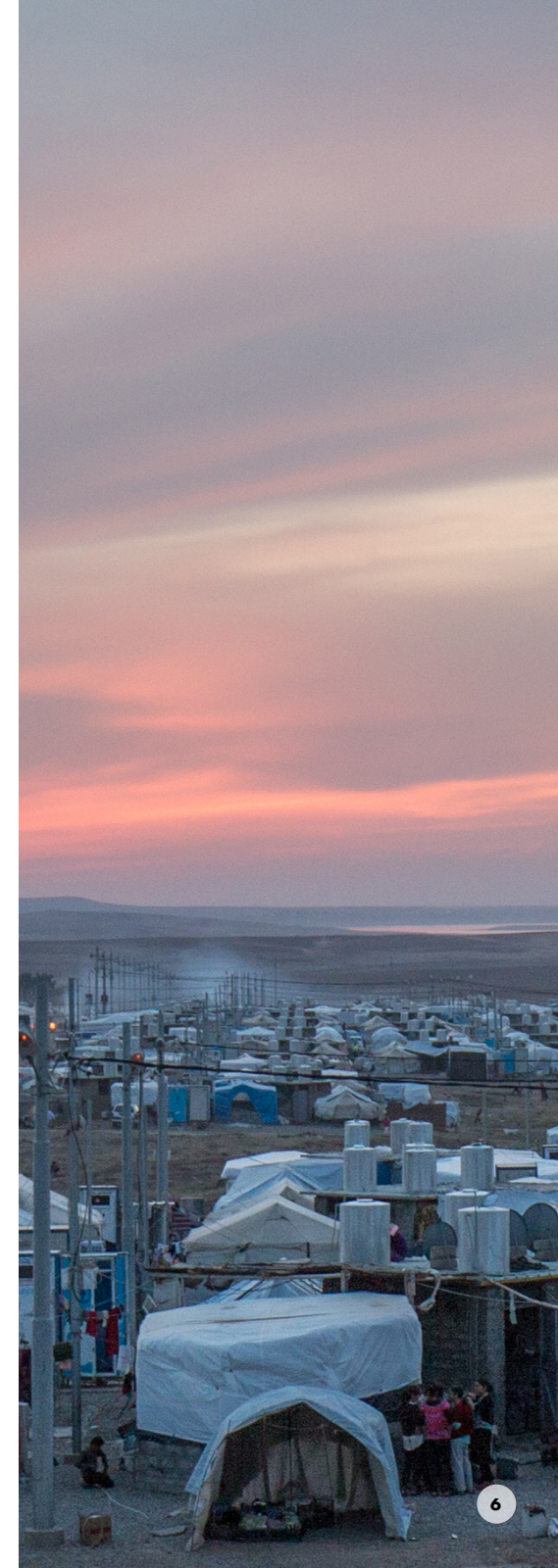
We have a dual focus on providing support for both the victims of trauma as well as the people and organisations that support them. The success of each of these informs the other.

Collaboration is key to our strategy to develop sustainable change in trauma treatment. By strengthening the capabilities and resilience of organisations already at work in the field, we create a ripple effect enabling us to achieve greater long term impact.



**'The number of people affected by trauma vastly outstrips the resources available to alleviate the psychological injury. That is why we both support organisations that work to end violations as well as capacitating others to become more effective at treating the consequences of trauma.'**

Brock Chisholm  
Founder



# Our founders

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**Dr. Brock Chisholm**  
**Founder & Clinical Director**  
brock@tt-intl.org

Brock is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist who has worked in specialist refugee trauma services for over 15 years.

He is the Clinical Lead for the UK Psychological Trauma Society; Trustee of Survivors UK and lectures at the Royal College of Tropical Medicine on working with traumatised populations in a humanitarian setting. He has assisted in the development and implementation of comprehensive services for trauma survivors internationally.

He was previously the lead psychologist in a large international war crimes investigation into the use of torture. Brock is regularly requested to provide assistance or expert opinion by lawyers or criminal investigators into torture and slavery cases. He frequently provides training in evidence informed trauma treatment as well as improving the organisational resilience of NGOs in trauma exposed environments.



**Dr. Katy Robjant**  
**Founder**  
katy@tt-intl.org

Katy is a Consultant Clinical Psychologist with over 10 years experience running treatment programmes for victims of trauma in the UK and internationally.

She is the National Director of Clinical Services at Freedom from Torture in the UK. At VIVO International she lead the implementation of regional trauma services for victims of sexual and gender-based violence in Eastern Democratic Republic of Congo. She was the Head of Therapy Services at the Helen Bamber Foundation, a charity providing treatment to victims of human rights violations.

Katy is considered a global expert on trafficking and mental health. She sits on the panel of experts of GloACT (Global Action against trafficking in persons and smuggling of migrants), a joint initiative of UN agencies. She trains in Narrative Exposure Therapy worldwide including in the UK, Sri Lanka, Democratic Republic of Congo, Uganda and Ukraine.



**Polly Rossdale**  
**Founder & Programme Director**  
polly@tt-intl.org

Polly has nearly 15 years experience working in the field of trauma rehabilitation and with refugees.

In Greece, she spent two years coordinating a project for torture survivors for the global law firm Reed Smith.

She has worked at the Helen Bamber Foundation and was a Deputy Director at human rights charity Reprieve.

At Reprieve she coordinated a rehabilitation project for former Guantanamo detainees in Europe, North Africa and South America and worked with Brock to train a local team of clinicians and social workers, to establish the first multidisciplinary torture rehabilitation services for torture survivors in post-revolution Tunisia.



# Together, we can help people to move on from the past and look to the future

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Trauma Treatment International operates as a non-profit organisation and is registered as a charity in the United Kingdom.

We rely on the generous support of people and organisations to do this work; as well as raising funds by providing services to other trauma-exposed organisations to build their skills, capacity and resilience.

If you would like to support our work, find out more about our services or collaborate with us, we'd love to hear from you.

**Visit [tt-intl.org](https://tt-intl.org) or email [info@tt-intl.org](mailto:info@tt-intl.org) to learn more. Thank you.**

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