A woman with dark hair, wearing a beige long-sleeved top and a headset, is seated at a white desk in a call center. She is looking at a computer monitor. The desk is white, and the background features purple cubicle walls. To the left, there is a large potted plant. The floor is a mix of orange and purple. The text 'Slachtofferhulp Nederland' is visible in the top left corner.

Slachtofferhulp Nederland

Beyond Victimhood

Multi-year perspective 2025–2028

Beyond Victimhood

Multi-year perspective 2025–2028

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Foreword

It is good to see that politicians have dedicated warm words to victims in recent years. The latest government programme reads: “Victims deserve recognition and support in dealing with the aftermath of a criminal offence. Various victims’ rights have been introduced in recent years, including restorative justice. Victims experience an improvement in practice as a result, though further targeted improvements are still necessary.” We also notice a lot of support in the House of Representatives, which is essential. Far too many victims remain deprived of attention and enforcement of their rights.

Only a small proportion of reported crimes actually go to trial. Even in court, enforcement of victims’ rights remains a constant challenge. In cases settled by other means, victims have no opportunity to exercise their rights.

The mental health care sector has long wait times. It is disheartening to see that offenders, convicts and ex-convicts are provided with an extensive range of rehabilitation services while their victims are left to manage their recovery through their health insurance, often necessitating out-of-pocket expenses.

At the same time, there seems to be more room for other forms of recognition besides criminal law. This search offers opportunities to provide more sustainable solutions and avoid unnecessary litigation. In practice, however, there is still very limited room for restorative justice due to insufficient decisiveness within the chain approach. Data sharing and differing interests are recurring problems here.

Increased victim support from the European government seems likely. The EU directive to combat violence against women and domestic violence was adopted in 2024. A modified Victims’ Rights Directive further reinforces victims’ rights. Slachtofferhulp Nederland (Victim Support Netherlands) and Victim Support Europe have been strong advocates for this initiative. We hope that this Directive will be embraced next year as well.

We have titled this multi-year perspective “Beyond Victimhood”. We aim to convey that being a victim does not define a person’s identity and that guilt and shame have no place in this context. We want to start a public discussion about the position of victims and move from a biased word and image to a judgment-free representation. The historic criminal trial in France in the Gisèle Pelicot rape case was quite a wake-up call for French society. Other countries in Europe will follow. Victims need not be ashamed of what was done to them; it is their assailants who should be ashamed.

Utrecht, 5 December 2024
Board of Directors,

Rosa Jansen,
Chair

Edward van der Kruijk,
Member



Goal, mission, vision

Our goal

Justice and recovery for every victim.

Our mission

We stand beside every victim.

We give victims a voice.

We help victims today.

Our vision

- 1) We are close by and immediately present when needed.
- 2) We represent the interests of victims as long as necessary and for as short as possible.
- 3) We offer a comprehensive package of practical support, legal advocacy and psychosocial assistance.
- 4) We collaborate with partners in our networks to that end.
- 5) Drawing on our knowledge and expertise, we serve as a guide for victims and their support network.
- 6) We help victims and surviving relatives take back control of their lives.
- 7) We represent the interests of victims and strengthen their position.

1. Our social mission

In 2024 – the year in which we created this multi-year perspective – Slachtofferhulp Nederland proudly celebrated its 40th anniversary. Since our foundation, we have become a household name in Dutch society. Every year, we reach more than one million Dutch people with over 1,300 employees, including more than 700 volunteers rooted in local communities. We help them get back on track when they become victims of domestic or international crime and calamities. The credit is not ours to take, however; citizens have been helping one another since long before Slachtofferhulp Nederland existed. That is called neighbourliness: people standing up for each other together, with their hearts in the right place, both voluntarily and professionally. We cherish it as the unique DNA of our organisation.

The foundation of our work

The rights of victims of crime are enshrined in law – specifically, Title IIIA (Article 51a through h) of the Dutch Code of Criminal Procedure¹. The Protection of Victims of Crime Decree² stipulates that as a victim support organisation, we must provide, at a minimum:

1 https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0001903/2021-05-07/#BoekEerste_TiteldeelIIIA

2 <https://wetten.overheid.nl/BWBR0038468/2022-07-01/0>

- information, advice and support relevant to the rights of the victim. This includes guidance on accessing procedures for compensation for damages resulting from criminal offences, as well as information about the victim’s role in the criminal proceedings, including preparation for attending court hearings;
- information on or direct referral to relevant specialised support organisations;
- emotional and, if available, psychological support;
- advice on financial and practical matters resulting from the criminal offence;
- advice on the risk and prevention of harassment, retaliation, and secondary and repeat victimisation, unless otherwise provided by other public or private organisations.

Rooted in society

Slachtofferhulp Nederland serves as a dedicated partner for all Dutch municipalities. Municipalities are responsible for providing assistance to their residents, including people who have been victimised and those bereaved by suicide. That work is crucial. We are available 24/7 to provide relief and support to municipalities and their residents in urgent situations. Good support after a major, unexpected event helps prevent social unrest. We ensure that victims are heard, which helps them process the event.

We offer municipalities:

- support and aftercare during disaster and crisis response, including in the form of group care in coordination with the municipality, the police, the Public Health Service and the Veiligheidsregio (safety region);
- custom support in the event of crime with a high impact on victims and their social circle and the sense of security in the local community;
- help to sooner identify and reach vulnerable residents and hard-to-reach groups of victims at increased risk of repeat victimisation. We offer help to better protect them.

We are always ready to assist and support municipalities and their residents in urgent situations of any magnitude.

Doing more

Since 2014, at the request of the Ministry of Justice and Security, we have provided support to the loved ones of missing persons. Since 2022, with a grant from the Ministry of the Interior and Kingdom Relations, we have offered emotional support to whistleblowers. We also work closely with other ministries: Health, Welfare and Sport (sex offences and other abuse in sports), Infrastructure and Water Management (traffic affairs), Foreign Affairs (missing persons, calamities and crimes abroad) and Education, Culture and Science (transgressive behaviour in the cultural and media sector). We also collaborate on the work of the Dutch commissioner for combatting transgressive behaviour and sexual violence.

Our expertise is increasingly sought to advise or support a broader range of social problems. That requires a tailored approach. Other ministries have sought us out for support with matters such as the COVID crisis, the childcare benefits scandal, and natural disasters such as the flood in Limburg. In such cases, we critically examine how our services and knowledge can be beneficial. We ensure the temporary nature of such activities in order to maintain the current high level of quality for our primary services.

Making a difference in society

Slachtofferhulp Nederland can be proud of forty years of added social value. Victims can come to us for professional support after an incident or disaster at no cost and without complex intake procedures. We have no waiting lists. With our help, people can return to work or education faster. We help victims take care of themselves. We tap into their power and give them back control. We help prevent trauma. With the right support, victims are less likely to need mental health care; if they need care, we can ensure a timely referral. Our legal aid improves quality and turnaround times within the court system. We help restore trust in society and fellow human beings more quickly. By offering every victim justice and recovery, we contribute to a resilient society.

2. Unique service

The human touch is embedded in our philosophy and way of working. Slachtofferhulp Nederland serves as an accessible guide in obtaining recognition, acknowledgement, justice and recovery when victims, witnesses, loved ones and surviving relatives need support after a shocking and unexpected situation

Our multidisciplinary expertise is unique. Even if a victim only requests legal assistance, our staff have adequate psychosocial expertise. They are mindful of the event's impact on clients, as well as the extent of their coping capacity, receptivity and resilience. The same holds true the other way around, when a victim has a psychosocial question. We pay attention to what the client is experiencing from a multidisciplinary perspective, which sets us apart from other organisations.

The goal of our contact is to listen to the client carefully and without judgment. We identify the circumstances and needs. We provide information about rights and amenities and make arrangements for further representation or referral. Our staff work with the victim to determine the requirements for recovery, develop a plan accordingly, and implement it.

For some people, a few tips and self-help tools are enough, while others require extensive guidance and support. We work flexibly according to

the victim's needs. We provide tailored information, advice and services at the time they are relevant to the victim.

In the event of a homicide, sex crime or serious violence, we deploy specialised support through case management. During the acute phase, the case manager provides support with practical and emotional issues the victim or surviving relative is facing. At a later stage, the case manager represents the victim's interests by liaising with police, prosecutors, health and educational institutions, their employer and other organisations. Our legal team is also involved in that.

One of the goals of case management is to prevent secondary victimisation. This is increasingly caused by media communications. Victims often unwittingly and unintentionally find themselves at the centre of media attention, which can make them become victims all over again. Their privacy may also be violated. This can also lead to social unrest that could have been avoided. Given the current developments in the media landscape and increasing demand, the case manager can no longer be tasked with this work. As such, Slachtofferhulp Nederland has set up the Namens de Familie (on behalf of the family) department together with experiential experts and media specialists. The department advises victims and surviving relatives on how to deal with the media, handles public relations if required, and has experts on social media.

Informal networks – family, friends, neighbours, colleagues (we call them the “helpers”) – are usually the main source of support for a victim. The victim's social environment and professional support, such as the GP and social workers, enable us to connect with the victim. They can also enable the helpers to provide support to victims we are unable to reach.

We will continue to invest in engaging and supporting the helpers, which contributes to more effective assistance. This includes our Herstelcirkels (recovery circles), in which victims' loved ones offer each other support. In addition to their own informal network, victims can also receive support from other victims ("peers"). To that end, we have established a peer contact programme. Peer contact is available in the form of themed meetings, online communities – in which we also work with ambassadors (experiential experts) – and personal groups. We will continue to expand the scale and diversity of peer contact in the coming years based on the results of scientific research.

Evidence and practice-based

Our work is based on evidence and practical experience. We draw on available scientific knowledge and our professional expertise. We align with research tracks and initiatives by collaborative research partners. Most importantly, we set the agenda to address the gaps we identify at the intersection of science and practice. To that end, we use our rich data collection and make it available to the scientific community if it serves the interests of victims. We monitor our understanding of victim needs by measuring, analysing and drawing conclusions about the impact and quality of our services.

Our psychosocial support policy and methods are based on the Multidisciplinary Guidelines for Psychosocial Crisis Management³. This multidisciplinary guideline reflects current thinking and available scientific knowledge about psychosocial support. This guideline emphatically mentions *watchful waiting* and the *stepped care* model.

After a major event, victims need to recover. Their recovery may be spontaneous, or it may require work (both psychological and material). Recovery monitoring concerns the areas of recovery as well as the duration of service.

When psychological or emotional consequences are involved, we apply the principles of the scientific **stepped care** model. The stepped care model is a methodology used in healthcare and psychiatry. Its fundamental feature is that all clients begin with low-intensity treatment.

The first step of the stepped care model is **watchful waiting**. In watchful waiting, the client agrees to delay treatment and to wait and see how symptoms develop first. This is because some clients with psychological symptoms recover spontaneously. The watchful waiting period is set at 4 to 6 weeks.

During this period, social workers from Slachtofferhulp Nederland provide support focused on stress reduction and recovery. We listen without judgment and provide information about stress reactions. We also assess the impact of the event on multiple aspects of life. Based on that assessment, we carefully take recovery-oriented actions and coordinate what the client can do on their own and where they need support. We monitor the progress of recovery and recovery-oriented actions; if we notice insufficient recovery, we refer the client for further assistance.

³ Previously: "Multidisciplinary Guideline for Psychosocial Assistance Related to Accidents and Disasters". The original dates back to 2007 and was reviewed and updated in 2014 and 2023 by experts from the Gezondheid en Milieu centre (Centre for health and the environment) of the Rijksinstituut voor Volksgezondheid en Milieu (National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM)), Arq/Impact, emergency services, Slachtofferhulp Nederland, Rode Kruis (the Red Cross), the safety region, Geneeskundige hulpverleningsorganisatie in de regio (Ghor), the public health service (GGD), the mental health care sector (GGZ), doctors, psychologists, psychiatrists, social services, welfare organisations, ministries and universities.

If these symptoms do not subside after 4 to 6 weeks, spontaneous recovery is unlikely, and there is a risk of psychological symptoms. In that case, the client will be referred – usually to their GP, but sometimes to other organisations as well. This is the next step in the stepped care model.

In 2022, the Dutch Research and Data Centre (WODC) confirmed that Slachtofferhulp Nederland’s methodologies are evidence-based. Following their advice from the “What Works” study, we are investigating whether victims of more serious crimes have a greater need for aftercare.

Experiential expertise

In addition to practical knowledge, literature and research, our expertise is informed by experiential expertise. Experiential expertise is more than just having experience. An experiential expert is someone who has become knowledgeable both through their own experience and by undergoing experiential training so that their own lived event can be translated into policy, treatment or approaches for a larger group of victims with a similar experience. In certain sectors, such as healthcare, welfare, social services, research and government, experiential experts are widely used in research, education and training in both the executive process and at the policy level. Our use of experiential expertise is currently limited to peer contact, working with ambassadors within online communities, and co-creation for the development of new services. However, we want to make more use of it; we want to develop a vision of experiential expertise and take stock of how we can make even better use of it.

Service developments

Several things stand out in our trend analysis over the past few years:

Traditional victimisation

In 2023, 20% of Dutch people aged 15 and older were victims of traditional crimes such as vandalism, violence or property crimes. This is more than in 2021 (17%) and nearing pre-pandemic levels again. Between 2005 and 2021, victimisation through traditional crime fell by nearly 60%. The decline was greatest in property crime. After 2021, we see an increase that is particularly notable for violent crimes.

In 2023, police reports were filed, and charges were pressed for more than a third of traditional crimes (37% and 32%, respectively). This is similar to 2021. Victims of property crimes are particularly likely to file a report or press charges. In 2021 and 2023, the main reason for not reporting or pressing charges was the thought that it wouldn’t help (41% and 43%, respectively), followed by not having thought about it or not finding it very important (26% for both years).

Over a quarter of victims of traditional crime reported experiencing consequences from the crime: emotional or psychological problems, physical injuries or harm, and/or financial hardship. At 21%, emotional or psychological problems were reported most often. Victims of violent crime are particularly affected by this.

Online crime

While victimisation through traditional crime is decreasing, victimisation through online crime is on the rise. However, the separation between offline and online victimisation is not always clear in practice. Many offences can occur both online and offline simultaneously, including various forms of violence or harassment, such as intimidation and stalking. Online crime

penetrates deep into the victims' personal lives and can take place within the safety of their homes. The willingness to report online crime is very low.

According to the Safety Monitor, 16% of Dutch people aged 15 years and older were victims of online crime in 2023; this was 17% in 2021. The report Online Safety and Crime by CBS (Statistics Netherlands) shows that 15% of Dutch people (2.2 million) aged 15 or older were victims of online crime in 2022. Online scams and fraud were the most common, specifically involving purchase fraud. Victimisation through online crime has increased 22% since 2012. Purchase fraud increased the most. Young people (ages 15–25) are more likely to fall victim to online crime than older people. People over 65 are the least affected. In 2023, 17% of victims reported this type of crime, down from 19% in 2021.

Research shows that victims of cybercrime often experience more emotional than financial damage and more acute stress than comparable traditional crimes. They often face secondary victimisation and misunderstanding from those around them. On top of that, the criminal justice chain is not set up for mass victimisation due to the enormous scalability of cybercrime. That scalability means that many people can be victimised simultaneously at the push of a button.

With that and the extent of cybercrime in mind, we need to continue to improve the delivery of assistance to these victims in the coming years. To that end, we are investing in our cooperation with local and national chain and network partners. We are further developing the close cooperation we have established in recent years with Fraudehelpdesk (the fraud helpdesk) and other parties, and we are establishing contact

with new partners such as banks to help victims of things such as online fraud as quickly and as well as possible. Our contributions to research projects at universities and colleges enable us to make evidence-based improvements to our services.

We will continue expanding our peer contact programme (including online) for victims of online crime with specific groups, such as specific new forms of crime with many victims.

Young people face the most online crime of all age groups. However, most young people do not report it or press charges. As part of our youth project, a youth platform was developed in co-creation with young people, using the information and testimonies that meet their needs in terms of form and content. This also educates young people about their options and their rights regarding cyber crime.

Our role also includes advising on the risk and prevention of secondary and repeat victimisation if other organisations are not already doing so. Prevention is essential, especially with online crime. It is crucial to avoid victimisation rates that exceed victim support capacity. We will urge the government to carry out that preventive task. We will also help other organisations fulfil their prevention duties. To that end, we are making our knowledge and data available to facilitate targeted prevention activities. We are identifying gaps and areas where our organisation can provide support through preventive consulting.

Sex offences

Victimisation through sexually transgressive behaviour has increased significantly. One-third of adolescents and young adults say they have been victims of sexual violence. Victims report psychological and sexual problems. Experiences of sexually transgressive behaviour are mostly discussed in social circles. It is estimated that only up to 2% of victims of sexually transgressive behaviour contact police, Veilig Thuis (domestic safety and security) or a Centrum voor Seksueel Geweld (centre against sexual abuse) facility.

After the publication of the research report “Laagdrempelige hulp voor slachtoffers en plegers van geweld in afhankelijkheidsrelaties” (Accessible Support for Victims and Perpetrators of Violence in Dependent Relationships) in 2023, the ministries of Health, Welfare and Support, Justice and Security, Education, Culture and Science and Social Affairs started a joint trajectory to improve the help provided to victims and perpetrators of sexual abuse and violence in dependent relationships. The aim is to better recognise requests for help, make adequate referrals and avoid victims having to tell their stories numerous times before they reach the right place. Slachtofferhulp Nederland, in cooperation with other organisations, already makes a tremendous effort to ensure that victims of sexual abuse and violence in dependent relationships receive the help they need and guide them on the road to recovery in a timely manner. It has been jointly examined whether a single recognisable service desk or central access point could be established for victims of sexual violence to seek help. We are also looking into further strengthening the underlying cooperation. The establishment of a central point focused on support was also recommended by the

Hendriks Commission for victims of organised sadistic abuse, as well as by Secretary of State Coenradie for femicide.

Slachtofferhulp Nederland contributes to a comprehensive approach to sexual abuse by participating in the implementation of the inter-departmental Actieprogramma Seksueel Grensoverschrijdend Gedrag en Seksueel Geweld (action programme against sexually transgressive behaviour and sexual abuse), which has been extended to 31 December 2026. We are focussing on lines of action 4 and 5, which, respectively, deal with identifying and properly responding to sexual abuse and implementing good and easy-to-find support.

Traffic

No records are kept regarding the experiences and needs or the consequences of victimisation of traffic victims and their loved ones or surviving relatives. Traffic fatalities and injuries have been increasing for years.

Recent research by Universiteit Utrecht (Utrecht University) shows that a large group of traffic accident victims receive no or limited support for recovery from personal injury. In traffic cases where a victim has been injured, and there is a liable party, we now refer the victim to a representative. We are launching a personal injury pilot in 2025 to expand our services for traffic victims with minor injuries.



3. Victims' interests

Victims deserve recognition and support in dealing with the aftermath of a criminal offence. Various victims' rights have been introduced in recent years, which have already led to improvements for victims in practice. However, many more targeted improvements are needed. Enforcing victims' rights has proven to be a major problem in practice. As such, we continue to draw constant attention to the victim's position and the application of their rights, both in society and with our partners in the criminal justice chain. We aim to enable victims to take their rightful and moral place in criminal proceedings.

We are committed to improving the victim's position within ongoing and new legislative processes by contributing to consultations and impact and implementation analyses. We also draw attention to victims' interests by providing both solicited and unsolicited advice in legislative processes. Our expertise gives us a good view of victims' needs, and we have a wealth of data to help with that. We continuously work to improve the position of the victim in this way.

In the coming years (up to 2029), we will prepare for the implementation of the new Code of Criminal Procedure. There are also other ongoing processes, such as those concerning the Donner Commission's opinion

(compensation for damages) and the Van Wijngaarden amendment (privacy), to which Slachtofferhulp Nederland makes important contributions. These activities contribute to achieving the ministry's ongoing multi-year agenda and the government's outline agreement and government programme.

Single point of contact for victims

The landscape around the victim can often be fragmented; sometimes, a victim may be unable to see the forest for the trees. In the government programme, the Schoof administration formulates the need for a single, clear point of contact so that victims of crimes such as sex offences and online privacy violations do not have to share their painful stories over and over again. Slachtofferhulp Nederland is uniquely prepared for such a role. Our organisation is known to every resident in the Netherlands, has its own professional helpline and can call upon years of experience as an accessible guide in the complex justice and recovery system. We already work with all national and local partners in the criminal justice and social domain. We are also used to "hot" referrals, so cooperation with other partners is a given.

When referring to external parties, we can provide information about other parties and support the initial contact. We provide an up-to-date, multidisciplinary referral policy and a referral guide, which is updated with information about other organisations. This enables our employees to properly fulfil their role as a guide for the client.

Europe

In a European context, we are working with Victim Support Europe on the ongoing revision of the Victims' Rights Directive and the implementation of EU DIRECTIVE 2024/1385 regarding violence against women.



The new Victims' Rights Directive brings significant improvements to victims' rights, support and protection:

- improved access to information and support during the criminal proceedings;
- increased protection from harm and harassment, better security measures and greater confidentiality;
- increased support;
- increased focus on awareness and educating professionals (proper knowledge and skills to effectively support victims);
- increased attention to vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly and victims of gender-related violence.

We expect these new regulations to have major consequences for the Dutch criminal justice chain and the position of victims within it, and are preparing accordingly.

Expanding representation

We want to increase the focus on violations of victims' rights in the coming years. We aim to work from the victim's perspective and maintain a constructive and critical attitude. We are considering the following interventions

- In addition to chain consultation and political influence, we want to explore how best to use existing legal options to obtain court rulings on matters of principle if the victims' interests are fundamentally at stake.
- Many victims do not press charges. They believe it to be pointless, find the process too complicated or are reluctant to tell their story again. They are also sometimes discouraged from doing so by other

chain partners. We are examining whether and how we can help victims press charges.

- We engage with commercial organisations such as law firms about their potential social contribution to victim support. We are considering social internships for their employees at Slachtofferhulp Nederland.
- Victims can be vulnerable. Navigating these complex issues requires knowledge, understanding, care and skills. A wrong approach can unintentionally cause extensive emotional damage. We wonder whether there is a need for a “victim assistance proficiency certificate” (such as the competence certificate for the Public Prosecutor’s Office) for people working with victims of crime in the context of the criminal justice chain, the legal profession or the personal injury industry; this quality mark would enable professionals to demonstrate that they are proficient in providing victim support. We can contribute to that with education.
- Processing times in the criminal justice chain are often long, and many criminal offences are never brought before a judge for a variety of reasons. This affects victims. We are exploring whether alternative systems or procedures in addition to and independent of the formal justice system and specifically targeted at victims can provide a solution. Slachtofferhulp Nederland aims to be the starting point for such parallel channels in the future: “Parallel Justice”.

Parallel Justice is a term coined by Susan Herman (<https://www.burlingtoncjc.org/parallel-justice>). It describes a system operating parallel to but independent of the criminal justice system. This system focuses on providing emotional support, safety planning and

information to victims of crime, regardless of whether the crime has been reported to the police or not. The goal is to support and help victims even if the perpetrator is never identified or apprehended.

“Beyond victimhood”: improving the victim’s position in society

We want to start a public discussion about the position of victims. That position has improved considerably since Slachtofferhulp Nederland was founded. There is a focus on victims in broad layers of society; the rise of silent marches and other expressions of collective support and grief are an example of that.

However, an “ideal image” of a victim often prevails; the more clearly a victim conforms to that image, the easier it is to recognise and acknowledge them. Those who conform less to the ideal image (and are, therefore, less identifiable) often still face prejudice, stereotypes and victim blaming. Many people prefer not to identify themselves as victims and, as such, do not look for some form of support that could help them.

We want to improve the social position of victims by changing their narrative and move from a biased word and image to a judgment-free representation. Victims are entitled to a listening ear and support without judgment. We will be using this new narrative in our communications and media policies and campaigns aimed at the general public. We want to make it clear that everyone is at risk of becoming a victim, that there is no need for guilt and shame, and that every victim is entitled to support.

We will also be targeting our partners in the criminal justice chain with this narrative, as well as anyone else who works with or for victims. We do so from an independent position, fueled by case studies from our victim support activities.



4. Network cooperation

Slachtofferhulp Nederland is part of a network of national and local partner organisations in the criminal justice chain, safety regions and the social domain, which works to provide the best possible service to victims. Our organisation and staff are well-equipped to maintain, evaluate or intensify partnerships. We are also continuously on the lookout for new partnership opportunities. Our ultimate goal is always to support more victims.

Working closely with chain partners, Slachtofferhulp Nederland guides victims through the criminal proceedings. Supporting victims in exercising their rights, such as the right to be heard and the right to compensation for damages, is always a priority. To that end, we collaborate with our partners within ZSM and Mijn Slachtofferzaak (MSZ).

In the coming years, Slachtofferhulp Nederland will increase its focus on working with partners to develop alternatives for finding justice and recognition outside the criminal justice system. The main reason is that victims will increasingly be unable to find justice through the criminal justice system. This already applies to victims of crimes where no suspect has been identified. The rise of online criminality with large numbers of victims and where suspects are harder to track will only increase the number of victims for whom the criminal justice system has no solution. Delays in the criminal justice chain due to personnel shortages, among

other things, only increase the urgency to seek solutions outside the criminal justice system.

Within the psychosocial domain, Slachtofferhulp Nederland primarily fulfils a guiding role: we refer the victim to institutions and people that can provide the right support. We do so using a detailed online social map. We aim to strengthen that guiding role in the coming years by providing a single, central access point for all victims wherever possible. We are more clearly defining our guiding role for both the legal and social domains to ensure that different groups of victims receive proper recognition. Our commitment to alternative forms of recognition outside the criminal justice system ties into that.

The municipality is an important partner for us. The municipal tasks in the areas of security, social support and population care complement ours. This makes the municipality a key cooperation partner and grant provider. Our services provide a substantial contribution to the municipal services. Our cooperation takes place within three municipal domains: disaster and crisis management, social security and the social domain. Financial support from the municipalities is essential for optimal cooperation. As such, every Dutch municipality must continue to allocate solidarity contributions, and we must continue to work with municipal networks to reach out to and support victims of incidents that disrupt local communities. We know that municipal budgets will be under pressure in the coming years. The year 2026 is expected to be a bad year financially due to cuts in the municipal fund. We want to avoid our municipal funding being affected. We are investing in our contacts with the municipalities and the Association of Netherlands Municipalities (VNG). In our approach

to the municipalities, both nationally and at the district level, we will emphasise that our efforts in the municipalities benefit many residents at a very low actual cost per resident. We are available day and night in times of need. It is important to the citizens in the municipalities that our availability is maintained.

Waiting lists in mental health care

We are concerned that victims who need further help often face waiting lists in the Mental Health Care System. When recovery stagnates and further assistance is indicated, waiting lists often lead to symptoms worsening. We strongly recommend broadly addressing the accessibility of mental health care, but we do not see a simple solution to this societal problem.

Without providing bridging care – we do not have the expertise or capacity for that – we can serve in a guiding role for victims waiting to receive further treatment. We match the victim’s level of self-sufficiency as closely as possible and focus on co-reliance by equipping both the victim and their network. Our support is aimed at enabling people and their networks to move forward. In the absence of a network, we help identify opportunities for contact, such as peer groups and local initiatives such as buddy projects. We are committed to equipping other professionals in our network with our Platform for Professionals.

We are also raising our concerns with our partners and politicians. For example, it can be distressing for victims to see the rehabilitation facilities available to criminals and former inmates while the victims are left to find their way to recovery. Victims pay for their recovery through their health insurance and personal contributions. When additional

treatment is needed, health insurance often covers only a limited portion of the costs for more extensive care, while victims and their loved ones often require longer-term care for appropriate treatment of more severe symptoms and trauma.

Lastly, we note that the costs of psychological counselling are seldom included in the compensation procedure, if at all.

International

Slachtofferhulp Nederland cooperates with other victim support organisations within Victim Support Europe, sharing knowledge and expertise and conducting research. Our cooperation with Victim Support Europe results in short operational lines when Dutch nationals are victimised abroad or foreigners are victimised in the Netherlands. We also work globally with other victim support organisations and INVICTIM, an organisation dedicated to supporting victims of terror attacks worldwide.

BES islands

We are exploring whether our organisation can play a role in supporting victims in Bonaire, St Eustatius and Saba, as these Caribbean islands are Dutch municipalities. Since 2009, victims on the BES islands have been able to obtain support from Bureau Slachtofferhulp (victim support service), which is part of the Dutch Caribbean Police Force. Bureau Slachtofferhulp has indicated that it could use our support. Cooperation between Slachtofferhulp Nederland and Bureau Slachtofferhulp by sharing our expertise seems a logical and sensible investment. For Slachtofferhulp Nederland, it offers a new opportunity to profile itself as a knowledge centre. The differences in legislation and capacity

necessitate customisation. This could still prove to be a substantial investment for us, for which resources will have to be made available while Bureau Slachtofferhulp's absorption capacity is limited. We will be exploring the options.

5. Flexible organisation

Our country is undergoing profound changes due to demographic and political shifts, the individualisation of society, a changing crime profile, environmental issues and technological developments. Victim Support Netherlands needs to respond to these changes promptly to remain relevant as a service provider for victims and to remain an attractive organisation for employees and volunteers.

Flexibility

The organisational setup supports our goal of continuously serving as many clients as possible to the best of our ability. Our teams are organised close to the clients and chain partners. To ensure that we can continue to meet changing client needs in the future, we have our own Innovation Department.

Clients want personalised appointments close to home. We are increasingly organising telephone or digital contact nationwide and location-independent. For acute care with 24/7 availability, we use a dedicated on-call and crisis organisation. We offer our services in a hybrid form. Are you looking for online information, advice and support? Do you want a programme with mostly personal contact? Or would you prefer a mix of online and in-person? This decision-making process must be as seamless as possible. Our service model provides an overview of the types of

support and the available options. The victim decides. If they are unable to reach a decision independently, we are, of course, willing to assist in the decision-making process.

The perception of service has changed dramatically since the COVID-19 pandemic. When you order a package from the comfort of your home in the evening, it is often delivered by the following morning. This also affects the expectations of our clients. Client satisfaction surveys show that we can still improve the speed of initial contact. In doing so, it is important to approach clients in a way and at times that are most likely to establish contact. For example, we know that many of our clients are more available in the evenings and on Saturdays. Some young people come alive at night. After a major calamity, demand for acute care can be so high that regular services are overloaded, and the solution does not always lie in more capacity. We will invest in working smarter in the coming years, such as by making our deployment more flexible or employing new technology. Our clients and our employees will reap the benefits. Clients are approached and supported more quickly, which will also enhance the job satisfaction of our employees. We can go home feeling even more satisfied because we were also able to provide adequate support to each victim in a timely manner.

New technology

Most of our informational and advisory services are also available to self-reliant Dutch citizens online. There is a growing demand for this type of information on our website, as well as for so-called explainer videos on channels like YouTube. Slachtofferhulp Nederland will continue to focus on digitalisation in the coming years, working with chain partners wherever possible.

One aspect of digitalisation worth mentioning separately is artificial intelligence (AI). We want to make more use of AI as a means to increase our reach through hybrid (digital and in-person) services, share our knowledge and work more efficiently. To that end, we cooperate with universities, companies and supply chain partners. Several experiments were already started in 2024.

Slachtofferhulp Nederland is not new to the use of AI. We have maintained a case law database with AI features since 2020. The case law database connects to rechtspraak.nl and imports court rulings that award compensation to one or more victims. Policy advisors can efficiently review a ruling and assess whether it is appropriate for our legal staff to use in victim services.

We will be expanding the number of experiments in the coming years. The release of Microsoft Copilot enables us to take the way we work, collaborate and disclose knowledge to the next level of quality. In addition to providing help with a variety of practical matters such as reporting and presentations, Copilot and the New Workplace concept will improve the searchability of all information in our digital environment. We must ensure that our expertise is not disseminated outside our domain without our consent.

Another experiment currently being considered is an AI that transcribes the conversations between our legal staff and victims. The staff member no longer has to write out the report, only review it. This saves time and allows our staff to pay more attention to the quality of the conversation.



While the first three initiatives are primarily intended to complement our work, the fourth is a service substitute. With AI, it is possible to search for and summarise information based on a “natural question”. For this experiment, we want to make our entire website accessible via AI search and summarisation. Clients can chat with an on-screen avatar that helps them find their way, eliminating the need for the client to search for things themselves. The avatar can also help you make appointments for personal services. This innovation enriches our out-of-hours offering, which young people, in particular, have a great need for.

Hard-to-reach groups

Society is becoming more diverse, older and more fragmented.

The path to help can be hard to find. This applies in particular to young people, the illiterate, the elderly, non-native speakers, refugees and people with a disability. We strive to keep our services easily accessible and searchable for those vulnerable groups.

On the one hand, we continue to develop material for clients, sometimes together with and for partners already in contact with certain groups; on the other hand, we provide the right tools for our staff in-house in the form of knowledge, tools, training and guidance to properly match the client’s needs, requirements, limitations and possibilities.

We also help loved ones and professionals assist hard-to-reach groups and guide them to appropriate help through our Platform for Helpers and our Platform for Professionals, among other things.

Working at Slachtofferhulp Nederland

With our core values, we indicate where our organisation’s strength lies, what we value and what drives us. All of our employees are **knowledgeable, reliable and decisive**.

Our services rely largely on volunteers. “For each other, together” is a guiding principle in our way of working. Volunteers have a rich life experience. They are rooted in society and dedicate their time and attention to their fellow humans. At our Slachtofferhulpacademie (victim support academy), we educate our volunteers to speak to victims and listen without judgment. In addition to the initial education, we offer a wide range of in-depth training, work supervision and peer review to keep everyone up to date on the latest insights into victimhood.

The need for flexibility in volunteer work is increasing. Many people want to combine volunteering with other commitments, such as work and family, and with free time. This leads to an increase in short-term and project-based forms of volunteering. In response, we will supplement our volunteer offerings with smaller roles in which tasks are offered according to ability, willingness and availability.

In addition to volunteers, we also employ more than 500 paid staff. We are proud that our organisation has had high employee satisfaction for many years. We conduct a satisfaction survey twice a year. We offer meaningful work, modern employment conditions, excellent education opportunities and a safe and informal working environment.

Our managers are attentive to everyone’s contribution, provide the frameworks and allow room for professionalism therein. They encourage ownership, initiative and personal growth. Our management has a keen focus on measurable and noticeable quality and provides feedback accordingly. Leaders consciously set a good example and do not hesitate to reflect on their actions.

Our staff work at 25 modern and well-equipped locations throughout the country, ensuring we are always close to the client. They are supported by IT that facilitates the preconditions for valuable, reliable information and safe service to clients, employees, the organisation and cooperation partners. Privacy and information security will remain key agenda items in the coming years. Secondary victimisation due to careless handling of client data must be avoided at all costs. Slachtofferhulp Nederland is ISO 27001 certified and is working systematically to achieve GDPR privacy maturity level 4.

Finally, stewardship of social funds requires a high degree of efficiency, transparency and reliability. All our employees are well aware of this. Our organisation operates methodically and lawfully, manages risks and is constantly in control. We continuously measure the quality of our services and work processes.

Diversity and inclusion

Diversity and inclusion within our organisation are normal. Employees and victims feel welcome and safe. We strive for more diversity in our workforce to better reflect Dutch society. In the coming years, we will implement targeted measures to increase gender diversity and the proportion of employees from multicultural backgrounds. We aim to ensure a healthy mix of generations in the workplace. Lastly, we are making efforts to recruit more employees at a distance to the labour market.

Sustainability

While our organisation already makes an extraordinary social contribution through our mandate of “justice and recovery for every victim”, we believe it is important to achieve that in a responsible, sustainable manner, organisationally speaking. Sustainability is becoming a regular part of our business operations. We use a holistic approach, looking at materials, energy, water, biodiversity, society & culture, health & well-being, and value. Our ambition is to achieve full climate neutrality in the future. To that end, we will conduct a baseline measurement and establish an ambitious roadmap. Sustainability is becoming a regular part of our planning and control cycle. It will be a fixed element in our external reporting and a mandatory component of our departmental plans in order to maintain and safeguard management attention. Sustainability is not just about the organisation, it is about all of us. Above all, it is important to show impact to touch people and encourage them to take action.

Beyond victimhood

Multi-year vision 2025-2028



Justice and recovery for every victim

Our task in society



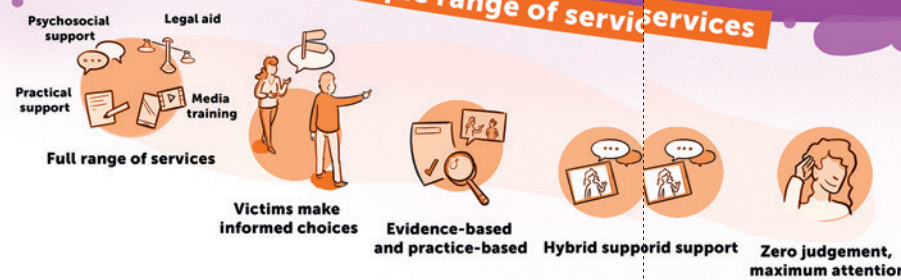
Collaboration in the network



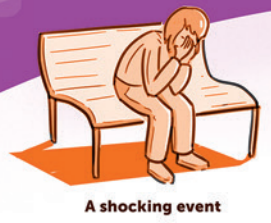
Agile organisation



Unique range of services



Victim's interests



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