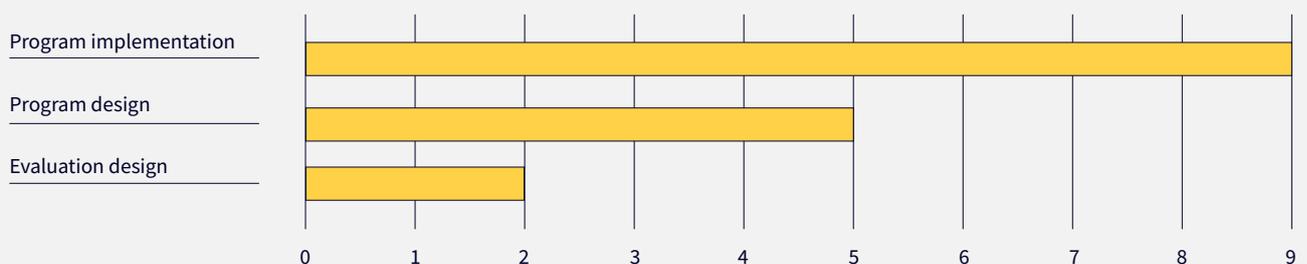


What Works: LESSONS LEARNED IN SURVIVOR INCLUSION

The participation of modern slavery survivors in program development, implementation, and evaluation is crucial to anti-slavery efforts. Working with survivor activists to shape programs based on their lived experience results in developing and implementing interventions that reflect survivor needs and are based on a detailed understanding of the factors that create vulnerability, thus enhancing their effectiveness. The same can be said of evaluations of modern slavery programming; the use of participatory approaches, where survivors determine measures of success and are included in or lead the research, allows for unique insights into effectiveness, ultimately leading to more robust interventions.

Yet, programs and evaluations are largely designed and undertaken without the participation of those directly impacted by them. Of the 262 evaluations housed in the Promising Practices Database (the Database), only four per cent (n=10) capture survivor inclusion in program design (n=5), implementation (n=9), or evaluation design (n=2). In this context, survivor inclusion refers to “the development or delivery of a process or project that is being carried out ‘with’ or ‘by’ survivors rather than being ‘for’ or ‘about’ them.”¹ Given the limited data, this policy paper sets out our initial observations on which practices work and which look promising for including survivors in program and evaluation design.

Survivor participation in program and evaluation design and implementation



Above image: Maine, United States, January 2018. A survivor holds up her candle during a vigil in support of National Human Trafficking Awareness Day held by Hope Rising. Hope Rising is a residential treatment program that serves victims of human trafficking. They estimate around 200-300 women and girls are trafficked in Maine every year. Photo credit: Brianna Soukup/Portland Press Herald via Getty Images.

LESSON 1:

Include survivors early and often and empower them to lead

Although it seems straightforward that survivors should be included in planning and implementing the programs that directly affect them, this was described in only a small number of evaluations. At best, survivor exclusion leads to ineffective interventions, and at worst, it results in a complete lack of autonomy and a continuation of trauma. Survivors can bridge the gap that often exists between what they need versus what they receive. When done well, survivor participation is a great strength that not only offers unique insights, but also enhances the success and sustainability of programs.

It is important to include survivors in the early stages of the process, to increase ownership and ensure reputability.¹ Engaging survivors early and often is vital; however, it must not be tokenistic. To this end, it is important that stakeholders understand why survivor inclusion matters and acknowledge survivors for their expertise. Across the ten evaluations that included survivors, the credibility and authority of survivors was recognised.² Survivors had opportunities to actively influence program, planning, and content, for example as members of the Board,³ through developing program

curriculum,⁴ determining training materials and codes of conduct,⁵ and establishing advocacy campaigns.⁶ It is also important to avoid assuming that one perspective mirrors the perspectives of all, and instead reflect a diversity of survivor experiences through an inclusive approach. This can be achieved through engaging with a range of survivor-led organisations.⁷

Fair compensation is essential to ensuring inclusivity and empowerment. Survivors deserve to be compensated for their time and expertise. This also supports their recovery. For example, the Anti-Trafficking Monitoring Group recommends using the London Living Wage as a baseline for calculating payments for survivors' work in the UK.⁸ In addition, childcare expenses and other practical support needed, which may otherwise preclude survivors from participating, should be considered.⁹

Ultimately, programs should be led and designed by survivors where appropriate. Lived experience provides invaluable insights that ensure outcomes meet the needs of those involved, in addition to potentially supporting a survivor's own recovery.

What is the Promising Practices Database?

The *Promising Practices Database* was created in 2015 to collate evaluations of anti-slavery and counter trafficking programs in a searchable format, so that stakeholders can quickly identify what works — and what does not — through a simple search by country, target population, type or sector of slavery, or type of intervention. The theory is that we can learn from the evaluations already undertaken, even if the learning is 'there is a lot we don't know.' We updated the database in 2020, while the evaluations and information in this policy brief are current as of February 2021.

How does it help?

Including survivors of modern slavery in programs and evaluations.

Survivors of modern slavery are experts and offer unique insights into how counter trafficking and anti-slavery interventions should be developed, implemented, and evaluated to prevent modern slavery and to better respond to survivor needs. Yet, programs are still largely designed and undertaken without their participation. Instead, alternative narratives are frequently promoted, which stereotype survivors into the role of a perpetual victim in need of support from external experts.

Survivors contribute to the eradication of modern slavery by not only bringing their experience to create tailored solutions to a complex crime, but they

also have the credibility and authority to determine what works. Survivors, too, benefit from additional chances for growth and development because of their participation in program planning, implementation, and evaluation processes, which naturally leads to a sense of empowerment and can support the healing process.

Ultimately, including survivors in program design, implementation, and evaluation affords them the opportunity to shape programs that directly affect them and influence the development of policy. This increases the likelihood that their needs are adequately addressed, and in turn, that programs accomplish their objectives.

LESSON 2:

Create space and provide training

Often, survivor engagement does not extend far beyond an expectation for survivors to retell their story, providing little opportunity for meaningful input. It is therefore important that expectations outlining opportunities for equal participation and growth are clearly communicated and agreed upon from the outset. Meaningful engagement requires acknowledging that survivors are not always programming experts and consideration should be made as to whether they require any support or training to be a part of the planning process. This includes providing opportunities for survivors to participate and providing upskilling where required, as well as setting realistic timeframes to accommodate learning.¹⁰ These measures can help to address unequal power dynamics at play by empowering survivors to contribute. However, such dynamics require ongoing attention and consideration.¹¹

Education and training to enhance leadership,¹² organising,¹³ and mentoring capabilities¹⁴ can contribute to survivor willingness to partake and engage in program design.¹⁵ Further, improving skills in advocacy,¹⁶ analysis,¹⁷ and documentation coupled with awareness raising sessions on relevant social and gender issues allows survivors to become social actors.¹⁸ By affording survivors the skills necessary to participate and make a clear impact on policy and programming, individuals can also gain improved self-worth and empowerment.¹⁹ Through this, survivors can reclaim spaces that were not originally designed for them. For example, by training survivors in computer literacy to improve digital data collection, the Coalition Against Trafficking in Women -Asia Pacific program established a position in which women survivors took control over technology that was not traditionally a female nor survivor space.²⁰

LESSON 3:

Provide ongoing support to prevent re-traumatisation

One ethical consideration for the inclusion of survivors in planning and implementation of programs is the risk of re-traumatisation, vicarious trauma, and other forms of secondary trauma.²¹ It is vital to consider their ongoing needs for holistic support.²² Collaborators should seek to create survivor-informed spaces²³ and adopt ethical guidelines to prevent the risk of re-traumatisation and safeguard wellbeing. This should include prior warning when participation may cause traumatic events to arise, as well as the option to withdraw, and access to support services.²⁴

Program designers, funders, and implementers should acknowledge the importance of survivors taking care of themselves first before helping others.²⁵ It follows that the techniques employed by survivors across the assessed evaluations comprised of boundary setting,²⁶ including recognising when they needed to seek further assistance from trained clinicians,²⁷ consistent psychotherapy sessions,²⁸ self- and bodily-awareness,²⁹ trauma-informed care,³⁰ and regular social interactions.³¹ Working with survivors is a long process that must not involve shortcuts,³² and should take the necessary time and resources to empower survivors to become effective social actors.

LESSON 4:

Co-produce, do not predetermine, evaluation methodologies

As program beneficiaries, it follows that developing evaluation methodologies should be a participatory activity.³³ To this end, evaluation metrics must be founded on a conceptual framework developed by or in collaboration with survivors, in which process and outcome measures, operative variables, and program logic models are determined.³⁴ Evaluation methodology should be survivor-centred and collaborative rather than "brought in from the outside."³⁵

As evidenced by the evaluations reviewed, participatory techniques are very effective in eliciting survivor knowledge and lived experience to improve

program design and evaluation.³⁶ This is particularly beneficial in situations where there is a paucity of research and expertise to assist in establishing program outcomes.³⁷

Because of competing interests, participatory evaluations can be perceived as less objective. To remedy this, UNICEF suggest that a suitable participatory strategy may be designed for each stage of an evaluation by posing the question, "who should be involved, why, and how?"³⁸ Further, triangulation, in which numerous data sources are used and the information from all sources is reconciled as part of the analysis, can also be an effective solution.³⁹

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